



THE STRATEGIC ROLES OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TO BUILD A STRONG BRAND EQUITY

(The case of Selected companies IN ETHIOPIA)

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis
Ababa University in Partial Fulfillment for the Award of the Degree
of Master of Arts in Marketing Management**

By:- Dawit Dagneu

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE
MARKETING MANAGEMENT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM**

May, 2014

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Declaration

DECLARATION

I, Dawit Dagneu, hereby declare that the thesis entitled “The Strategic roles of Social Media marketing to build a Strong Brand Equity in Ethiopia” submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts (M.A) Degree in Marketing Management of Addis Ababa University at Addis, is original work and it hasn’t been presented for the award of any other Degree, Diploma, Fellowship or other similar titles of any other university or institution.

Name

Signature.....

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the Thesis entitled “The Strategic roles of Social Media marketing to build a Strong Brand Equity in Ethiopia” is a bona-fide work of Mr. Dawit Dagneu who carried out the research under my guidance. I certify further, that to the best of my knowledge the work reported here in doesn’t form part of any other thesis report or dissertation on the bases of which a degree or award was conferred on an early occasion on this or any other candidate.

Signature.....

Mehret Berhanu (Assistant Professor)

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.3. Objective of the Study.....	6
1.3.1. General Objectives.....	6
1.4. Research Question	6
1.5. Significance of the Study	7
1.6. Scope of the study.....	7
1.7. Limitation of the study.....	7
1.8. Organization of the Study	8
CHAPTER TWO	9
2.1 Brand and Brand Equity.....	9
2.2 Social Media and Social Media Marketing.....	13
2.2.1 What is Social Media?	13
2.2.2 Type of Social Media.....	15
2.2.2.1 Social networks.....	16
2.2.2.2 Microblogs.....	16
2.2.2.3 Video and Photo sharing or Communities Content.....	17
2.2.2.4 Blogs	17
2.2.2.5 Social bookmarking	17
2.2.2.6 Forums	18
2.2.2.7 Collaborative creation.....	18
2.2.2.8 Aggregators.....	19
2.2.3 Social Media Marketing.....	19
2.2.3.1 What is Social Media Marketing?.....	19
2.2.3.2 Social Media in Integrated Marketing Communication.....	23
2.2.4 Conceptual model of Social Media Marketing Roles on Brand Equity	34
CHAPTER THREE	39
3.1 Research Design.....	39
3.2 Type of Data and Source.....	40
3.3 Sample Design	40
3.3.1 Target Population and Sample Frame	41
3.3.2 Sample Size.....	42

3.4	Methods of Data Collection	43
3.4.1	Survey	43
3.4.2	Observation	44
3.4.3	Secondary Data Collection.....	45
3.5	Response Bias and Data Clearing	45
3.6	Data Processing and Analysis	45
3.6.1	Descriptive Statistics.....	46
3.6.2	Regression Analysis.....	46
3.6.3	Content Analysis	47
3.7	Ethical Considerations	47
CHAPTER FOUR.....		48
4.1	Introduction.....	48
4.2	Demographic Data	49
4.2.1	Organizations Demographic Data.....	49
4.2.2	Respondents Demographic Data.....	50
4.3	Type of Social Media and the extent Social Media used for marketing by organizations	51
4.3.1	Social Media Marketing Communication tools used by Organizations.....	51
4.3.2	Importance of marketing communication tool in the organizations	52
4.3.3	Commonly used social media platforms by organization	53
4.3.4	Organization Years of Using Social Media Marketing.....	54
4.3.5	Organizations Social Media marketing arrangement and Management	54
4.3.6	Organizations time commitment and frequency of new contents for social media platforms	57
4.4	Social Media Marketing as Integrated Marketing Communication	59
4.4.1	The Social Media marketing performance in the organization	59
4.4.2	How Organization integrates SMM with each traditional marketing tools	59
4.4.3	Important factors to incorporate SMM into integrated marketing communications.....	60
4.5	Social Media marketing roles and importance's on brand equity	61
4.5.1	Effectiveness of SMM compared to traditional once for brand awareness and image	62
4.5.2	Benefits of social media to brand.....	63
4.5.3	Social media marketing reflects brand standards.....	64
4.5.4	Organizations social media marketing for building strong brand equity	64
4.6	Social Media Marketing Strategy	65
4.6.1	Organizations with Social Media Marketing Strategy	65
4.6.2	Factors organizations consider while designing social media marketing strategy.....	66
4.6.3	Organizations monitor and measure their Social Media marketing.....	67

4.6.4	Organization updates their Social Media marketing program	67
4.6.5	Successes or failures of SMM programs fully understood before it's changed.....	68
4.7	Social Media marketing Challenges, Level of Risk and Opportunities	69
4.7.1	Social Media marketing perceived challenges	69
4.7.2	Level of risk involved in launching and running social media marketing into IMC	70
4.7.3	Organizations plans to add other social media platforms	71
4.8	Regression and correlation analysis	71
4.9	Qualitative Observation	72
CHAPTER FIVE		74
5.1.	Introduction.....	74
5.2.	The types of social media and the extent SM used for marketing by organizations in Ethiopia ...	74
5.2.1.	Major type of Social Media platforms being used in Ethiopia for Marketing	74
5.2.2.	The extent Social Media used for marketing by business organizations in Ethiopia.....	75
5.3.	Social Media Integration into Companies Integrated Marketing Communication.	75
5.4.	Role and importance of Social Media Marketing for Brand Awareness & image in Ethiopia.....	76
5.4.1.	Customer's attraction and engagement role and importance	76
5.4.2.	Branding and two way communication role and importance.....	77
5.4.3.	Social Media Marketing Augmented role and importance	79
5.4.4.	Other Roles and Importance's.....	79
5.5.	Social Media Marketing Strategy to build strong brand equity.	80
5.6.	Social Media marketing Challenges, Level of Risk and Opportunities	81
5.7.	Relationship between social media marketing and brand equity.	83
5.8.	Future Research Direction	83
CHAPTER SIX.....		84
6.1.	Conclusion	84
6.2.	Recommendation	87
Reference		I
ANNEX A: Online Survey		VIII
ANNEX B: Observation Guideline.....		XVII
ANNEX C: Questionnaire for Non-Social Media Users		XVIII
ANNEX D: AAUSC Support letter		XXII

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Type of target audiences and key influencer.....	31
Table 2.1 Links of consumer engagement in social media and brand equity elements.....	39
Table 4. 1 Demographic Characteristics of the organizations	49
Table 4. 2 Demographic Characteristics of the Organization respondents	50
Table 4. 3 Importance of marketing communication tool in the organizations	52
Table 4. 4 Organizations Social Media Marketing Platform Arrangement for Ethiopian Customers	54
Table 4. 5 Organizations Social Media Marketing Platform Management.....	55
Table 4. 6 Cross Tabulation of Social Media Marketing platform and its management	56
Table 4. 7 Min, Max and Mean of Time spent for social media marketing per day	58
Table 4. 8 The position of Social Media in the Marketing Communication.....	59
Table 4. 9 Level of Social Media integration with existing marketing communication	60
Table 4. 10 Important factors considered by organization while incorporating SMM in to IMC	60
Table 4. 11 Summary of the effectiveness of Social Media Marketing for brand awareness and image ...	63
Table 4. 12 Summary of the effectiveness of Social Media Marketing for brand awareness & image	63
Table 4. 13 The level of agreement that Social Media Marketing reflects brand standards	64
Table 4. 14 Organizations social media marketing for building strong brand equity	65
Table 4. 15 Organization with Social Media Marketing Strategy.....	66
Table 4. 16 Summary of the importance of different factors for designing social media marketing.....	66
Table 4. 17 Cross tabulation of organization updates their SMM by Organization understood the SMM programs before it's changed.....	69
Table 4. 18 Familiar with the term Social Media Marketing among non-social media users.....	70
Table 4. 19 Response rate on level of risk involved in launching and running Social Media Marketing...	70
Table 4.20 Mode Table.....	72
Table 4.21 ANOVA Table Dependent Variable.....	72

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Role of communication for brand knowledge.....	12
Figure 2.2 Social Media importance for business.....	15
Figure 2.3 Conceptual framework of social media marketing on brand quity.....	38
Figure 4. 1 Marketing Communication Tools Used by the Organization.....	52
Figure 4. 2 Summary of Social Media used by the respondents.....	53
Figure 4. 3 Organizations Years of using Social Media Marketing.....	54
Figure 4. 4 Frequency of new Social Media Marketing content crated by organizations.....	58
Figure 4. 5 Organization objectives for using Social Media Marketing.....	62
Figure 4. 6 Benefits of social media marketing apply to organizations brand.....	64
Figure 4. 7 Percentage of organizations that monitor and measure Social Media Marketing performance.....	67
Figure 4. 8 Percentage of organization that updates their Social Media marketing program.....	68
Figure 4. 9 Summary of Organizations understood status of SMM before it's changed.....	68
Figure 4. 10 Summary of organizations plans to add social media platforms.....	71

List of Abbreviations

AAAA:	American Association of Advertising Agencies
AIDA:	Attention, Interest, Desire and Attitude
AMA:	American Marketing Association
BE:	Brand Equity
CBBE:	Customer Based Brand Equity
CGC:	Consumer Generated Content
CRM:	Customer Relationship Management
eWoM:	Electronic Word of Mouth
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
IT:	Information Technology
IMC:	Integrated Marketing Communication
IP:	Internet Protocol
ROI:	Return on Investment
RSS:	Really Simple Syndication
SEO:	Search Engine Optimization
SM:	Social Media
SMM:	Social Media Marketing
SMN:	Social Media Networking
SME:	Social Media Engagement
SMMS:	Social Media Marketing Strategy
SMO:	Social Media Optimization
WoM :	Word of Mouth
WWW:	World Wide Web
URL:	Universal Resource Locator
UGC:	User Generated Content

ABSTRACT

A great interest in the Social Media has emerged along with the rise of online social media during the past few years. Marketing practitioners were the first ones attempting to define and understand the potential roles of Social media marketing for brand.

However, due to a lack of scholarly interest and empirical support, the role of social media has remained rather vague and its presupposed capability to use social media for marketing purpose is still uncertain. The aim of this study is to bridge this gap by empirical analysis and identify the roles of Social Media Marketing on strong brand equity from an Ethiopian business organizations context. Among branding concepts, brand equity is always considered as one of the most significant concept in both practical and academic environment.

Drawing on the overview of academic literature and the results of both quantitative online survey and qualitative observation the paper delivers a thorough investigation of the concept and offers empirical evidence of its role and the relationship with brand equity ultimate brand equity performance. The most important findings of this study suggest that social media marketing has strategic role and social media marketing and brand equity are related. Thus, this paper is an important contribution to in the field of social media marketing in the context of Ethiopia which still remains mostly conceptual or qualitative, and provides useful insights and recommendations for marketing practitioners.

Keywords: brands, brand equity, social media, social media marketing.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In the 21st century advancements in information and communication technology (ICT) particularly, the growing access and use of the internet for personal and business purpose, have had a profound effect on how people live and interconnected around the world, these advancements also made more transparent by the proliferation of new communications technologies.

As the internet grew in fast pace with wide adoption of personal computers, smart phones and tablets which brought a new development of web-based online communication and social media (SM). The Social media revolution started quietly long ago and it is the biggest change since the industrial revolution (Business Week, 2008). Now Social media is the fastest growing type of media in the history of the world (Eve Mayer, 2012) in many forms. This brings change on how different people are connected and interacts in the web. In these new social media web technologies have made it easy for anyone to create and, most importantly distribute their own content in a text or multimedia (picture, audio, & video) formats for free and everybody loves it (PR Smith & Ze Zook, 2001).

Social Media can be defined as a group of Internet based applications that exist on the Web 2.0¹ platform to enable the Internet users from all over the world to interact, communicate, and share ideas, content, thoughts, experiences, perspectives, information, and relationships (Briscoe,2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Scott, 2007; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Social networks (such as Facebook and MySpace), online communities, microblogging tools (such as Twitter), photo sharing sites (such as Flickr and Photobucket), social tagging (such as Digg), and video creating and sharing services (such as YouTube, Oic, Seesmic, UStream) are examples of social media. Social media fulfils a fundamental human need to communicate. We are social animals. We like

¹ The second stage of in the development of the World Wide Web, characterized especially by the change from static web pages to dynamic or user-generated content and the growth of social media.

to communicate with each other. Therefore, social media facilitates this by helping us to communicate more easily, to more people, whenever we want. That is why social media networks like facebook, twitter, google + and YouTube are so successful.

Social media growth is huge because it simply lets customers communicate with each other and organizations communicate with customers. This new business environment allows marketers to listen to customers and opinions formers (and other stakeholders), channel their feedback into suggestions and product new ideas, and even test out new concept and brand names, while all the time engaging customers, developing higher levels of customer loyalty and nurturing brand ambassadors.

Social Media marketing is today seen by many practitioners as the new arena for market communication. Barefoot and Szabo (2010) define social media marketing as use of social media channels to promote a company and its products. They believe social media marketing comprises of the traditional web-based promotion strategies, including email newsletters and online advertising.

A new marketing era, long overdue, was heralded in when social media emerged as a real game changer. Social media put customers back at the center of the organization and gave marketers a new set of tools to listen to them and to encourage them to engage with the brand. A golden opportunity has emerged as organizations realize the possibilities of engaging with customers in new ways so they can become partners driving the business forward. For marketers this golden opportunity help to create strong brand and sustainable competitive advantage, and ultimately to build better businesses (or organization). Marketers have to add new ways to engage customers and move them up the ladder of engagement. Social media engagement requires creating meaningful impressions to build awareness, gain trust, and increase customer loyalty. Social media engagement also provides customers with the means to spread the word about how great products, services and their experience to their friends, fans, and followings all of whom may be potential customers for you (PR Smith & Ze Zook, 2001). The rationale behind this assertion is the prevailing conception of customer engagement as a way to create deeper and more lasting customer brand relationships (Kumar, 2010). Furthermore, eventhough the traditional media still plays the major role in reaching the customer, the companies are increasingly using the new social media

channels for managing their customer relationships. Research showed, that social media has emerged as a valuable tool widely employed by businesses and even 54% of executives of consumer goods companies participating in a recently conducted survey said that social media was central to their effort to engage consumers in 2011(WARC, 2012)

There are a lot of factors that affect the brand either positively by the increase potential customers or negatively the increased in fragmentation of media and customers, as well as the revolution in mass communication. By the new communication channels which in turn will determine the fate of the brand in the competitive business environment. Additionally, a recent study exploring customers engagement in social media site published by DEI worldwide² found that 70 percent of consumers now visit social media site to retrieve brand and product information, with almost half (49%) making a purchase decision based on information found on social media sites (DEI Worldwide, 2008). Product social media site visit and the purchase decision based on the information found on social media to retrieve brand and product information. These factors which contribute to the success of the brand mainly related with the increase in brand awareness and marketing communication effectiveness (Keller, 2003).

There is no doubt that social media marketing has tremendous potential for a company benefited from which will transform the company brand equity. Additionally, social media marketing strategy, despite the uncertainties about the future, will be an important part of company's overall marketing strategy. In part brand awareness and integrated marketing communication programs. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller two group of sellers or more and to differentiate them from those of competition. Therefore, a brand needs to be wherever its customers are.

It is clear from the extant literature in brand management that the significance of online marketing has been recognized. Therefore, online marketing as marketing communication program used to develop brand equity (Keller, 2003). This has marketing effects that are uniquely attributable to a brand (Keller, 2001). In fact, online marketing can function as a basis for social media marketing. Both the theoretical literature and other studies have laid a logical basis for the role of social media

² A social media marketing agency: <http://www.deiworldwide.com/about>

marketing for brand equity concept. One of the most valuable aspects of the social media for marketers, and specifically with regard to the role of social media, is in its ability to provide a clear, detailed picture of what it is that the people who matter to you are saying about you and what they are telling others (Evans, 2008). A brief description of social media and SMM is warranted in the context of Ethiopia since there is limited social media marketing in Ethiopia.

Therefore in Ethiopia though the number of social media marketing has risen however still in its infancy stage. Marketers worldwide have already taken advantage of social media. But, the absence of clear, comprehensive, rigorous, and empirically based studies on the role of social media marketing in Ethiopian is very limited. Therefore, gap observed and this research is to identify the strategic roles of Social Media Marketing on brand equity in Addis Ababa by combining survey approach and qualitative observation.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Social Media and Social media marketing has risen to a great level in Ethiopia in the past years and bunch of business organization has practicing social media marketing. However, it is observed that due to its newness coupled with skepticism of its roles organizations in Ethiopia are not taking the advantages of social media marketing to build strong brand equity.

Vollmer and Precourt (2008), addressed customers are turning away from the traditional sources of advertising, such as radio and television, and that they consistently insist on more control over their media consumption. Lindberg, Nyman & Landin (2010), examined how to implement and evaluate an online channel extension through Social Media, which compares and contrasts conventional marketing practices with social media marketing in the context of micro firms and then suggests these micro firms as which tools are more suitable for them.

The rationale for this study was motivated by a personal interest in the social media marketing and also the desire to investigate the role of social media marketing. This is mainly because there is a growing experimentation among the organization which type of social media to use, how to use it in the traditional marketing communication for brand awareness & image and social media marketing strategy on brand equity building from a business organization perspective.

The context of online social media has become of great interest to marketing practitioners as the new social media platforms quickly emerged as valuable tools central to their effort of customer engagement (WARC, 2012). Despite the vast popularity of the concept among businesses, the push of social media marketing is still misses the mark and fails to explain what it ultimately has to the brand equity. The behavioral measures of social media marketing is currently available on online social media platforms such as number of fans, repeated visits or interactions with the brand page provide little information about the roles to be expected (Nelson-Field & Taylor, 2012). Given the importance of brand awareness, image and integrated marketing communication effectiveness, to build a successful strong brand equity companies must issue continuous concern. Social media sites such as facebook, twitter, youtube, linkedin, my space, and other have provided an interactive communication platform for both consumers and businesses offering a new potential for companies to build awareness and image, loyalty, shape attitudes, and impact purchase behavior (Boyd and Ellison, 2008; Keller, 2009).

Preliminary investigation in the business organization was identified that organizations are using different social media marketing approaches. This study contends that the Social Media Marketing could have strategic roles which require a clear position on the marketing communication for strong brand equity in Ethiopia.

The importance of the research question to the role of social media marketing has been heightened by the recent changes in growth of social media use in Ethiopia. According to Internet World Stats report for example in 2012 number of facebook users in Ethiopia is over 1million with 1% penetration rate (Internet World satas, 2013). However, too few companies have a social media marketing strategic plans for managing their company brand to build their brand equity. Despite the acknowledged role of the social media marketing it is observed that there are limited researches by others in the Ethiopian context. Thus this study was designed to identify the roles of social media marketing on building strong brand equity in Ethiopia.

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objectives

The main objective of the study is to identify the roles of Social Media Marketing on strong brand equity from an Ethiopian business organizations context.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

To achieve the general objective of this study, the following specific objectives were developed. Therefore, the study has the following specific objectives:-

- ⇒ To determine the major type of social media's used by Ethiopian business companies;
- ⇒ To assess and understand social media marketing roles in brand awareness & image from an Ethiopian business organizations context;
- ⇒ To describe the role of social media marketing on brand and brand equity to Ethiopian context;
- ⇒ To investigate the factors that influences the design of social media marketing strategy to build strong brand equity; and
- ⇒ To examine the relationships between social media marketing and brand equity in the context of Ethiopian business organizations.

1.4. Research Question

In reference to the background, and identified problem statement, the central issue to this study was to identify the strategic roles of social media marketing on strong brand equity. Therefore, the following research questions are formulated:

RQ1: What are the major types of social media's business companies uses in Ethiopia?

RQ 2: Does companies in Ethiopia integrate social media marketing in to their integrated marketing communication?

RQ3: What are the roles and importance's of social media marketing on brand equity in the context of Ethiopian business organizations?

RQ4: What are the Social Media marketing challenges, level of risk and opportunities from an Ethiopian business organizations context?

RQ5: What are the factors influencing the design of social media marketing strategy to build strong brand equity?

1.5. Significance of the Study

In general, this study expected to make three contributions. First, add to the knowledge on social media marketing role on brand equity through brand awareness, build a brand community, and nurture brand to stand out when compared to competitors. Second, identification of social media marketing roles associated to brand equity within the context of Ethiopia which will benefits marketers and business organizations and improve social media marketing strategy development in relation to what type platforms, segments to focus upon, implementation and how to measure success. Finally, it can lead to further social media researches on specific marketing elements both from organization and customer's side. Therefore, the methods will be used in the future as literatures for researchers, marketing strategy developers, owner-managers, promotion and advertising consultants and advisors and other involved in the process.

1.6. Scope of the study

The study was limited to domestic and international business within Addis Ababa. Considering the time and cost the study was restricted to Addis Ababa geographical area operating in their own brand.

This study as an initial effort, did not evaluate the impact of social media marketing in general and it tries to identify the potential roles of social media marketing to build strong brand equity using descriptive research method from business organizations side only so that future studies could measure the impact of social media marketing specifically and study from customers side.

1.7. Limitation of the study

First of all, because of the early stage of research in this area in Ethiopia, the conclusions was made with cautiousness. Though empirical model can be generalized this study as an initial effort it does

not evaluate the effect and impact of social media marketing in general so future study could develop effective instrument to measure social media marketing more appropriately which requires further testing in alternative settings. Second, the conceptual model only included organizations, assuming that it is concerned with existing organizations only.

This research has defined and limited scope because social media marketing is a recent phenomenon and still growing with dynamics nature especially to Ethiopia. Therefore, these are the limitations and future research directions to this study as well. Finally, the study only focused on the brand equity. Hence, any other brand related issues are out of the scope. This is mainly to see the specific roles of social media marketing on brand equity without cross breeding other social media marketing roles. Moreover, most of the available studies in Ethiopia take the case of internet (online) marketing mainly and, as a result, little is known whether the results can be generalized and applied to online social media platforms. Thus, future research should also consider applying the model in alternative social media platforms contexts to identify the role of social media marketing in building strong brand equity in Ethiopia.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The study is separated into six different chapters. The First chapter is an introductory part bear foundation for the study information, statement of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and ethical consideration. Chapter two deals with review of literature relates to brand, brand equity, models of brand equity, social media, social media marketing and strategy, and issues related to branding through social media marketing. In the third Chapter, the study methodology presents exhaustively from the research design, sample design, data collection, data validations, and other research methodology outcomes. Chapter four puts the detail result of the data analysis and other study tests results. In chapter Five, the findings are discussed. Finally, chapter six will include the conclusions with recommendations put forth then the study will conclude.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand and Brand Equity

Branding has been around for centuries as a means to distinguish the goods of one producer from those of another. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller two group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition. A brand is an offering from a known source and it is an intangible, legally protectable, valuable asset. It is how a company or product is perceived by customers (or the target audience) (Keller, 2003)

Brands include intangible attributes and values. For a brand to be successful, its components have to be coherent, appropriate, and appealing to consumers. A brand is a promise to the customer. A brand also embraces vision, values and personality (see 'Brand components' below). A brand is far more than just a logo or a name (this is just brand identity). It is the complete customer experience (the integrated sum of all the marketing mix and the communications mix from products to customer service, from packaging to advertising, from rumor to discussion). The last two components are less controllable, from a brand management perspective, but they are nevertheless influenceable, as good brand management participates wholeheartedly in social media also. (Keller, 2003)

Brand equity concept was emerged in 1980s since then it became one of the most popular and potentially important marketing concepts. It is defined in terms of marketing effects that are uniquely attributable to a brand. AMA defines brand equity from a consumer's perspective, as being based on consumer attitudes about positive brand attributes and favorable consequence of brand use. Therefore, brand equity relates to the fact that difference outcomes result from the marketing of a product or service because of its brand that if the same product or service had not been identified by that brand. In accordance to the definition, Keller asserts that the power of a

brand lies in what customer have learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand over time. Creating differences is a central focus of brand equity. Then brand equity provides a common denominator for interpreting marketing strategies and assessing the value of a brand. Finally, there are many different ways in which the value of a brand can be manifested for exploited to benefit the firm.

The customer based brand equity (CBBE) model incorporates recent theoretical advances and managerial practices in understanding and influencing consumer behavior. There are two basic questions arise regarding brands: what makes a brand strong? and how do you build a strong brand? are answered by CBBE model. Although a number of useful perspectives concerning brand equity have been put forth, the CBBE model provides a unique point of view as to what brand equity is and how it should best be built, measured and managed (Keller, 2003).

According to the CBBE model a series of sequential steps, termed 'brand building blocks' which accumulates in the achievement of brand resonance. The building blocks required to achieve ultimate CBBE include brand awareness (salience), positive brand meaning (performance and imagery associated with the brand) and desired brand responses. Taking into consideration the substantial changes occurring in the marketing communications environment, there are now many new opportunities for marketers to develop CBBE according to this model, utilizing new communication platforms such as Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube to influence consumers at each stage of the CBBE pyramid.

A necessary condition for building brand equity is achieving a high level of brand awareness and a positive brand image (Keller, 2003). Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand recognition relates to consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue. Brand image on the other hand is created by marketing programs that link strong, favorable and unique associations to the brand in memory. Besides marketer-controlled source of information brand association can also be created in a variety of other ways: by direct experience: from information communicated about the brand from the firm or other commercial or non-partisan sources (e.g., Consumer reports or other media vehicles) and word of mouth; and by assumptions or inferences from the brand itself for the identification of the brand with a company, country, channel of distribution, or some particular person, place, or event. Marketers should recognize the influence of these other sources of information by both managing

them as well as possible and adequately accounting from them in designing communication strategies (Keller, 2003).

A number of competitive challenges now exist for marketers (Keller, 2003). Given the fragmenting of mass markets into mini markets, the proliferation of new types of media and the growing sophistication of consumers, companies need to use a wider range of communication tools, messages, and audiences. To do this most effectively, companies must embrace integrated marketing communications. As defined by the American Association of Advertising Agencies, integrated marketing communications (IMC) is a concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communications disciplines and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communications' impact through the seamless integration of discrete messages (Kotler, 2000).

According to the CBBE model, marketing communication can contribute to brand equity. Therefore, high brand equity provides a company with many competitive advantages and enjoys a high level of consumer brand awareness and loyalty (Keller, 2003). The fundamental asset underlying brand equity is customer equity—the value of customer relationships that the brand creates. A powerful brand is important, but what it really represents is a profitable set of loyal customers. The proper focus of marketing is building customer equity, with brand management serving as a major marketing tool (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).

- The role of brand can be critical for credence goods, when it is difficult to evaluate quality prior to consumption

Companies with high brand equity at offline should be in a position to replicate the brands online by continuously assessing the quality of online presence to ensure that the consumers perceive it to be of high quality (Martensen, 2004).

2.2 Social Media and Social Media Marketing

2.2.1 What is Social Media?

The technology in the last decade has transformed the Web into the ultimate collaboration platform. Given the visible impact of Web 2.0 in marketplaces around the globe—or more correctly, the market place of the globe—social technology is now considered a “given” in business. While technology may have sparked the blog revolution, technology has never been the driving force behind online social interaction. From the chat rooms, forums, and blogs, human nature is at the heat of creation and building online communities. From the very beginning of computer networking, the web has been a place for social interaction. That’s why we call it social media (Barefoot & Szamba, 2010).

Social media is the democratization of information, transforming people from content readers into content publishers. It is the shift from a broadcast mechanism to a many-to-many model, rooted in conversations between authors, people, and peers. Social media uses the “wisdom of crowds” to connect information in a collaborative manner. Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, message boards, weblogs, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video. Technologies such as blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, group creation and voice over IP, to name a few. Examples of social media applications are Google (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), MySpace (social networking), Facebook (social networking), Last.fm (personal music), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Second Life (virtual reality), and Flickr (photo sharing).

Social media allows users to create online profiles and interact with other users. The main reason for the success of Facebook is its ability to address many different aspects of life in a very

appealing way - corresponding to the requirements and demands that human beings have on communication. Social Media is a participatory online media where news, photos, videos, and podcasts are made public via social media websites through submission. Normally, it accompanied with a voting process to make media items become “popular.” Social media site websites that allow building relationships online between persons by means of collecting useful information and sharing it with people. Also, they can create groups which allow interacting amongst users with similar interests (Evans, 2008).

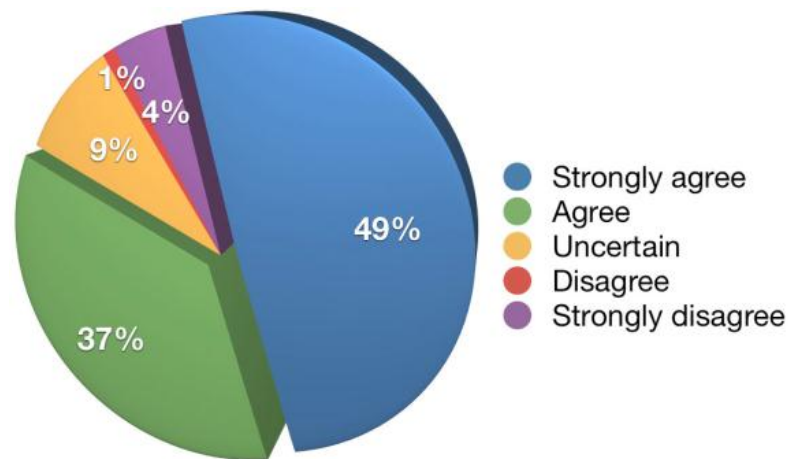
Social media fulfils a fundamental human need: to communicate. We are social animals. We like to communicate with each other. Social media facilitate this by helping us to communicate more easily, to more people, whenever we want. That is why social networks like facebook, twitter and blogs are so successful (Smith & Zook, 2011). The social media phenomenon has completely and rapidly changed the way that people interact-in regard to personal and professional relationship (SAFKO, 2010). Because social media taps into something deep inside us all – the need to communicate, talk, share and be part of a community. This is the fundamental to us as social animals, and satisfies a deep need that is profoundly embedded into our genetic structure (Smith & Zook, 2011).

Social media has a number of characteristics that make it fundamentally different from outbound traditional marketing media such as newspapers, TV, books, and radio. It enables many-to-many communication, consumer-to-consumer communication and enables customers to control the flow of marketing information as they shut out interruption marketing and use, instead, social media to find products, rating and reviews. Marketers know what Facebook, twitter or Google + users like and are using that knowledge to influence users’ friends. “Social context ads” are based on data collected on the likes and friends of Facebook users. When you click on an ad indicating that you like it, you also give Facebook permission to share that preference with all your friends marketers like this feature (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).

Social media sites such as facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube have experienced high growth rates and provided an interactive communication platform for both consumers and businesses, offering a new potential to build brand equity (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Interactive marketing communications contribute to CBBE by allowing daily, frequent communication between

individual consumers and the brand. Brand communication via social media sites may act to strengthen brand attachment in addition to the development of a brand community (Keller, 2009). Additionally, interactive marketing communication on social media allows consumers to learn from and teach others about a brand and observe the brand loyalty of others, further providing opportunities for the strengthening and development of CBBE ‘building blocks’.

We engage people through: communication, collaboration, education and entertainment. A very recent report by Stelzner (2013) in Figure 2 indicated that a significant 86% of marketers said that social media is important for businesses.



Source: social media marketing industry report: 2013

Figure 2.2 Social media importance for business

2.2.2 Type of Social Media

Not all social media are created equally. Some are general sites for chatting with friends and some are serious and intricate business networks. Others are highly focused niche community pages. Most are impossible to fully define because they have their own unique combinations of features, tools and uses. In addition, not all are well suited to marketing strategies, or may require radically different approaches (Jones, Malczyk & Justin, 2013). For the purpose of this study the classification of social media adapted from Constantinides and Fountain, 2008; van Zyl, 2009;

Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Stokes, 2009; Lon, 2010; Evans, 2008; Evans and McKee Jake, 2010; and Wikipedia explain here after.

2.2.2.1 Social networks

Social networks are the biggest, most popular and most widely used social media platforms. The leader in this field is Facebook, with over 1 billion users (and growing), but others like twitter and LinkedIn boast substantial memberships too. Social networks allow users to create virtual approximations of their real-world social relationships, and facilitate the sharing of news and content. Their focus is usually on immediate, sharing-based casual interactions between acquaintances, though this can vary depending on the platform.

There are online tools available for creating custom social networks as well. Ning, for example a paid service, allows anyone to create a customized social network around a cause, business, location or shared interest; the creator can add a variety of features, including advertising and donation applications.

2.2.2.2 Microblogs

A recent arrival on the blogging front is the microblog. A microblog takes the idea of a blog – an article discussing a topic or sharing an idea – and shrinks it down exponentially with a strict character limit. Since web users dislike long, complex content, micro-blogging is an excellent tool to use – it keeps messages short and simple.

The best-known microblogging service is Twitter, one of the world's largest and most active social platforms. Twitter users can follow others to read their messages, or can be followed themselves. The shortness of the message (140 characters or less) means that tweets has to be carefully tailored. Twitter is an excellent way to share news about your brand, and is suitable for companies that have frequent updates that they want to share with a large community.

Microblogging epitomizes immediacy because the messages are so short and because they vanish so quickly from a user's view as more recent ones appear. It is also considered a conversational medium, and users expect timely replies to questions; this makes microblogging a great tool for web PR and brand promotion.

2.2.2.3 Video and Photo sharing or Communities Content

Video & photo sharing or content communities are created by contribution of the members by spreading video & photo content online just like any other media sharing (links, articles, music, text and so on), effective video or photo sharing involves sending appropriate, entertaining and useful content to the right people. Creating video or even plain audio, clips is an effective way to humanize your brand. You can make the content available on your website, on distribution services like iTunes and on video-sharing services like YouTube and photo-sharing services like Flickr, Pinterest, and Instagram.

2.2.2.4 Blogs

A blog (the contraction of “web log”) is an online tool that allows a user to publish articles or posts on any topic; it can also serve as a personal web journal. Good blogs are focused around a clearly defined topic and are updated regularly. Ideally, blog articles are short, easy to read and discuss or explain one central idea.

The social part of blogging has two aspects. First, readers can comment on a post by leaving a short text-like message, and can engage in a discussion with other readers and the blogger. Second, blogs can form networks around related interests, or can join blogging communities – an example is BlogHer (www.blogher.com), a large portal that allows blogs to join the network under categories that are interesting to female readers, giving the site interesting content and gaining exposure for the writers. Of course, besides this, links to articles and blogs make good content for sharing on other social networks. Blogs can be used in marketing by promoting and explaining a company’s brand, products and by providing interesting and useful related content to readers.

2.2.2.5 Social bookmarking

Social bookmarking is the process of sharing web bookmarks online with others. It works just like regular browser-based bookmarking, except that the links can be stored online and shared with anyone who follows you; in addition, the pages with the most bookmarks or recommendations are boosted in search engine rankings. Creating newsworthy content and getting it bookmarked on social platforms can lead to viral spread and increased awareness of your brand. Some of the most

popular services are Delicious, StumbleUpon and Reddit, where the most popular content percolates to the top and attracts new viewers.

A front-page appearance on one of these platforms can literally draw tens of thousands of viewers to your content. This tool allows marketers to track user data by seeing who links to their articles and also to see what other content they find interesting. This provides valuable insights into the target market and is a good addition to other analytics strategies.

2.2.2.6 Forums

Forums are online community message boards where users can post and reply to topics. While forums are not as immediate as instant messaging, they allow conversations to grow as participants discuss a topic publicly. Forums can either stand alone as a community platform, or can be integrated into larger social networks (for example, Facebook Pages have forums).

In almost all cases, forums are very tightly focused around a single hobby (or an aspect of one), organization or interest. This makes them a good place for niche product marketing, though this should be kept separate from the actual discussions themselves as this is considered spam in most forums' terms. Forums also provide a unique opportunity for building a relationship with a brand representative in a social space. Most forums are moderated; if a moderator suspects someone of trying to advertise or of not being who they say they are, that person will be reprimanded or even kicked off the forum.

2.2.2.7 Collaborative creation

The big appeal of the internet is the possibility of working collaboratively on projects with people from all corners of the globe. There are two popular ways of effecting this collaboration. The first one is Wikis, wiki is a web page on a specific topic that can be edited by anyone.

The best known collection of wikis is Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia that is created and maintained by millions of people from all around the world. Wiki pages can be created on any topic, and the process of collaborating and sharing is important to building a community. For example, WikiTravel is starting to replace traditional guidebooks because it's completely up to date, written by a wide variety of people and free. Consider the power of a wiki page created

around your product, on which you can include new information, improvements and features – and even allow customers to add their own suggestions and feedback. It can be an excellent way for brainstorming projects, solving complex problems or getting many people involved in a competition or other brand activity. This teamwork is a valuable social activity and can result in some excellent outcomes, not least new strategies or solutions. However, care should be taken not to exploit contributors because they will hesitate to participate the next time.

2.2.2.8 Aggregators

An aggregator is a web tool that collects and filters updated online information according to certain parameters. It functions like a tailor-made news stream: it can be set to find all information about a person, a certain piece of technology, a political theory – anything you can think of. This content is gathered and displayed in a single, easy-to-use stream, taking away the hassle of having to source the information manually.

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) reader and Google Alerts are the world leading aggregators. RSS for example allows you to sign up and automatically get notified whenever there is an update to the site including a new blog or news. Rather than having to go from site to site every day checking to see if new content has been posted, RSS notifies you when it has. RSS automatically feeds you new contents, from only the sites you want it from, and only when that content is new. This is an extremely useful tool for marketers, as it keeps them up to date with any mentions of their brand online and allows them to track both the good and bad comments being made – an important aspect of web PR. Web alerts also gives you a good sense of the amount of media coverage over time, judging by the number and frequency of alerts.

2.2.3 Social Media Marketing

2.2.3.1 What is Social Media Marketing?

Barefoot and Szabo (2010) define social media marketing as use of social media channels to promote a company and its products. From a marketer's perspective, the premises Evans (2008) has asserted with regard to the application of social media in marketing are daunting.

The Social Web, used correctly, is all about what your community of supporters can do to help you build your business. Keep in mind too that all of your other channels still exist; social media is a complementary extension of all of your other marketing efforts. As Keller's (2003) point of view, all new marketing approaches and other which help to reinforce a number of important marketing concepts and techniques need to be reconciled. From a branding point of view, they are particularly useful means of thinking how to both elicit positive brand responses and create brand resonance to build CBBE. Therefore, social media sits at the pinnacle of the current trends in consumer-to-consumer conversation and marketing effort amplification. Furthermore, it simply widens and organization's net by spreading its branded content (and web links) out to a potentially vast audience. And according to Stelzner (2013) 97 % of marketers use social media to market their businesses.

Social media and its connection to business is with the basic relationships that are created between participants in social networks and social applications, and to then look at the types of interactions between them that follow. On the Social Media, the customer is now becoming an integral part of the sales process. There is a direct overlap between nurturing a brand and nurturing customer relationships.

Social media marketing put forth tremendous benefits that business could leverage on. Business can have personal and immediate contact with your customers (Evans & McKee, 2011). And business is entering the post-'ad loyalty era', where the power of advertising is waning as other communication tools, particularly eWoM accelerated by social media, generate fast high attitudinal shifts. The old loyalty model used advertising primarily to build brand awareness and, ultimately, to build a lasting bond with customers. Securing loyalty today is a never-ending process requiring outstanding Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and ongoing customer engagement (Smith & Zook, 2011).

Engaging with people in a relaxed social space is conducive to them accepting and remembering your marketing message, can create a holistic brand image by combining your marketing message with other useful content, conversations, and customer feedback and brand personality. It's also a great way to manage your brand's reputation, and allows you to create a devoted community around your brand, can target your audience precisely and very specifically, resulting in a much

higher return on investment and a higher click-through rate to your website or product pages. Furthermore, Social media tools are relatively easy to use, cheaper than traditional media and don't require specialized technical skills. Being online is vital in our interconnected world, and social media is one of the quickest and cheapest ways to get your brand onto the internet. Your product will reach new markets and will spread more easily online, increasing your visibility. In addition, peer recommendations are much more effective than pure marketing messages. However, despite the ease and user friendliness of social media, there are several risks involved also both for the user as well as business. The biggest is the loss of privacy for the user. Equally Social media is riskier for companies (Jones, Malczyk & Justin, 2013). The Social media marketing has risks that go hand in hand with launching and running SMM campaign (Jones, Malczyk & Justin 2013; Barefoot & Szabo, 2010; Keller, 2003).

- I. **Your Campaign Doesn't Get off the Ground:** You put energy and money into launching your social media relations campaign and undergo a complete social media makeover. Although, after long wait nothing happens social media campaign isn't getting off the ground. Therefore, start by reexamining your strategy and considering a campaign using a different channel from the conversation prism. Because your target market may not respond to the social media channels at all, resulting in a lot of wasted time and effort. This could happen either because you applied the wrong strategy to your target market, or you used social networking for a market that is unfamiliar with it. Try them all and see what sticks. If you've already pitched your A-list strategies, move to your B and C lists to build compelling enough long-term social media relationships.
- II. **The Crowd Talks Back:** In social media marketing, you don't get complete control over the message; you give some of it to your customers and critics. Why on earth would you do this? Because, by inviting the crowd in, you get real, measurable feedback, maybe for the first time. You may even discover that the message you've been forcing on customers doesn't work; it may not resonate with the people you're trying so hard to impress. Every comment, reply and piece of content you put on your profile is visible for a very long time. If considerable care is not taken, this visibility can act against you – especially if you say something inappropriate by mistake or are misunderstood by your audience. Don't make claims you can't support
- III. **You Get Rejected:** A bad product review in an industry journal is tough. Usually, though, after a month or two, the hardcopy magazine article disappears and you can (sort of) pretend

it never happened. Unfortunately, if an online influencer reviews your product poorly, or a customer rants online about a bad experience with your company, those posts don't go away. On the bright side, social media is based on two-way relationships. You can respond to a poor review or negative post and begin meaningful discourse with the reviewer and your community. Undeserved criticism is often called out by happy customers who feel you've been judged unfairly. If you handle the web PR badly, this could result in brand esteem dropping, your brand being ridiculed and sales falling. However, if you are doing something contrary to what your target market needs, then social media opens the channels for them to complain about this – this isn't a bad thing. Since customers are already speaking about you, the faster you can sort out the issues, the better.

- IV. Your Initiative Dies on the Vine.** Many company blogs, Facebook groups, and Twitter accounts launch with a bang and then fade away, with more time passing between updates. You spend less time commenting on others' blogs, and you ignore profiles on social networks. A poorly managed social media presence can make your company look unprofessional, lazy and out of touch.

Social media requires considerable time investment to reap rewards – there are no instant results and it takes a long time to generate meaningful interactions. If you cannot afford the investment, it is usually better to go without. The success of a social media marketing campaign rests on your company's genuine interest in engaging its audience and becoming an active member of an online community.

Giving your team enough time and the right tools to monitor the Web, comment on blog posts, and so forth is critical. You may want to cut back on less effective offline marketing activities or get more help to make sure social media marketing tasks get completed. Another good way to stay committed to your online community is to find people inside your organization who are already active online.

- V. Ignoring Other Marketing Communication Channel.** Blogs and social media are ideal for initiating direct, informal, engaged conversations with your customers. But they're not a panacea. They're an additional communications channel and shouldn't replace e-newsletters, static web pages, or other collateral materials and marketing programs. Plenty of potential customers aren't looking for you online. By counting on social media alone to connect with your community, you alienate potential customers trying to find you in other ways—at trade

shows, in industry journals, at events, and by real world word of mouth. The online audience is definitely growing. Because sometimes social media is a leisure-time activity for some audience, you need to pushy or obvious marketing tactics. If you don't work at creating meaningful relationships with your audience, using other marketing communication you will be ignored.

- VI. **Too Much Success, Too Soon.** Too much success? Sounds crazy, we know. But not being prepared for an online home run can be a disaster. A successful online campaign calls for considerable community outreach from you and your company. You'll need adequate resources for monitoring mentions and responding to blog posts and comments. The week after a successful social media campaign can be a letdown.

2.2.3.2 Social Media in Integrated Marketing Communication

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) coordinates and controls the promotional mix element to send unified and focused messages to customers based on the organizational goals. The American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) (cited in Belch & Belch, 2003) define IMC as “a concept of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety communication disciplines for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations- and combine these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact.

The strategies behind marketing communication programs have changed dramatically over the years and marketers need to consider and develop an IMC program in terms of the optimal mix of options that should be chosen and the relationships among those options. Therefore, marketers should “mix and match” communication options to build brand equity (Keller, 2003).

Contemporary social networks for example follow Reed's Law (Evans, 2008) that is the value of the network grows more powerfully (which in turn give rise to communities) and the interconnections between them. For many marketers, interruptive advertising is very likely the basis of the marketing toolbox. I'd go as far as to say that most marketers don't even think of advertising as being an interruption: It is just advertising. Interruptions are so engrained across current marketing channels that a lot of marketers don't stop to think about the consequences of not being able to interrupt. It's a lot like air: It's just assumed to be there.

Now, looking out across the Social media, it feels like marketing on the moon. There is no air. This is indicative of where marketing is heading (Evans, 2008). This new business environment allows marketing beyond the old one-way communication and even beyond a basic dialogue between customer and brand instead consider a triologue amongst customers, opinion formers and the brand to listen to customers and opinion formers (and other stakeholders), channel their feedback into suggestions and new product ideas, and even test out new concepts and brand names, while all the time engaging customers, developing higher levels of customer loyalty and nurturing brand ambassadors (Smith & Zook, 2011; Evans, 2008; Ulusu, 2010; Schau, Muniz, & Arnould, 2009, Keler, 2009; Fournier & Avery, 2011; Muniz & Schau, 2011).

Scholars Mangold & Faulds (2009), Patterson (2011), Schau, Muniz, & Arnould, (2009), Woerndl, Papagiannidis, Bourlakis, & Li (2008), Adjei (2010) analyzing communication of companies or brands with consumers in SM most often focus on three aspects of communication in SM: **communication between brands or companies and consumers; consumer-to-consumer communication; and communication between consumer and brand (feedback).**

- I. ***Communication between brand and consumer.*** In social media brand becomes dependent on the wish and will of a consumer. Consumers themselves decide how to interpret a brand, i.e. shared creativity between a brand and consumers. Companies seeking to expand brand awareness must learn to communicate in such a way when a message would spread among consumers like a virus. Consumers display opinion giving behavior when they share product or brand. Therefore companies have to prepare for the communication with consumers in SM. Hollenhorst & Michael (2009), Woerndl, Papagiannidis, Bourlakis, & Li (2008) suggest to analyze environment (platforms, communication between consumers, evaluate resources used by other brands) and prepare a strategy (distinguish target groups, appropriate channels; to consider the basic idea in messages, the frequency and the content of the messages and consumer engagement in communication). Dörflinger (2011), Blanchard (2011), Murdough (2009), Hollenhorst, Michael (2009), propose for companies to view the communication of a brand in SM as a complex of actions (analysis, audience research, planning, preparation, implementation of communication, monitoring and evaluation), company (Eyrich, Padman, Sweetser, 2008; Blachard, 2010) encourage to integrate it into general strategy of a company. Once the brand profile on proper platforms is created and the “talking” has been started, it is

important to realize that such communication may not always be successful, because communication in social media depends on consumers will and wish.

II. *Consumer-to-consumer communication.* Social media has empowered consumers to communicate each other in the form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) by user-generated contents. Electronic Word-of-mouth communication (eWOM) according to Henning-Thurau (2004) is “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet”.

Social media has given the possibilities to create content (Muniz & Schau, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), and unlocked ‘control’ from companies facilitating User-Generated Content (UGC) (PR Smith & Ze Zook, 2011) or Consumer-Generated Media (CGM) (Evans, 2008) to form eWOM which occurs via a variety of electronic and social media (Cheung, 2008). These platforms allow “consumers to not only obtain information related to goods and services from the few people they know, but also from a vast, geographically dispersed groups of people, who have experience with relevant products or services” (Cheung, 2008). Therefore, consumers are no longer passive acceptors of press releases and information about products (Li & Bernhoff, 2008).

Bronner & Hoog (2010), Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold (2010) recommend constant monitoring of word-of-mouth communication, which is performed simultaneously with the traditional marketing surveys; to follow the number of negative comments about a brand and divide them into categories according to their seriousness and credibility (validity of data); to monitor the ratio between positive and negative comments. Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold (2010) highlighted that dissatisfied people are much more motivated to share their negative experience than satisfied people are motivated to talk or write about their positive experience. On the basis of such information marketing specialists can determine the relative probability that potential consumers will face a rather large number of negative, reliable comments about the brand.

III. *Consumer-brand communication (consumer's feedback to brand).* According to Fournier & Avery (2011), Patterson (2011), Beuker & Abbing (2010), Barwise & Meehan (2010) consumers influence brands not only by directly responding to a message, but also by communicating or interpreting it, forwarding the message to other consumers, who can directly

respond to the sender, show no reaction or forward it to another consumer with their own interpretations.

Consumer's response or reaction, attitude towards a brand can be facilitated by social media engagement. By definition social media engagement (SME) is the process by which online communication and the content you post online help you build connections with other people within online communities. It involves the use of the tools of social media — social networks, for example — to build relationships with others that, ideally, result in some kind of reaction, interaction, or action (Sherman & Smith, 2013).

The act of engagement is consumer's response to a successful communication of a company in SM eventually customers or stakeholders become *participants* rather than viewers (Evans & McKee, 2010). Therefore, Consumer engagement is valued as a strategic factor helping to form and maintain a competitive advantage, allowing foreseeing future directions of business development. These communications in SM is most useful when resonance is created as it guarantees the possibility of a daily or frequent encounter or feedback between consumers and the brand. This is attributed to the fact that customers have largely lost trust in traditional advertising and that they prefer conversing with the media and making informed decisions.

There is a need for cohesive integration when implementing Social Media Marketing. This means that instead of regarding Social Media as the only tools a company should use in marketing communication, a marketer needs to integrate the entire marketing communication tool together with Social Media. A combined strategy is far much better than a single tool.

On the Social media, conversations are driven by actual experiences, which are themselves driven by operations policies and processes function much more like traditional media than social media (Lovelock and Witz, cited in Dragger, 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) agree on the notion that Social Media is an upgrade of traditional marketing, as it borrows most of its principles from the old IMC. To that effect Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) recommend marketers to integrate Social Media with traditional marketing as according to them, traditional marketing and new marketing are regarded by consumers as a representation of a corporate image. Social Media Marketing Strategy Development

Businesses have realized that creating a web presence is essential and that to effectively target the audience through a well-planned and analyzed promotional and marketing strategy, strategies must be developed (Lewis & Ariyachandra, 2010). They ascertain that organizations find it cheaper to employ online social networking strategies than paying for marketing communication particularly advertising. According to Jelassi & Enders, (2005), there is a great need for companies to have a long term plan of how they conduct their business to meet organizational goals.

A strategy is concerned with the long term direction of a company and it deals with aligning corporate goals with the resources that a company has (Jelassi & Enders, 2005:7). The main purpose of this is to develop a sustainable plan of action that will help an organization to be more competitive. There is no one strategy that is better than another, as strategies need to be customized according to an organization's preferences and culture (Smith, Wollan & Zhou, 2011). Moreover your strategy will depend on; your goals, audience and your resources³.

Marketers and practitioners have to first observe the current strategies being used by other companies and then come up with a customized strategy that suits their environment. Research has indicated that most marketers are in the habit of jumping blindly into the Social Media world without having set boundaries, rules and strategies (Bolotaeva & Cata, 2010; Smith, 2011). The challenge that comes with this is that once a company loses its brand image in the Social Media the effects are long term because of the life span of information on the internet, unlike in traditional marketing where companies could easily rectify their failures and move on.

Marketers working with leading brands in social media suggest one solution may be “co-creation”—where marketers encourage users to become actively involved with a brand or product (Needham 2008,). Thus, in order to develop loyalty with tech savvy consumers, some marketers have decided to stop talking or selling “at” them, and instead market with them. Some marketers incorporate this approach within “relationship marketing”; rather than focusing on transactional marketing, the aim is to build longer term relationships with customers, generating trust between buyer and seller so that loyalty develops (Harridge-March & Quinton, 2009). Dragger, (2009) suggests that the starting point is analyzing the Social Media objectives that the company wants to achieve and then aligning them to marketing objectives and the overall company objectives. Smith (2011) on the

³ www.lornali.com/6-steps-for-creating-a-social-media-marketing-roadmap-plan/

other hand suggest that in drawing up a Social Media strategy, a company should consider six elements, which are Context, Culture, Process, Metrics, People and Policies. So, before you start into a social media program, meet not only with your marketing team but also with your product managers, business unit leaders, and operations team. Review customer service calls and look at product returns and the issues that drive them (Evans, 2008).

Social Media might require a company to possess some degree of flexibility to accommodate technological and business requirements. According to Dragger, (2009), the building of a Social Media strategy should be based on certain elements: (a) performing a situational analysis (b) setting goals and objectives, (c) implementing the strategic plan and (d) performing periodic evaluations. This concurs with Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) who advocate the importance of considering traditional marketing strategies when implementing Social Media. There have been numerous strategies suggested by different scholars and these are adapted from Evans 2008; 2010, Solis (2010), Safko (2010), Smith & Zook, (2011) who suggests we are witnessing ‘the transformation of business acumen while also shifting the culture and the communication that embraces an inward and outward flow for listening, interacting, learning, and adapting. it is listening that sets the stage for intelligent participation discussed below.

A. Listening to the conversation. Ahlqvist , (2008); Falkow, (2009); Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010); Wigmo & Wikstrom, (2010) and Smith, (2011) agree that listening should be the first stage in implementing a Social Media Marketing (SMM) strategy. They all emphasize the importance of listening to what the audience is saying about the product, the brand, the company and the general topics discussed about the company on all Social Media tools.

Falkow, (2009) suggests that marketers should listen to what the competitors are saying and where they are saying it, Evans (2008) recommended the starting point in gathering social media metrics is the Social Web itself. It’s the most direct indication you can get with regard to understanding and tracking what is being said about you. The challenge with this part, however, is that according to recent post-modern marketing advocates, the audience have become more and more fragmented and confused so that it is difficult to segment the audiences (Brown & Hayes 2008; Weber, 2009).

Dragger’s, (2009) first step of implementing SMMS is identifying organizational goals and Social Media objectives. This appears to be more reasonable as one cannot start listening

without knowing why in the first place he or she is participating on social media. Smith (2011) advocate that the objectives of Social Media are to increase brand awareness, increase revenues through demand marketing, increase efficiency and reduce cost on Social Media. According to Dragger, (2009), only after this process can listening be considered, and this is called target marketing. Keller (2003) states that as guideline to listen to the buzz in which you monitoring consumers reaction which could yield insights.

B. Analyze existing media strategy, Set priorities and goals, and don't try to cover all social media outlets. List all your entire marketing media; let's take a look at what has been effective and what has not? (Safko, 2010).

Marketing communications have to be integrated for two reasons. Firstly, un-integrated communication will be fragmented perhaps could cause many problems and complications, as there is no single picture for the customer. Secondly, as communications morph into customer experiences, all communications need to be integrated to deliver a consistent experience (Smith & Zook, 2011). This is important question to any marketing media strategy, but especially to the less defined online space.

It is not possible to engage in all conversations everywhere. Pick the more important ones initially. Not all online conversations have the same impact. Identify the more important ones. Learn when and when not to engage. Moving beyond just listening to observing where the really significant conversations are, the types of responses and the language that is used can reveal burning issues, pain points, new ideas and a lot more valuable intelligence. Businesses do not have to be everywhere to create a presence, just where relevant conversations are occurring with significant audiences or influencers. However, you don't assume that you can follow only one formula (Jones, Malczyk & Justin, 2013) so continually analyze and adjust your media strategy.

C. Identify your target audience and Key Influencers. An understanding of your audience adds depth to the conversations you uncover by telling you who is leading them versus who is being led. What they are saying — the actual conversation — is only part of the story.

Segmentation is an important step in the implementation of traditional marketing strategies this applies to social media too. Knowing who is saying it and who is listening gives you very valuable insight when planning your social media campaigns (Evans, 2008). According to Falkow, (2009) one could propose that before participating in Social Media, it could be of great

importance if a company identifies the key influencers (See the detail Table 2) in its media, finds relevant communities and also collaborates with them. Safko (2010) also agree with the notion of identifying influencers and extend the argument by suggesting identification of venues where the conversations occur. Maintaining a community means dealing with all manner of people and remaining sensitive to individual issues as well as to group concerns is important for your SMM strategy to identify each of the audience segments, gather data, and segment in your audiences (Evans, 2008). These influencers and keep a close eye and monitor how their engagement and conversations are evolving. Therefore, you need to run through formation: first impressions, Infancy: just watching, Courtship: first interactions, participation: superficial interaction, Engagement: deeper interactions, and finally Evangelism: organic ambassadors are the common stages to form and grow the influencers community by being kind, discriminating, honest, open (don't spam blatantly community posts) and value adding (Sherman & Smith, 2013). People on social networks can be divided into several personality types, each of which requires a specific approach. Here are some of the most ones illustrated by Evans (2008).

Table 2.2 Type of target audiences and key influencer

Source: Evans 2008

Targets	Interpreted Information	Underlying Metric
Audience	Who`s reading	aggregate profile
Unique visitors	Page views, visitors info, blog mentions, click analysis, traffic	Web Analytics: Unique visitors

	patterns, source of traffic via Referrer measure	
Influence	Memes(thoughts, ideas etc) and intensity overtime	Time on site, blog context, review polarity
Engagement	Clicked on length of stay conversation	Time on site, pass-along, comment-to-post ratio, blog mentions, reviews, bounce rates
Loyalty	Trends: subscribers, repeat visitors, referrals	Pass-along, blog mentions, time on site, bounce rate
Action	Conversions	Pass-along, conversions, reviews

D. Develop Content strategy and Join the conversations. An audience needs to know why they have to go back to company blog or Facebook profile. It therefore becomes essential for marketers to see to it that they provide quality content which will encourage them to engage with customers (Falkow, 2009). In fact, while crafting your content you should consider your business goals, target audience, actions you want others to take, and the forum you are using (Sherman & Smith, 2013).

As the needs of relevant communities and opinion formers emerge, an organization can begin to define what kind of content, questions, challenges and collaborative co-creation it would be good to feed into these communities. This is the shift from ad hoc communications to a more carefully planned communications agenda. Content has to be driven partly by the overall positioning the brand wants to achieve and partly by the market itself. This information should be fresh and should add value both to the company and the audience (Falkow, 2009). Furthermore, Ahlqvist, (2008) and Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) agree on the idea that the content must be interesting, lively, frequently updated and that it should promote issues that concern the audience. According to Kaplan & Haenlein, (2009), it is important that in the development of content, marketers should identify what the audiences want to hear and talk

about and what amuses them. That can be a significant factor in engagement, retention, and message reception Evans (2008).

To effectively draw the reactions, interactions, and actions that makes SME work for you, get people talking — to you and to each other (Sherman & Smith, 2013). Eve (2012) pointed as social media business equation you need to express yourself on social media using the following types and percentages of content: and it will help you address exactly what you need to do to make your social media efforts more effective.

- Informing: 20 percent
- Entertaining: 20 percent
- Interacting: 40 percent
- Converting to business: 20 percent

After developing the content strategy start or join the conversations that reflects your brand and that is focused, attractive, interactive, and intrinsically valuable to the audience with whom you want to connect so that you will not just jumping into someone else's conversation which can be akin to interrupting. You need to find relevant conversations, listen to what' being said, consider how you can contribute and of course create your own conversations and/or post an appropriate message on other conversations (Sherman & Smith, 2013).

E. Constantly use (promote) social media and integrate other media and events.

Social media requires a continued feed of fresh content (as well as resources to respond to discussions) equally, conversations across the full social media spectrum need to be monitored and tracked continually. Sudden and scope less stealthily move can mess up and imbalance social media usage, as can poor content management, eg out-of-date content left online. Therefore, you need a regular consistent stream of useful content update, creep gradual change and balanced intensity of use of your social media. This requires clear briefings and motivation to your community members as well. Ask your readers, listeners, and followers what they want to know about a topic trough what. And provide content they want and can use. Hence, the ability to learn and adapt determines organizations' future survival.

Now a day's all organizations promote their websites in everything they do, so too should social media be promoted. On the other hand, the organization's own social media team has to believe in the power of constantly used social media and its integration with other media and events. The online social media team or consultancy needs to work more closely with the

offline team (Smith & Zook, 2011). Customer relationship management (CRM) systems, for example could integrate with social media, as questions may need to be answered by the CRM team (Smith & Zook, 2011).

Maintenance is essential to secure this constant progress and successful integration of social media content with suitably optimized and spread across the company various social networks, other media and events constantly. Sherman & Smith, 2013 says Add value: Ask “What value does my content provide to a consumer following our brand?” For example, it may be entertainment, education, current events, coupons, or giveaways.

Barefoot & Szabo (2010) Smith & (Zook 2011) stress on Social Media Optimization (SMO) as a new search engine optimization as important way helps companies to secure constant presence to community in addition to their constant social media use to integrate with external social media. Therefore, you’ll enjoy SMO benefits and an increase in visitors to your social media over the long term. A lot of effort goes into SEO but, as more and more searches being carried out start within social media platforms, ‘Social media is becoming a core product research channel’, with social networks accounting for 18 percent where all searches begin Gibs (2009).

F. Implement and Commit time and resources to grow the community. A community does not grow simply by establishing a social media blog, a facebook or Google+ fan page, a group or ‘any old online profile’s (Jones, Malczyk & Justin, 2013). A presence on social media platforms by implementing social media marketing is not enough a significant task involves for inviting and encouraging members to join a new social media community Safko (2010). A significant amount of time and resources commitments is required. Although social media marketing appears to be free – after all, you don’t need to pay to sign up with Facebook or Twitter – running proper social media marketing is time consuming and require budget, personnel and time expenditure. For instance, Can you afford to dedicate an existing staff member to social media? Can you afford to hire social media marketer and marketers or out-house marketing consultants? Are you willing to commit time, money and personnel to a long-running social media campaign? Will your marketers embrace social media? Are they well versed in it? these requires to devote resources to social media (Evans, 2008; 2011; Jones, Malczyk & Justin, 2013; Smith & Zook, 2011; Zarrella, 2009). Also, remember that there will always be new platforms to explore and you may not be able to keep up with trends if you

overflow your social media plate initially (Jones, Malczyk & Justin, 2013). However, if the organization cannot handle the incoming social media marketing traffic with its comments and enquiries, it could end up generating a lot of negative PR develop credibility before raising visibility (Smith & Zook, 2011).

G. Monitor Measure and report.

Marketers must be able to monitor and evaluate the value of their social media marketing and present the report to the concerned. Of course, Setting monitoring and measurements into your business context is an obvious first step; yet for the most part, businesses and organizations sometimes fail to formally recognize the monitoring and measuring the impact of social media on business.

Social media measurement is based as much on heuristics — using what is available to make the best of what you have — as it is more traditional quantitative and statistical analysis. Though, Social media metrics are still evolving and currently, there are no ‘best practices’ for measuring a successful social media campaign it is possible to quantify and compare return on investment (ROI) (Suryakumar, 2011). However, companies need to invest in infrastructure to measuring different aspects of social media marketing to evaluate what is happening at various points of SMM as well as uncover opportunities and pitfalls (Evans, 2008).

2.2.4 Conceptual model of Social Media Marketing Roles on Brand Equity

Considering the intensity of competition for customers, and the desire to build sustainable brand equity, customers therefore become the main focus for any marketing brand strategy. Marketers should hence thrive to capture the attention of customer and create an image in the mind of customer that would make them want to share the marketers brand with their friends. In most cases people are always eager to share something that is fantastic and of value to them. Even though the main purpose why Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms were created was to link people together in collective conversation, in contrast, marketers found these platforms appealing to market their products/services despite the fact that their brands are not always welcome in social media. In fact some online users view them as being intrusive and out of place (Fournier & Avery 2011).

Companies have found social media as a place where they can gain rich, unmediated customer insights much faster than before. This has given Social media an ability to boost brand awareness; encourage people to try products/services which might eventually lead to more sales returns especially when the campaign happens to go viral (Barwise & Meehan 2010).

According to Social Media Research Wave34 report (2008) social media can have a dramatic impact on your brand's reputation: 34% post opinions about products and brands on their blog and 36% think more positively about companies that have social media. From a marketer's perspective, social networks offer two things: traditional media-buying and advertising placement opportunities (Evans, 2008).

By comparison, social media simultaneously tackles awareness and consideration, and does so with a lower level of perceived interruption. To be sure, traditional media still plays a role in pure awareness. Again I'll stress that "social media" is not a technique that is applied in isolation. However, unlike traditional media, social media connects with and involves the consumer from awareness all the way through consideration. Research shows that social media is increasingly a platform consumers use to express their loyalty to their favorite brands and products, and many seek to reap benefits from brands for helping promote their products (Nielsen, 2011).

Social media is applicable as both a prompt (awareness) and as a validation, something that works very much to your advantage if you apply it correctly. Note too that the source of awareness has little to do with it. Traditional media is still very much a part of the picture in terms of awareness. It's the validation step that is changing the equation. This validation impact of the Social Web via the content created and made available in the social feedback cycle is best understood through the mechanics of word-of-mouth. The conversations built around word-of-mouth extend to the discussions of the company itself when the company chooses to participate in the conversation. Participation conveys a sense of trust, of caring, of involvement in the outcome.

Typically a good brand is not about being chosen over a competitor in the market segment, but rather, it should offer a solution to the prospects problem. Social Media also plays a key role in protecting brands: 58 percent of social media users say they write product reviews to protect others

⁴ Social Media Research organization: www.socialmediawave.com

from bad experiences, and nearly 1 in 4 say they share their negative experiences to “punish companies”. Many customers also use social media to engage with brands on a customer service level, with 42 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds acknowledging that they expect customer support within 12 hours of a complaint (Nielsen, 2011). Therefore online branding is not only about a new brand finding its way in the social media arena, but in reality, it is a brand that is already well established which can be replicated online. It is for this reason that a good branding strategy for both online and offline branding should be in place to support all channels to create mutual synergetic effect (Martensen, 2004).

Barwise and Meehans, (2008) cite four fundamental qualities that companies suggest that great brands share;

- **The consumer promise:** -The contents on the web site and social media sites should convey the same message, and the brand promise should also be relevant and understood.
- **Build trust by delivering on that promise:** - It is important to create a brand with a message that users will trust overtime. Honesty is very important.
- **Continual improvement:** -The biggest social media opportunity lies in gathering insights to drive continual incremental improvements. These improvements can be realized through getting response from the online community on the shortcomings of a company/brand.
- **Innovating beyond the familiar:** -Fresh insight from the social media by way of interacting with the online community.

Bearing these four points in mind, any company deciding to use social media as a way of marketing should therefore be very keen on the kind of choices they make.

Many social media networks have emerged; a marketer should hence choose the right medium depending on the intended target group. First and foremost, knowing the target group is vital as it leads to picking the application that would be effective for online marketing. In some cases, a marketer might decide to use various social media application within the same group to reach wider audience. In such instances, ensuring that all the activities align with each other is very crucial (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

Social media networks are not flawless, however there are few challenges here and there that can be controlled by marketers and immediate foreseen pitfalls sealed off. There is a need to determine the kind of impact social media has made on a marketers brand. As for the consequences, two customer-based items were selected – brand loyalty and word-of-mouth, which here refers to the intention to recommend the brand. Bowden (2009) addresses customer engagement as the superior predictor of customer loyalty as compared to other more traditional marketing constructs.

Someone can share their opinions about a brand on their favorite social networks and their thoughts can spread exponentially. Another interesting trend is the interest of consumers to act as ambassadors and advocates for brands through social media. A majority of active social networkers (53%) follow brands. These brands are increasingly recruiting their fans and followers to spread word-of-mouth recommendations about their products and services, and among consumers who write product reviews online, a majority say they share their experiences to “give recognition for a job well done” by the company (Nielsen, 2011).

Duncan and Everett (1993) long before have identified synergism as the essential concept behind IMC, the integrated effect of each effort would push the communication to more effectiveness. In the case a certain message would not reach the intended result in isolation, quite common, the interactions in-between the elements on the IMC program will enhance them desired effect and lead to the ultimate results.

A central focus in IMC is the interrelationship among different variables: taking into consideration communication channels on one hand and marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion) options on the other. One of the core reasoning behind IMC is effective communication as well as cost reduction (Fill, 2008); in fact the optimization of the interactions among significant factors is the final objective of the IMC process. The combined and synergetic effects taking place among different factors drive the final outcome. Schultz (1996) has always affirmed the power of a holistic view in IMC deeming the whole is much more effective and powerful than sum of the parts. In fact synergies play a great role as a leveraging tool.

For each stage of consumer engagement Li and Owyang (2010) suggest company's actions that can motivate engagement and Owyang and Lovett (2010) propose communication in social media evaluation indicators, which have an influence on brand equity elements.

Based on these findings from the literature review, a conceptual model of social media marketing on brand equity was developed (see Figure 2.3).

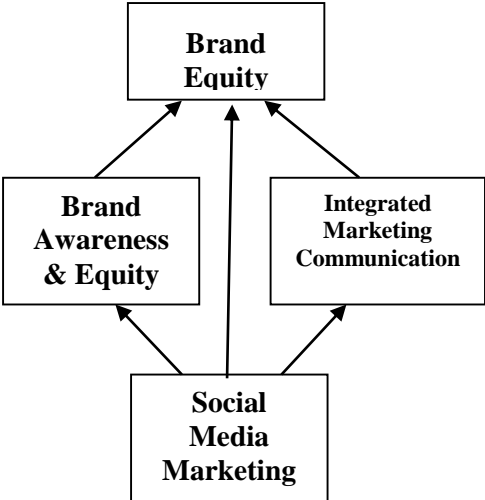


Figure 2.3: Conceptual framework of social media marketing on brand equity

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The purpose of this study is identifying and describing the roles of social media marketing on strong brand equity in Addis Ababa companies. Considering the newness of social media as a brand communications tool to the context of social media marketing communications and the fact that research on Social Media is still at its early stage with the implications for brand equity on one hand a mixed research method is chosen due to the lack of time and budget. Moreover, due to the purpose of this study, the mixed approach taken as the most appropriate and efficient approach mainly in qualitative to quantitative sequence. Specifically, descriptive study is the main approach to collect primary data (Bruce, Robert Stevens & Loudon, 2002). As such, descriptive research presupposes much prior knowledge on the part of the researcher regarding who will be targeted as a respondent, what issues are of highest priority to be addressed in the study, how the questions are to be phrased to reflect the vocabulary and experience of the respondents, when to ask the questions, where to find the respondents, and why these particular questions need to be answered in order to make decisions.

Descriptive research are more formalized and typically attempts to describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or programme with stated hypothesis or investigated question. Therefore, descriptive research seeks to describe something (Bruce, Robert Stevens & Loudon, 2002). Accordingly, the descriptive research approach was provides a method to discover the roles of social media marketing on brand equity. Therefore, using the survey and observation in which companies with social media mainly studied. This research methodology was important for this particular research because it provides a systematic way to gather valid and meaningful discreet data. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to customize the research methodology to suit the research questions articulated.

At the beginning of this study, theoretical positions on the research questions addressed in the study were investigated through extensive literature review so that gain a prior in depth knowledge . This extensive literature review included investigating the following: i). brand and brand Equity

former and cotemporary state, ii). the type of existing Social Media and their current reach, iii). The Social Media role and it influence in the general marketing strategies, iv). The challenges and opportunities Social Media has and v). the existing models and approaches used for adoption and implementation of Social Media as a marketing tool

The statistical generalizations from the survey were combined with findings from the observation of organizations' activities on Social Media platforms to make analytical generalizations. The findings from the study were then discussed in the light of the theoretical positions found from the literature review.

3.2 Type of Data and Source

This research based on the design uses both qualitative and quantitative data types. The data sources of this study were both primary and secondary. As Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon (2002) pointed regarding the type and source of data this study primary first hand data was collected for the first time from the business organizations though online survey, questionnaire and observation. Secondary data which is previously gathered for some other purpose was gathered from published and unpublished literatures, internet, newspapers, and Social Media sites. Both data sources provide the background knowledge that was used to design the data collection instruments.

3.3 Sample Design

There are two sample designs which can be used; these are probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Due to constraints such as time, cost and objectives of the research study there are circumstances when it is not feasible to adopt a random process of selection and in those circumstances usually non-probabilistic sampling is adopted (Singh, 2002). Hence, a non-probability sampling technique was employ under which the inquiry purposively chosen the particular units and it allowed the researcher to gather information quickly and in an inexpensive way. Non-Probability sampling method is classified in to two types: accidental and purposive (Singh, 2002). The research at had used a purposive sampling. In this case purposive sampling can be very useful for situations where you need to reach a targeted sample quickly (Singh, 2002).

Purposive sampling involves selecting subjects who are more advantageously placed or in the best position to provide the information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). In this research since Social Media is at its preliminary level, only few organizations are using Social Media and digital fields, thus a limited number of respondents were available for the researcher. The survey samples are competent and contribute new ideas. Therefore, the researcher carefully selected the sample respondents to ensure a representation of different types of experience. Thus the researcher used different organizations social media marketers, marketing managers or officers, brand or product managers and any decision makers in related to marketing and communication who were conveniently available and possessed the necessary facts and information required in the research. Organization was selected based on the following criteria:

- they are operating in their own brand and their brand could operate either locally or internationally;
- they had at least one Social Media presence on any Social Media platforms; and
- finally organization without Social Media marketing and doesn't exist in any kind of Social Media platforms.

3.3.1 Target Population and Sample Frame

A population is a group of individuals, objects, or items from among which samples are taken for measurement (Singh, 2002). Target population is the complete group of individuals or companies that the researcher wishes to investigate. It is defined in terms of availability of elements, time frame, geographical boundaries and topic of interest (Hair, 2007 and Sekaran & Bougie 2010). Using sampling decision model (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2002) this study population is defined as business companies both service provider and manufacturing business operating in their own brand. In short companies with brand. The sampling frame is defined as the frame of entities from which sampling units are selected for a survey (Singh, 2002). The sample frame was derived from this study target population that are existed in at least on one Social Media platforms. Social Media presence used as sample frame characteristics. The characteristics of the sample frame are extremely important in designing the data-gathering instrument (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2002).

The organizations participated in the study were those based in Addis Ababa and who have a social media marketing. These key informants were used as they are assumed to have up to date, complete and detailed information about the Social Media and Social Media marketing in Ethiopia. They were also assumed to be more experienced in SSM.

3.3.2 Sample Size

Deciding the size of the sample, among scholars is a flexible matter, meaning the researcher can use any number depending on the cost and availability of funds and time and participants. Singh & Nath, (2005) add that there is no specific number or percentage that determines the size of an adequate sample as long as it is a representation of the targeted population. However, a greater number is encouraged (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). After extensively researched on different social media platforms and identify the organizations based in Ethiopia that are exist at least one Social Media platform as well as organization listed on social bakers⁵ operating on their own brand both locally and internationally. The researcher aimed to use a total of 45 sample units but only 41 are actually participated in this study. The 40 organizations operating in their own brand and that have existed at least in one social media were drawn. However 26 organizations were responded to the invitation to participate in the research. In this sense, internet connection and personal email address represented an indispensable requirement for participating in the online survey. Additional 10 samples were used in the qualitative observation by the researched.

Finally, 5 purposefully selected sample companies that don't exist in any Social Media as well as doesn't have SMM drawn purposively. It was presumed that they had no experience with SM & SMM. It is mainly to know their perceptions towards the social media marketing. This was done to reduce biased opinion on the position of Social Media marketing expected roles on brand equity form new entrants.

At the survey and observation study level the business organizations in different sectors are used as the unit of analysis. This allowed the researcher to make analytic generalizations on the research issues addressed in this study. These units of analysis were social media marketers, marketing managers or officers, brand or product managers and any in marketing department and communication who

⁵ <http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-pages/brands/country/ethiopia/>

were conveniently available and possessed the necessary facts and information required for the research. It was presumed that these employees have direct communication with the customers and have an in-depth knowledge on their organizations' approach to adoption and implementation of Social Media Marketing.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

The study used both primary and secondary data types accordingly the primary data were collected using survey and observation which was used to identify and evaluate the roles of Social Media marketing perceived to be playing in the brand equity building. The secondary data, on the other hand, were collected from existing literatures with extensive review.

3.4.1 Survey

A Survey is a systematic way of collecting data by obtaining opinions, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs or answers from selected respondents in order to understand the group or population represented (Grinnell, 1997; Fowler, 2009). Survey instruments can be broadly classified into two categories: (i) questionnaires and (ii) interviews (Singh, 2007). As stated before a survey was conducted in this study. It embedded in the descriptive study using online and paper questionnaire. The qualitative survey was on those organizations' having Social Media marketing as units of analysis. The design of the questionnaire was informed by the findings of the literature review. A questionnaire is the main type of data-gathering instrument in descriptive research designs (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2002). Therefore, qualitative data collected through a structure questionnaire with online google survey for organizations with social media marketing as well as paper based questionnaires for organization without social media marketing (with traditional marketing communications) (see Annex C).

The online electronic version questionnaire developed for Social Media users also transformed to paper based. These combinations helped the study flexible data collection and relax the choice for respondent's preferences. A questionnaire is almost always self-administered, allowing respondents to fill them out themselves. All the researcher has to do is to arrange for the delivery and collection of the questionnaires (Singh, 2007). Therefore, after the online questionnaire

developed and 5 pre-tested was carried out by friends and marketing expert colleagues. The purpose of the pre-test was to refine the questions to check that respondents clearly understand them, to check the questions' validity and that reliable data will be collected (Saunders et al., 2009). The web site link was sent directly to the each of the organization to the relevant respondents. The questionnaire has two sections. The first section (Section A) used to collected general data about the organization and respondents and brand specific information. The second section (Section B) of the questionnaire in survey was used to identify the roles and opportunities presented by Social Media Marketing and to evaluate the role Social Media Marketing should play in the integrated marketing communication and brand equity from the organizations' perspective. Finally to ascertain how organizations are currently adopting and implementing Social Media marketing.

The second questionnaire which developed and administer for organization without social media has also two sections. The first section (Section A) used to collected general data about the organization and brand specific information. The second section (Section B) was used to the organization familiarity and perception toward social media marketing and their future plans on social media marketing.

Both the online and paper questionnaire and observation was conducted from mid-March to mid-April 2014. The online questionnaire was sent out to 30 organizations and 21 replies within the deadline. Five paper questionnaire were also spread to those target group preferred the printed version and all of filled and replay. The google online survey⁶ tool offer great ways to create the questionnaire, collect and store information with easy and fast manner for the researcher to administer and capture the results freely.

3.4.2 Observation

A combination of the theoretical foundations from the literature review and the organizations who could not participate in the research survey leads the design of quantitative data collection through direct observation. Direct observation carried out by looking for organizations Social Media platforms (See Annex B). The observation was considered to identify the number and type of

⁶ Google survey or Google Forms is a useful tool to plan events, send survey, or collect other information in and easy, streamlined way. It is connected to a google spreadsheet and responses will automatically be sent to the spreadsheet. <https://support.google.com/docs/answer/87809?hl=en>

Social Media platforms a single organization uses and to relate the marketing communication tool performance. This was done through observing Social Media profiles of the organization on platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google+. The observation was guide by pre developed guideline (See Annex B) specifically designed for this research. However, whenever additional information's related to the study found during the observation also included.

3.4.3 Secondary Data Collection

For the secondary data collection part the researcher used internet and organization report. As Robert Stevens & David (2002) pointed out that the Web has become the first, and too often the only, source to be used by the marketing researcher in search of pertinent secondary data and conduct related literature review. After different secondary data searched and evaluated using nine sequential steps (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2002) each secondary data in the context of this research objective relevant data was sorted and added to the literature review chapter.

3.5 Response Bias and Data Clearing

Response bias is one of the most common phenomenon, which is observed during data collection As much information as possible should be collected about non-responders to research in order that the differences between responders and non-responders to a research study can be analyzed, and the extent of any resulting bias assessed (Singh, 2007). In order to address this issue the researcher mainly used close ended questions combined with adding mandatory field on the online survey and rigorous checking and comparing the respondent's data of the non-responders. Once the data has been collected and stored in computer readable form, the next task were to eliminate the more obvious errors that was have occurred during the data entry (collection), coding and input stages (Singh, 2007). The researcher has cross check all missing values, skips, range checks and inconsistency before categorizing and analyzing data.

3.6 Data Processing and Analysis

After all the data collected the data was coded, categorized, classified and presented in the tabulated form, observation reports, bar charts and tables. As Miles & Huberman in Sekaran &

Bougie, (2010) pointed out agree on the notion that there are three stages involved in data analysis, which are data reduction, data display and drawing and verification. Since the data collected was quantitative and qualitative, different methods were used in analyzing the data. Analysis of qualitative data contains three steps roughly description, systematization and categorization of the existing data to select the most important parts and at last, combining planning, collecting of data and analysis (Jacobsen, 2002).

3.6.1 Descriptive Statistics

For empirical findings from the questionnaires it was categorized and tabulated. Ryen (2004) claims, it is necessary to put the empirical data into categories to make it possible to analyze. These procedures were followed during the data analysis process.

In the quantitative data analysis a descriptive statistics frequency, mean and standard deviation are used to analyze data from questionnaire and online survey. These include the numerical mean and median, graphical and tabular techniques for organizing analyzing and presenting data. In addition, frequency and measure of central tendencies from which the percentages, the cumulative percentage of occurrences and the typical or average value of distributions indicated, calculated and analyzed for the general parts, type of social media usages, ascertaining the position of social media marketing role and the position of social media marketing on brand equity.

In analyzing quantitative data, a statistical software program, SPSS (version 16.0) was used.

3.6.2 Regression Analysis

The aim of regression analysis is to identify the existence of the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. In this study, that is the relationships between brand equity and its four dimensions. Moreover, this statistical method also evaluates the impacts of those variables towards the brand equity. Specifically, linear regression was used to analyze the strength of those relationships by the coefficient of determination and the multiple correlation coefficients.

3.6.3 Content Analysis

In analyzing qualitative data from the observation, open ended questions in questionnaires and online survey content analysis were used. Content analysis ask question about the content. Content analysis is an observational research method used to systematically evaluate the symbolic contents of all forms of recorded communication (text or word document) (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

A researcher would first look at where the information was release, the date it was release and the circulation and readership of the information. Essentially content analysis is the method of categorizing content to find critical information within the language. It can be done with data reduction, questionnaires, by using a checklist, coding or other form of qualitative or quantitative data analysis. This information can be used to determine a specific perspective and is used for a variety of purposes. However, this data may be skewed by the researcher and how they interact during data collection when using qualitative data.⁷

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This research carried out for academic purpose. Therefore ethical consideration procedures were followed. The research obtained approval from the Addis Ababa University School of Commerce and this has been supported with official university support letter (See Annex D). In which it indicates the purpose of the study and what was expected from the participants during the study.

In order to protect and respect all participant' anonymity and privacy has offered to all respondents. It is further been reassured that all the information given handled online in a secured google drive and all the paper questionnaires solely handled by the researcher. Participation was voluntary and confidential. Furthermore, participants were informed that they would get feedback upon their request either to the researcher or department head. Participants were allowed to terminate their participation if they feel uncomfortable and to answer the questions as truthfully as they could. Each email and paper questionnaire had a cover letter with all the above details.

⁷ <http://www.contentanalysis.org/>

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the methodology used to collect data. The aim of this chapter is to present the responses of the respondents, from organizations having social media marketing and from organization without social media marketing in identifying the roles of Social Media marketing in the strong brand equity.

4.2 Demographic Data

In this section the researcher discusses the demographic data of all the targeted population samples, Organization and unit of analysis (respondents)

4.2.1 Organizations Demographic Data

The sample from the target population survey comprised of 41 organizations operating in their own brand and existed at least on one social media of which 26 participated in online survey and the remaining 10 used for qualitative observation. Finally, 5 organization operating with their own brand but doesn't have social media are included in this study. The general demographic indicates that of the 9 of the organization are in information technology industry which is the highest followed by Media and Communication with 8 respondents. Education sector is nonexistence. Moreover, of the total 4 organization operates in two industries. When it comes to the respondents brand area of operation 51% of respondents brand operates domestically, the remaining 49% of the respondents brand operate both domestically and internationally. The organization demographic data characterized as follows:

Table 4. 1 Demographic Characteristics of the organizations

Sample N=41

Items	Type of Industry	Frequency	Percentage
Industry	Food & Beverage ¹	4	10%
	Financial Institution ²	2	5%
	Hotel & restaurants ³	5	12%
	Information Technology ⁴	9	22%
	Manufacturing ⁵	4	10%
	Media and Telecommunications ⁶	8	20%
	Retailing ⁷	5	12%
	Transportation ⁸	1	2%
	Education ⁹	0	0%
	Health Care ¹⁰	2	5%
	Other ¹¹	5	12%
	Domestic only	21	51%

Area of Operation	International only	0	0%
	Both	20	49%
Size of Employee	1 to 10	4	10%
	11 to 50	17	41%
	51 to 150	20	49%
	More than 151	7	17%
Organization with website	Yes	37	90%
	No	4	10%

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.2.2 Respondents Demographic Data

The sample from the business organization participated in the online survey and questionnaire comprised of 31 respondents which were characterized as 68% (n=21) were Males, 32% (n=10) were Females. Of the 31 respondents 48% (n=15) were between 26-36 years old and the remaining 52% were of the age group 37 to 50.

The respondents job level in the organization structure were 29% (n=9) Top, 61% (19) Middle and only 10% (n=3) were Lower level. The researcher targeted marketing department and designations of the respondent's in marketing department were 90% and 10% (n=3) are not in the marketing department. This gave the study a high representation of marketing employee's respondents. The respondents who are in the marketing position and participated in the study have more than 2 year of experience in marketing position. Respondents position title in the organization include CEO, General Manager Commercial Manager, Marketing Manager & Officer, Brand Management, Sales Person, Online Marketer, Social Media and Communication officer. Table 5 below shows the summary of the demographic data of the organizations.

Table 4. 2Demographic Characteristics of the Organization respondents

Sample N=31

Item	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	68%
	Female	10	32%
Age	18-25	0	0%
	26-36	15	48%

	37-50	16	52%
	Above 51	0	0%
Level of Education	Diploma or equivalent	0	0%
	Bachelor or equivalent	14	45%
	Master or equivalent	15	48%
	Doctoral or equivalent	0	0%
	Non responses	2	6%
Level of Job	Top	9	29%
	Middle	19	61%
	Lower	3	10%
Department	Marketing	28	90%
	Other	3	10%
Year of Experience	Less than 1 year	0	0%
	2-5 years	12	39%
	6-10 years	16	52%
	More than 10 years	0	0%
	Non responses	3	10%

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.3 Type of Social Media and the extent Social Media used for marketing by organizations

In this section results on which type of social media platforms are used and the extent to which Social Media marketing is being used in organization are presented. This aims to establish the type of Social Media platform largely used and the position of Social Media in the marketing communication among in the organizations.

4.3.1 Social Media Marketing Communication tools used by Organizations

The researcher first establishes if Social Media is being used at all the organization. The respondents were given the five elements of the marketing communication tools together with social media and additional with other option to identify the marketing communication mix elements which are still being used for marketing purposes. Results in Figure 4.1 indicate that all respondent's use advertising and Social Media Marketing in their marketing communication mix.

Furthermore 13 respondents were indicated they are using internet marketing by choosing the other option.

The following graph gave the number of respondents on the usage of marketing communication elements for marketing purposes.

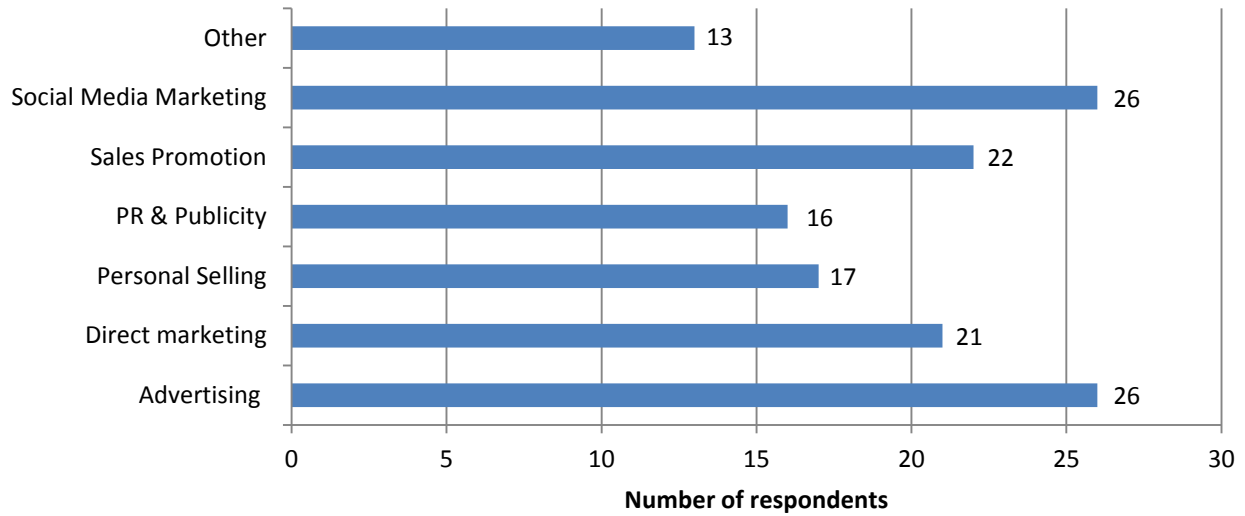


Figure 4. 1 Marketing Communication Tools Used by the Organization

4.3.2 Importance of marketing communication tool in the organizations

After marketing communication tools used by the organizations respondents were asked how important each marketing communication tool in their organization and rank them accordingly. The researcher used to check the exact position of Social Media in the marketing communication. Eventually, Social Media Marketing ranked 4th place in their marketing communication mix. In the contrary advertising ranked as 1st in the marketing communication tool used in their organization.

The following table will give percentages of the usage of marketing communication elements for marketing purposes.

Table 4. 3 Importance of marketing communication tool in the organizations

Tools	Rank of marketing communication tools based on importance						Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	

	Count	Rank * Count	Count	Rank * Count	Count	Rank * Count	Count	Rank * Count	Count	Rank * Count	Count	Rank * Count	
Advertising	20	20	3	6	2	9	0	0	1	5	0	0	40
Direct marketing	3	3	5	10	9	27	6	24	3	15	0	0	79
Personal Selling	1	1	2	2	1	3	5	20	11	55	6	36	117
PR & Publicity	0	0	3	6	1	3	6	24	6	30	10	60	123
Sales Promotion	0	0	11	22	6	18	5	20	3	15	0	0	75
Social Media Marketing	2	2	3	6	7	21	8	32	6	30	0	0	91

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.3.3 Commonly used social media platforms by organization

Respondents were asked to give the exact Social Media platforms their organization use for marketing purposes. Findings in Figure 4.2 revealed that among the social media platforms listed facebook overwhelmingly being used by all the respondents followed by 62% Twitter and 46% YouTube. These tools are mostly used for advertising.

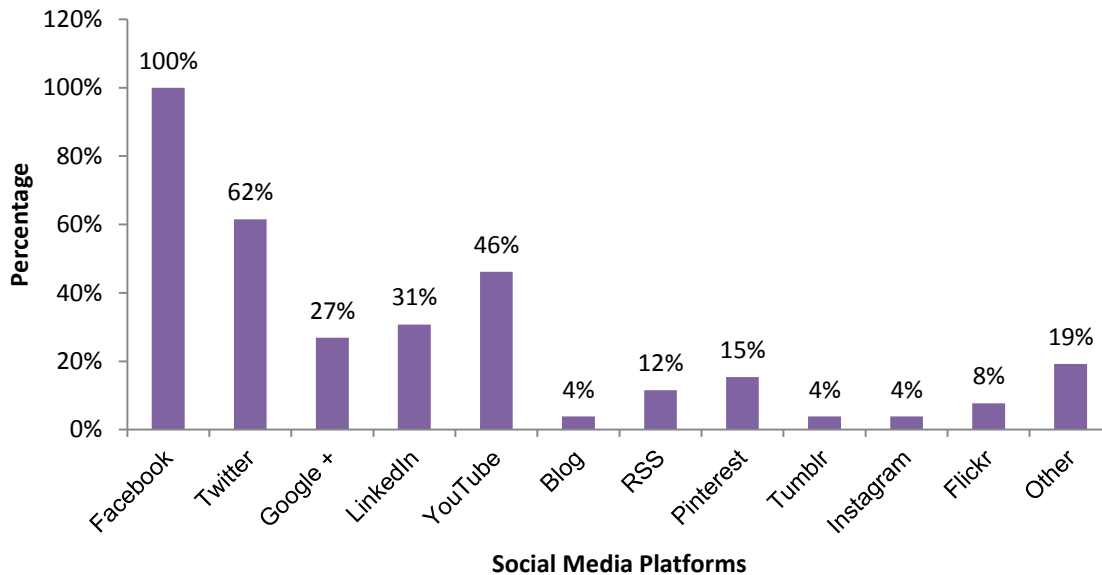


Figure 4. 2 Summary of Social Media used by the respondents

4.3.4 Organization Years of Using Social Media Marketing

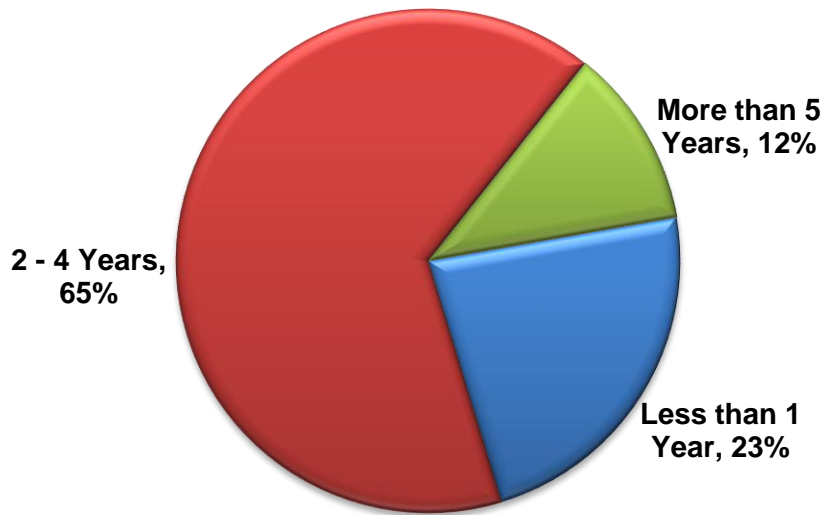


Figure 4. 3 Organizations Years of using Social Media Marketing

Using a year range respondents were asked how long their organization has been using social media for marketing purposes. All responded (n=26) answered this question, Of the 26, 20 have been using social media marketing more than two years and the remaining 6 (12%) were start using social media less than a year time. The percentage statistics summary was presented in Figure 4.3 above.

4.3.5 Organizations Social Media marketing arrangement and Management

The organization social media platform arrangement for their customers and by whom it was managed were asked. Surprisingly 77% indicated that they have a dedicated social media marketing platform for their customers in Ethiopia, of course, of which 19% (n=5) are using both the regional or global social media platforms as well for their customers in Ethiopia. And of the total respondents 23% of the organization are using regional and/or global social media platform for their customers in Ethiopia. Table 4.4 shows the detail the summary.

Table 4. 4 Organizations Social Media Marketing Platform Arrangement for Ethiopian Customers

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Has a dedicated page for Ethiopian customers only	15	58%
Regional or global page only	6	23%
Both	5	19%

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

Table 4. 5 Organizations Social Media Marketing Platform Management

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Social Media Marketer Employee	10	38%
Marketing Employee	14	54%
Outsourced	1	4%
Social Media and Marketing Employee	1	4%

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

After the organization social media arrangement for Ethiopian customers asked the respondents asked who is in charge of their organization Social Media Marketing management or who represent their organization or brand on their social media platforms. The finding revealed shown in the Table 4.5 above 54% of the organization Social Media Marketing management carried out by marketing employees. Surprisingly, only one organization has outsourced its Social Media Marketing management. Similarly only one organization has responded the Social Media Marketing managed by both dedicated Social Media marketer as well as marketing employee.

The previous results showed that most of the organizations have a dedicated social media marketing platform for their customers in Ethiopia. The researcher then moved to check how each type of social media arrangement for Ethiopian customers is being managed by these organizations. The results shown in Table 4.6 below indicate that the 60% of the organizations that uses a regional and/or global social media platform for their customers in Ethiopia was managed by Social Media marketer employee only. Which is less than compared to 67% of the organizations having a dedicated page for Ethiopian customers that managed by marketing employees only.

Results reveal that marketing employees are used mostly manage the social media marketing platforms by 53.8% and Social Media marketer employees 38.5%.

Table 4. 6 Cross Tabulation of Social Media Marketing platform and its management

		Social Media Arrangement for Customers in Ethiopia			Total
		Has a dedicated page for Ethiopian customers only	Use the regional or global page only	A dedicated page and Regional or global page	
Organizations Social Media Marketing Managed by	Marketing Employee Only	Count 10 66.7%	3 50.0%	1 20.0%	14 53.8%
		% within Social Media Marketing platform arrangement for Ethiopian customers			
	Outsourced	Count 1 6.7%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 3.8%
		% within Social Media Marketing platform arrangement for Ethiopian customers			
	Social Media Marketer Employee Only	Count 4 26.7%	3 50.0%	3 60.0%	10 38.5%
	% within Social Media Marketing platform arrangement for Ethiopian customers				
Social Media Marketer and Marketing Employee	Count 0 .0%	0 .0%	1 20.0%	1 3.8%	
	% within Social Media Marketing platform arrangement for Ethiopian customers				
Total	Count 15 100.0%	6 100.0%	5 100.0%	26 100.0%	
	% within Social Media Marketing platform arrangement for Ethiopian customers				

4.3.6 Organizations time commitment and frequency of new contents for social media platforms

The organization time commitment for social media per day was asked. Except one respondent that did not respond the remaining 25 were responded and used for analysis. Accordingly, as shown

Table 4.7, a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 12 hours with an average of 6.24 hours spend per day for social media marketing.

Table 4. 7 Min, Max and Mean of Time spent for social media marketing per day

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Time	25	.15	12.00	6.2460	3.66691
Valid N (listwise)	25				

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

Figure 4.4 shows how frequently organizations create a new content on their social media platforms. 46% (N=12) responded that they create a new contents at least every hour per day of which 42% has a Social Media Marketer employee and spent between 7 to 10 hours per day, 31 % (N=8) of respondents confirms that their Social Media Marketing updated every week. The remaining 19% (N=5) and 4% (N=1) responded that their Social Media Marketing updated monthly and quarterly respectively.

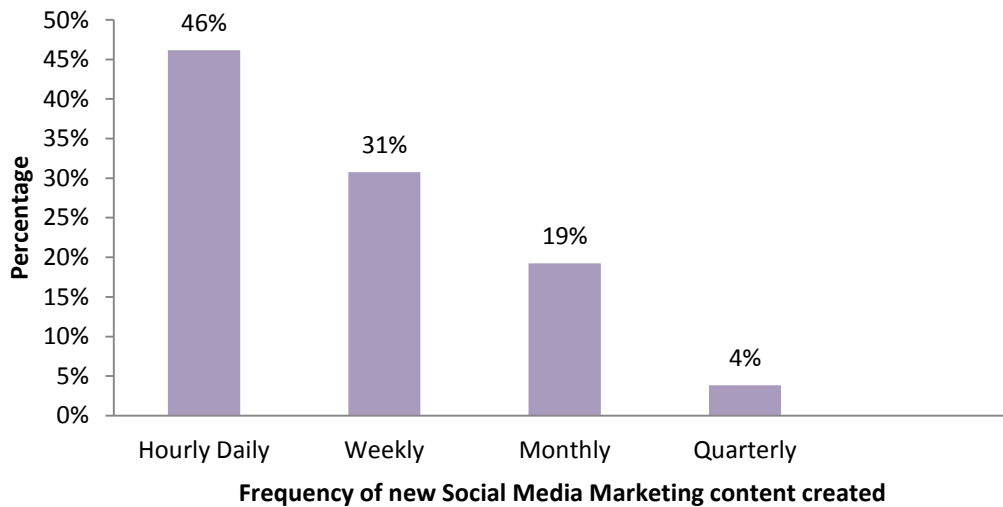


Figure 4. 4 Frequency of new Social Media Marketing content crated by organizations

4.4 Social Media Marketing as Integrated Marketing Communication

4.4.1 The Social Media marketing performance in the organization

The researcher wanted to check the performance of Social Media marketing communication in the organization. The respondents were given a list of possible performance that might apply when implementing social media and were presented on a Likert scale of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The results shown in Table 4.8 reveal that 84.6% of respondents agree that social media marketing is integrated with traditional marketing tools in their organization. 38.4% of the organizations agree that they are using social media marketing as a replacement to the traditional marketing tool. Other interesting finding is that 96.2% disagree that social media is not a passing fad. The detail presented in the table below.

Table 4. 8 The position of Social Media in the Marketing Communication

Item	Response	SA* (5)	A (4)	N (3)	Ds (2)	SDS (1)	Total
Social Media is used as a replacement to the traditional marketing tool.	Freque.	1	9	3	12	1	26
	%	3.8	34.6	11.5	46.2	3.8	100
Social Media is integrated with traditional marketing tools.	Freque.	4	18	2	2	0	26
	%	15.4	69	7.7	7.7	0	100
Social Media is a passing fad.	Freque.	0	0	1	8	17	26
	%	0	0	3.8	30.8	65.4	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

*SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N=Neutral DS=Disagree SDS=Strongly Disagree

4.4.2 How Organization integrates SMM with each traditional marketing tools

The previous results showed that Social Media marketing is integrated in to existing marketing communication mix in the organization. The researcher then moved to check the level of Social Media marketing integration with each traditional marketing communication tools in the organization. The results shown in Table 4.9 reveal that 73.1% of respondents agree that social media integrated with advertising in their organization followed by sales promotion and PR with

53.8 % and 46.2% respectively. Among the communication mix direct marketing is the least integrated with Social Media as depicted in the detail analysis 53.8% respondents indicate that they disagree social media is integrated with direct marketing in their organization.

Table 4. 9 Level of Social Media integration with existing marketing communication

Item	Response	SA* (5)	A (4)	N (3)	Ds (2)	SDS (1)	Total
Integrate social media with advertising Integrate Social media with PR	Freque.	0	19	0	2	5	26
	%	0	73.1	0	7.2	19.2	100
Integrate social media with personal selling Integrate social media with sales promotion	Freque.	2	12	2	10	0	26
	%	7.7	46.2	7.7	38.5	0	100
Integrate social media with direct marketing Integrate social media with advertising	Freque.	1	8	4	12	1	26
	%	3.8	30.8	15.4	46.2	3.8	100
Integrate Social media with PR Integrate social media with personal selling	Freque.	0	14	2	8	0	26
	%	0	53.8	7.7	30.8	0	100
Integrate social media with sales promotion	Freque.	0	8	4	14	0	26
	%	0	30.8	15.4	53.8	0	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.4.3 Important factors to incorporate SMM into integrated marketing communications

Results from survey in Table 4.10 revealed that both long term customer relationship and customer engagement are the most important factors considered by organization while incorporating social media into integrated marketing communications with response rate of 65.4%. Brand building 57.7% and Social Media presence 46.2% on the other hand considered the second and third most important factors in incorporating social media in to integrated marketing communication. By 73.1% of the respondents responded that know how for social media marketing elements is important for incorporating into organizations integrated marketing communication. Finally, saving cost considered as not important by 26.9% is higher than those responded least important 19.2 %.

Table 4. 10 Important factors considered by organization while incorporating SMM in to IMC

	Most Important		Important		Indifferent		Least Important		Not Important		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Brand Building	15	57.7	10	38.5	1	3.8	0	0	0	0	26	100
Long term customer relationship	17	65.4	8	30.8	1	3.8	0	0	0	0	26	100
Customer engagement	17	65.4	8	30.8	0	0	0	0	1	3.8	26	100
Social Media presence	12	46.2	14	53.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	100
Know how	5	19.2	19	73.1	0	0	2	7.7	0	0	26	100
Saving Cost	0	0	8	30.8	2	7.7	5	19.2	7	26.9	26	100
Easy way of communication	0	0	11	42.3	1	3.8	2	7.7	3	11.5	26	100

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.5 Social Media marketing roles and importance's on brand equity

In this section the results of social media marketing role in brand equity through the organization objectives to use social media marketing, social media contents objective, and the level of organization's Social Media marketing effectiveness first analyzed. Organizations objective for Using Social Media Marketing

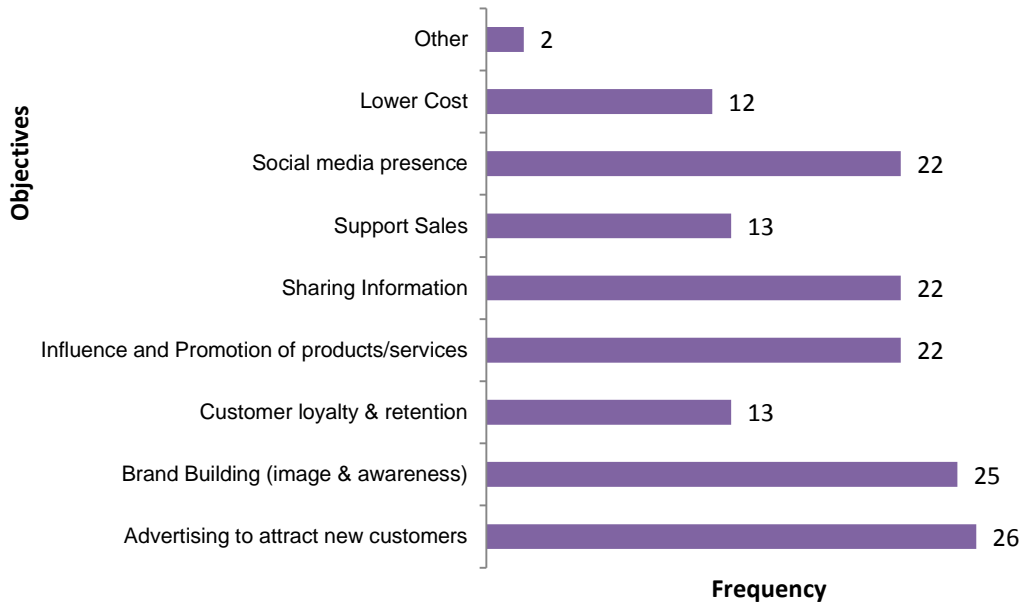


Figure 4. 5 Organization objectives for using Social Media Marketing

Respondents were given a list of possible objectives of using social media marketing and were asked to select all that applied in their organization. Figure 4.5 above shows the frequency for each type of objective organizations aim to achieve using social media marketing. The result from the survey advertising to attract new customers was considered by all (26) respondents, influence & promotion of products/services, social media presence and sharing information were considered by 22 respondents. 2 respondents were further added other objectives using social media marketing in their organization.

4.5.1 Effectiveness of SMM compared to traditional one for brand awareness and image

Out of a scale between 1 (not effective) to 5 (very effective), the respondents indicated that their social media marketing is effective by 46.2% compared to existing marketing communication for brand awareness and image. Table 4.12 which shows the result further checked by the central tendency median and mode resulted 4. Those responded low effective is higher 15.4% than those responded (3.8%) their social media marketing is not effective all for brand awareness and image compared to existing traditional marketing communications.

Table 4. 11 Summary of the effectiveness of Social Media Marketing for brand awareness and image

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1. Not Effective	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
2. Low Effective	4	15.4	15.4	19.2
3. Moderate	4	15.4	15.4	34.6
4. Effective	12	46.2	46.2	80.8
5. Very Effective	5	19.2	19.2	100.0
Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

Table 4. 12 Summary of the effectiveness of Social Media Marketing for brand awareness & image

N	Valid	26
	Missing	0
	Median	4.00
	Mode	4
	Std. Deviation	1.098

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.5.2 Benefits of social media to brand

Having established the effectiveness level, the researcher moved to identify the benefits of Social Media is playing in brands. To achieve this, organizations were given various benefits of Social Media and were asked which of them applies to their brands. Figure 4.6 below shows the results.

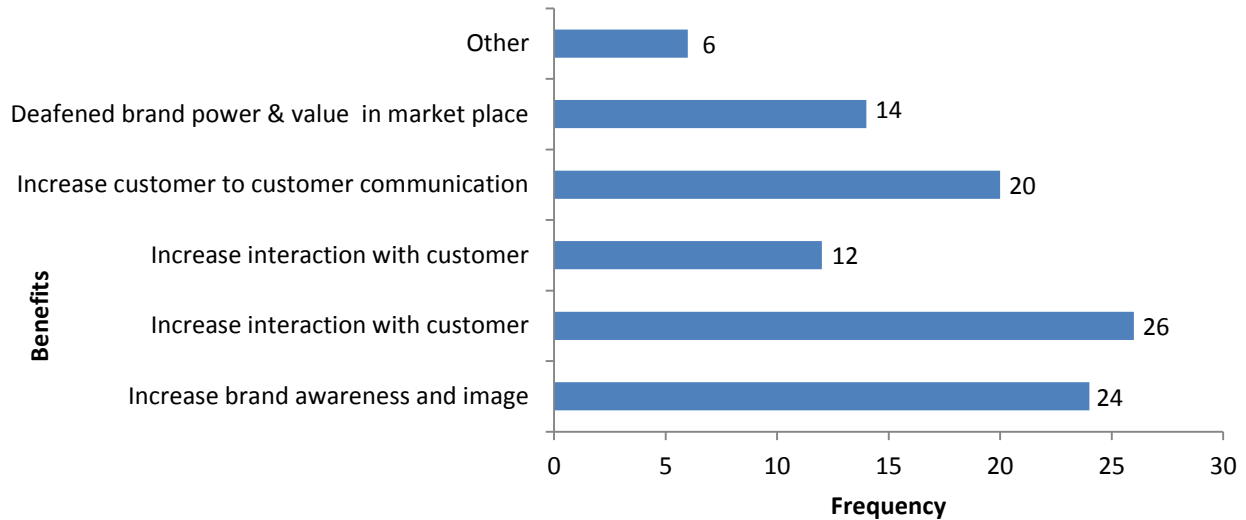


Figure 4. 6 Benefits of social media marketing apply to organizations brand

4.5.3 Social media marketing reflects brand standards

The researcher asked the respondents their level of agreement by which their social media marketing whether reflects the brand standards. The finding from the analysis as shown in Table 4.13 reveal that 57.7% (N=15) strongly agree, 30.8% agree and 30.8% (N=3) were neutral. Therefore, these finding shows 88.5% of social media marketing reflects brand standards.

Table 4. 13 The level of agreement that Social Media Marketing reflects brand standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	8	30.8	30.8	30.8
Neutral	3	11.5	11.5	42.3
Strongly Agree	15	57.7	57.7	100.0
Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.5.4 Organizations social media marketing for building strong brand equity

According to the survey results majority of the organization answered their agreement to their organization's social media marketing campaigns are concerned with building brand equity. As the Table 4.14 below shows, 23.1% of the respondents strongly agree, 30% of the respondents

agree, 23.1% were neutral and 3.8% respondents disagree. One can see that in the percentage of respondents that agree with organization's social media marketing campaigns are concerned with building brand equity is much higher than those neutral and disagree combined.

Table 4. 14 Organizations social media marketing for building strong brand equity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	8	30.8	30.8	30.8
Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	34.6
Neutral	6	23.1	23.1	57.7
Strongly Agree	5	19.2	19.2	76.9
Strongly Disagree	6	23.1	23.1	100.0
Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.6 Social Media Marketing Strategy

This sub chapter concentrates on social media marketing strategy. The researcher investigates organization running their social media marketing with predefined strategies, what are the important factors should be considered for the development of Social Media strategy specific to their organization and its culture, organizations monitor and measure their Social Media marketing and the successes or failures of Social media marketing programs fully understood before they are changed to updates their Social Media marketing.

4.6.1 Organizations with Social Media Marketing Strategy

Organizations were asked if they have Social Media marketing strategy that guides them when implementing Social Media marketing. All responded to this question. Of the 65% or 17 responded that they have Social Media Marketing Strategies on how it should be implemented and managed while 31% were responded they don't have any strategy and only one responded that not sure. The main points came from the open ended questions why organizations don't have social media are discussed in the qualitative section.

Table 4. 15 Organization with Social Media Marketing Strategy

	Frequency	Percent
No	8	31%
Not sure	1	4%
Yes	17	65%
Total	26	100%

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.6.2 Factors organizations consider while designing social media marketing strategy

Among the factors considered by organizations while designing social media marketing strategy target audience is remarkably the most important with high percentages 76.9% followed by marketing objective 57.7% and organization objective 42.3%. Cost of running social media marketing and existing marketing communication analysis was among the factors considered least important with 38.5% and 34.6%. Other interesting finding from the survey as indicated in Table 4.16 was monitoring and measuring effectiveness of social media marketing considered as important factor by 76.9% of the respondents for designing social media marketing strategy. The table below shows the summary from the survey.

Table 4. 16 Summary of the importance of different factors for designing social media marketing

	Most Important		Important		Indifferent		Least Important		Not Important		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Organization Objective	11	42.3	13	50	1	3.8	1	3.8	0	0	26	100
Marketing Objective	15	57.7	10	38.5	1	3.8			0	0	26	100
Existing Marketing Communication Analysis	3	11.5	10	38.5	4	15.4	9	34.6	0	0	26	100
Target Audience	20	76.9	5	19.2	1	3.8			0	0	26	100
Availability of Expertise	4	15.4	17	65.4	1	3.8	4	15.4	0	0	26	100
Cost	2	7.7	13	50	1	3.8	10	38.5	0	0	26	100

Monitoring and Measuring effectiveness	1	3.8	20	76.9	3	11.5	2	7.7	0	0	26	100
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Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.6.3 Organizations monitor and measure their Social Media marketing

Using the yes or no options the researcher extrapolated information regarding organizations that monitor and measure their social media marketing performance. In addition using open ended option given to organization answered yes and the main points are discussed in the qualitative section. The figure below summarizes the results.

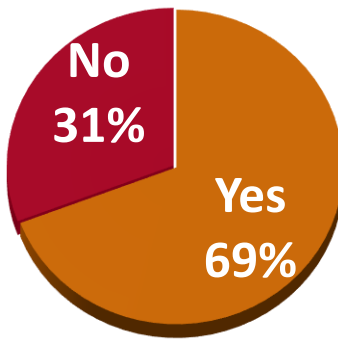


Figure 4. 7 Percentage of organizations that monitor and measure Social Media Marketing performance

4.6.4 Organization updates their Social Media marketing program

According to the analysis form the respondents, the percentage of organizations agree i.e 50% with updating their social media marketing program to keep current is much higher than those disagree and neutral with 12% and 8% respectively. Figure 4.8 summaries the finding from the analysis.

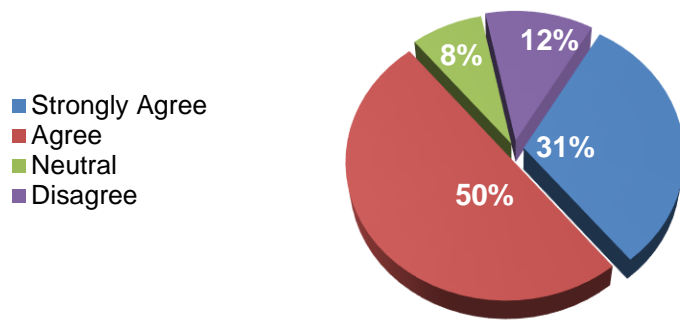


Figure 4. 8 Percentage of organization that updates their Social Media marketing program

4.6.5 Successes or failures of SMM programs fully understood before it's changed

After the researcher identify the percentage of organizations response whether they update social media marketing program turn the intention that successes or failures of the programs are understood before they are changed. To investigate this using the Likert scale respondents were asked whether the organizations fully understand the successes or failures of their Social Media marketing programs is fully understood before they change. In addition using open ended option given to organization answered yes and the main points are discussed in the qualitative section. The figure below summarizes the results.

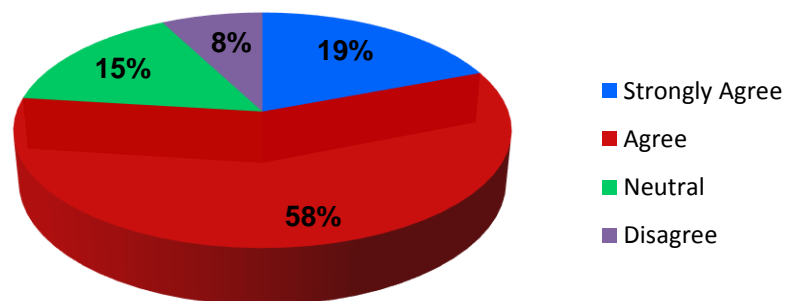


Figure 4. 9 Summary of Organizations understood status of SMM before it's changed

The result indicates that 77% of the respondents responded that their organizations fully understand the successes or failures of their Social Media marketing programs is fully understood before they change. Of which, as shown above, 19% strongly agrees.

In the Table 4.17 the detail analysis of cross tabulation on organization updates their SMM by Successes or failures of SMM programs understood before it's changed. According to this statistical summary that agrees that they understand the successes or failures of SMM program 10 also agree in updates their social SMM.

Table 4. 17 Cross tabulation of organization updates their SMM by Organization understood the SMM programs before it's changed

Count		Successes or failures of SMM programs fully understood before they are changed				Total
		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree	
Organization updates their Social Media marketing program	Agree	10	1	2	0	13
	Disagree	1	1	1	0	3
	Neutral	1	0	1	0	2
	Strongly Agree	3	0	0	5	8
Total		15	2	4	5	26

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.7 Social Media marketing Challenges, Level of Risk and Opportunities

4.7.1 Social Media marketing perceived challenges

Organizations without social media (with traditional marketing tools) have been asked what their familiarity with social media marketing and challenges hinder the organizations for not using social media marketing. An overwhelmingly 4 respondents are very familiar with social media. Out of the total respondents, half mentioned that they perceived more than three challenges for not using social media. 80% of the respondent's perceived lack of man power is as the major challenge for not adding social media marketing into organizations marketing communication.

Table 4. 18 Familiar with the term Social Media Marketing among non-social media users

	Count	Percentage
Very familiar	4	80%
Heard of it	1	10%
Never heard of it	0	0

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

Table 4.19 Factors considered as challenges for not using social media by organization

Factors	Count	Percentage
Lack of man power	4	33
Risk Involved	0	0
Not relevant	3	25
Lack of information	1	0.08
Inadequate Financial Resources	1	0.08
Uncommon	2	0.16
Lack of Time	0	0
Difficult to Monitoring and Measurement	0	0
Management perception	1	0.08
Other please Specify:	0	0

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.7.2 Level of risk involved in launching and running social media marketing into IMC

The level of risk involved in launching and running social media marketing in to organizations integrated marketing communications has no risk by 12% of the respondents. 50% of the respondents consider social media is less risky. These indicate that in general social media is considered less risky to lunch and run in the integrated marketing communication. Table 4.19 summaries the results from the survey.

Table 4. 19 Response rate on level of risk involved in launching and running Social Media Marketing

	No Risks	Less Risky	Moderate	Risky	Total
Count	3	13	9	1	26
Percentage	12%	50%	35%	4%	100%

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

4.7.3 Organizations plans to add other social media platforms

Most of the organizations using social media responded they have no plan to add another social media platform in to existing social media marketing in the coming two years. 42% of the respondents confirmed this. The percentage of responded yes is higher compared to those are not sure with 35% and 23%.

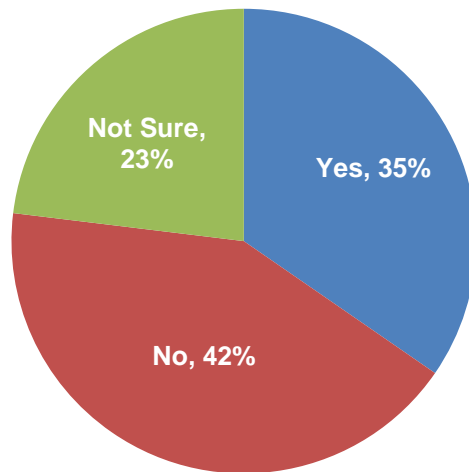


Figure 4. 10 Summary of organizations plans to add social media platforms

4.8 Regression and correlation analysis

The results of the regression analysis demonstrate how much of the variance in the company brand equity the independent variable explain. Regression analysis is conducted separately for brand equity comes from social media marketing measures. The independent variable is are added in two blocks into the regression. The first block includes only social media marketing for brand awareness and image and the second block includes social media marketing for customers brand loyalty

R-square is the coefficient of multiple determinations. It describes how big part of the dependent variable is explained by the set of independent variables selected in the regression equation (0.0 or 0% is low and 1.0 or 100% is high). Here adjusted R-square is reported. It is a modification of

R-square that adjusts for the number of terms in a model. R-square increases when a new term is added to a model, whereas adjusted R-square increases only if the new term improves the model more than would be expected by chance. Adjusted R-square is generally considered to be a more accurate goodness-of-fit measure than R-square.

The Model Summary table below presents the strength of relationship between the Social Media Marketing and dependent variable brand equity. The R Squared value is 0.776. This means that approximately 78% of the variability of Brand Equity is accounted for by the variables in the model.

Table 4.20 Model Table

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.881	.776	.774	.45513

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

Table 4.21 ANOVA Table Dependent Variable

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	165.942	2	82.971	400.557	.000
Residual	47.849	231	.207		
Total	213.792	233			

Source: Survey Questionnaire (2014)

ANOVA is a statistic technique for examining the differences between two or more populations. The ANOVA table above shows that the p-values are all less than 0.05 (0.000), which means the model is fitted and can be derived for the data set.

4.9 Qualitative Observation

In observational research part of this study the researcher observes 10 different organizations (See the detail in Chapter four Organization Demographic Section) existed at least on one social media using structured observation guide (See Annex B) solely for this research.

It is observed that most of the organization has included the social media sharing link in their social media platforms. The organizations have in each social media increasingly attracting their fans and followers and creating a large social media members base. This helps them easy to spread unified contents to all eventually harness the word-of-mouth recommendations about their products and services, and among consumers who write product reviews online, however few observed they share their experiences in their own network.

Based my observation the organizations Social media marketing was center around matching the content with interested audiences as well as stimulating conversation and buzz. Further it is observed that the content can be created from scratch, linked from other social media sources and offline events. The contents contain a variety of content formats that is text, video, photos, graphics, and third party web links. But the key and most common type of contents are text (both in English and Amharic language), photo and video.

The content on the organizations social media platform is about their brand. However their major focuses of the contents are providing information, conversation and advertising. This can go a long way towards building the kind of buzz that result brand equity building. I found this to be an interesting observation. I suppose that if organizations are sharing content in a compelling and wrapper way that brand awareness and image are communicated effectively.

Among the organization observed most of them combine their social media with off-line events and among traditional marketing communications sales promotion is the most integrated one. On the off-line events holidays and entertainment events are the most common one in the social media.

Form the open ended question on the online survey the respondents who responded that they monitor the number of social media members, number and type of visitors, the content likes for facebook: tweets and favorites for twitter and shared by the member or fans.

Finally, Social media instructiveness, easy to use, low cost advantage, availability in different type perceived as an opportunities by the respondents in the online survey.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter gave the research findings from the online survey, questionnaire and the observation. This chapter discusses and summarize the data presented the data Presentation and Analysis chapter. This will be done through the research questions along with the role of Social Media in brand equity literatures. Furthermore, the limitations of the study at hand will also discussed in this chapter.

5.2. The types of social media and the extent SM used for marketing by organizations in Ethiopia

5.2.1. Major type of Social Media platforms being used in Ethiopia for Marketing

Findings from this study and prior studies concur that facebook is still at the top among the social media platforms used for marketing purposes followed by twitter, and it is still growing (Deirdre Bannon, 2012:2013).

This research shows that blogs, tumblr, Instagram and MySpace are the least used tools among the organization, as indicated by Social Media experts and observation. When they are used, they are used more for knowledge sharing, and are then abandoned because of lack of information on how to manage content. This, however, Blogs can be used in marketing by promoting and explaining a company's brand, products and by providing interesting and useful related content to readers (Evans, 2008; Evans and McKee Jake, 2010).

5.2.2. The extent Social Media used for marketing by business organizations in Ethiopia

This research finds out that organizations include social media marketing organizations into their marketing communication. The study suggests that Social Media is not a new element in the Marketing Communication Mix but it acts as an enhancer of each of the existing marketing communication elements. But on the other hand the importance of social media marketing ranked 4th compared to advertising ranked first. The reason for this based on the findings is that social media marketing is in its infancy stage. 88% of organizations use social media less than 4 years and 38% of organizations have dedicated social media marketing experts. This leads marketers to develop strategies and managing contents on Social Media without having full knowledge of how best to use these tools. However, organizations commit larger amount of time per day for social. The research finds out on average organizations spend more than 6.2hours per day with 46% create contents every hour.

5.3. Social Media Integration into Companies Integrated Marketing Communication.

As the main research question this study was tries to establish whether Social Media can be regarded as the sixth element in the Marketing Communication Mix (Advertising, Sales Promotion, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling and Public Relations). The study suggests that Social Media is not a new element in the Marketing Communication, by 84.6% of the organizations social media is integrated with traditional marketing tools. This study showed that Social Media is not a passing fad neither a replacement for any traditional marketing communication tool. Some respondents in this study, however, point out that the position of Social Media is dependent on the company, what it does and what kind of products it offers to a particular market. Accordingly 73.1% agree that they integrates social media in to advertising and consider long term customer relationship and customer engagement as the most important factor they considered before integrating social media marketing in to their marketing communications. Prior studies have expressed different views on how Social Media should be used. According to Mangold & Faulds, (2009), Social Media is a new hybrid element of the promotional mix which still performs the

same role as other elements but which is more advanced because it allows engagement with customers and gives customers control over the brand and the content. Stephen & Galak, (2009) on the other hand view it as a supplement of traditional marketing. Another school of thought views Social Media as a tool that has to be integrated in the marketing communication (Hanna et al., 2011). The current study concurs with this school of thought by Stephen & Galak, (2009) further explain that using Social Media together with traditional media has a great influence on improving marketing performance to ward building strong brand equity. This may therefore explain why organizations in this study advocate the integration of Social Media into the existing marketing communication.

5.4. Role and importance of Social Media Marketing for Brand Awareness & image in Ethiopia

The primary aim of this research was to identify the strategic roles of social media marketing in brand building strong brand equity. Therefore, in this section the researcher will discuss the main aim of the research social media marketing role and importance in brand awareness, image and in building brand equity.

5.4.1. Customer's attraction and engagement role and importance

The research revealed that social media has a customer's attraction and engagement role for a strong brand equity. this indicated by the greater percentage of respondents whose primary objectives of using social media marketing and the content of SMM is to attracted new customers, existing customers engagement to retain customer loyalty by advocating or recognition of fans and their initiative to build brand (image & awareness).

Social media helps to ensure interactivity, i.e. provides an opportunity to maintain conversations among consumers and engage then in content producing and brand equity building (Sashi, 2009).

Kidd (2008) claims that the engagement of organizations in social media and the maintenance of relationships with consumers in virtual environment should be encouraged due to the benefits provided by social media: it helps make the name of organization or brand more popular, gather

supporting community online, enriches organization with insights or created personal histories. If social media properly managed, brand awareness is built and favourable brand image is formed. However, it is important to remember that communication in SM can have the biggest positive impact on brand equity only when the degree of consumer involvement in communication in SM is high. I believe, that the proposed model of brand equity building by employing SM will guarantee a higher consumer involvement in communication.

5.4.2. Branding and two way communication role and importance

A greater population is using social media platforms and the study revealed that social media is used more for advertising and brand building (image & awareness) with 100% & 96%.

Results also show that Social Media plays the role of allowing direct communication between the company and the customers and also gives a platform for customers to communicate with each other. Hoffman & Novak, (1996:7) define this communication as many-to-many communication in this new model, Marketing Communication in the marketing environment. Mangold & Faulds, (2009) agree with this model and with the current study, adding that Social Media allows two-way communication between the organizations and the customers as well as engagement between customers. This direct communication helps to enhance brand equity. The survey result supports this with the benefits of social media marketing to brand. 100% of the respondents are witnessed social media marketing increases interaction with customers. Furthermore, out of the 26 respondents 24 indicated that it increase brand awareness and image.

The increase in customer to customer communication through social media is sought by 80% of the respondents. This finding is validated by Mangold & Faulds, (2009) who posit that the role of Social Media in the marketing communication is to facilitate communication, and the ability to extend traditional word of mouth (WOM) to eWOM through allowing customers to communicate with each other, and its ability to magnify the communication level by adding on conversations.

Organizations often communicate and analyze customer to customer communications of consumers in real time to respond to requests and provide utility/solve customers' problem before its going viral in the form of eWOM. Organization aims to attract fans and advertises information

about upcoming events, which are often supported by the brand and creating an entertaining brand communication.

The research revealed that when brand communication on social media provides a significant new opportunity for marketers to directly communicate and interact with consumers. To influence & promote products and services, deliver unified product/services updates and share related information's. According to the survey results 53% of the organization answered their agreement to their organization's social media marketing campaigns are concerned with building brand equity. That the proposed model of brand equity building by employing SM will guarantee a higher consumer involvement in communication conversation: In addition to good communication, it is possible to easy share content among users, so that some content can be easily spread and passed on to other users in the form of eWOM.

The finding from the observation suggests that organizations use social media for matching the content with interested audiences as well as stimulating conversation and buzz. This creates acceptance from customers, as reflected by the discussions and their engagement to brands. However, their major focuses of the contents are providing information, conversation and advertising.

Where traditional communications and advertising planning starts with a message and a target audience or target influencer, social media begins with an understanding of what consumers and influencers are saying about your brand, product, or service and then builds on that through participation (yours and theirs) for the purpose of encouraging higher forms of engagement, up to and including collaboration. This stands in contrast to prescribing and directing a message with the intention of persuading or driving awareness and conversion (Evans & McKee, 2010).

These are the types of issues that you need to resolve in advance. As you start to move into outreach — for example, with a blog or other form of social media that involves consumer-generated content — the risks can go up further (Evans, 2008)

5.4.3. Social Media Marketing Augmented role and importance

Social media marketing is effective compared to existing marketing communication for brand awareness and image. Results from the analysis indicated that Social Media is effective as other existing traditional communication for brand awareness and image when used for marketing communication purposes. It is interesting to learn that Social Media is effective for brand awareness and image, by 96% among organizations that participated in the survey. If SMM properly managed, brand awareness is built and favorable brand image is formed. Prior researches stated that the effectiveness of Social Media is dependent on the type of Social Media tool an organization is using (Kietzmann et al., 2011). This could suggest that organizations are using the right Social Media tool to reach out to customers.

McGhee (2012), advocate that Social Media should not be used as a stand-alone strategy but should rather be integrated into the traditional marketing or marketing communication mix. This study accepts and proves that social media marketing has greater role when it is integrated with other form of marketing communication. By this study's findings 46.2% respondents point out that Social Media cannot replace traditional marketing but rather should be integrated into the existing.

5.4.4. Other Roles and Importance's

Social media marketing requires social media presence and this has role technology-based role. This is supported by Mangold & Faulds, (2009) who suggest that Social Media's role is displayed by its characteristic of springing out from mixed tech and media origins that enable instant, real-time communication and utilizes multi-media (text, picture, audio & video) time and numerous deliverable plans and global reach. This opinion is supported by the inclusion of Amharic local language on facebook and twitter for example.

Finding in this study showed that Social Media marketing plays a role as a cost cutting and advertising medium tool which is at the same level as traditional media like TV and Radio. This is indicated by all of the organizations that use social media more for advertising and sending information to the customer. Added to that, it is reflected by some respondents who perceive Social Media as another form of online presence without a cost to become a member of which reaches

out to customers at low cost, low speed and effort. Results therefore show that most of the organizations are using social media marketing because its low cost.

Orsburn (2012), pointed that social media can provide you with ways to do business more efficiently and less expensively than ever before. The current study strengthen this argument by organizations objective to use social media marketing for lower cost, although it is low, Many companies use social media to assist them in performing inexpensive and targeted customer reach for advertising, brand building, influence and promotion of products, sharing information, support sales, and online presence with lower risk.

5.5. Social Media Marketing Strategy to build strong brand equity.

The last aim of the research was to identify the factors influencing the design of social media marketing strategy to build strong brand equity. The issue, from a business perspective, is the same now: social media and in particular the development of a dedicated, online social community can be a powerful element of an overall marketing strategy in cases where there is a clear need to be met (Evans, 2008).

Strategy design and factors affecting the strategy either positively or negatively are inseparable. You can't design a strategy without deep, firsthand knowledge of the factors with their priority. Begin with a clear view of the business and an understanding of overall operation or applicable segment of it (Evans & McKee, 2010). With organization continuing to embrace social media for business purposes, particularly with the aim of the study at hand to build strong brand equity. The survey looked in to the important factors and analyses how the factors are important they are on the organizations use of social media marketing.

The result show interesting result on target audience factor. It is remarkably the most important factor considered by the organization while they design social media marketing strategy by 76.9%, followed marketing objective by 57.7%, and organization objective by 42.3%. Cost of running social media marketing and existing marketing communication analysis was among the factors considered least important with 38.5% and 34.6%. Other insightful finding from the survey was

monitoring and measuring effectiveness of social media marketing considered as important factor by 76.9% of the respondents for designing social media marketing strategy.

Apart from using social media, it is assumed that the higher the monitoring and measuring rate, the more the technology is accepted by the business. In this study, the difference was made between using and Monitor and/or measuring every day the performance of organizations social media marketing. Findings from this research seem to suggest that the implementation of Social Media marketing is independent of social media marketing strategy. Although there were 65% of organizations has social media marketing strategy to build strong brand equity 31% of organizations run their social media marketing without a clear strategy.

Having social media marketing strategy is one and monitoring and/or measuring is another. Measurement is critical to building social media acceptance within an organization beyond the marketing department (Evans, 2010). The researcher extrapolated information whether organizations that monitor and measure their social media marketing performance. Interestingly 69% of the organizations do monitor and/or measure their social media marketing. This is supported the argument that when organizations analyze and take all of what they have learned by monitoring and/or measuring their social media after filter out what is ineffective with a low return on investment (ROI). To show business value and ROI for social media marketing campaigns, effective measurement is key (Zarrella, 2010).

The social media monitoring and/or measuring output is a supplement for updating social media marketing program. Subsequently updates could run in fine-tuned manner. Therefore, updating social media marketing program is important to all organization. 81% of the organizations in the survey regularly update their social media marketing program and 76% of them understood the success and/or failures of the social media marketing program before it's changed.

5.6.Social Media marketing Challenges, Level of Risk and Opportunities

Social media engagement is hard work. Creating a social media engagement strategy for business or brand, putting it into action, monitoring it, engaging with your community, tweaking the plan, and ensuring that takes time and effort, and a lot of it (Sherman & Smith, 2013). Social media

engagement, as a way to build brand equity, isn't a cakewalk. It's an ongoing learning process that is ever-changing. Every day, organizations schedule, implement social media marketing plan, and modify the plan based on successes. Organizations without social media (with traditional marketing tools) have been indicated this with half mentioned that they perceived more than three challenges for not using social media. Lack of man power with 80% of the respondents is the major challenge for not adding social media marketing into organizations marketing communication.

According to the analysis in the previous chapter Social Media marketing has risks. 85% of the respondents confirm that risk exists. This finding supported by Barefoot & Szabo (2010) Yes, risk is existed. But if you do your homework, follow the basic rules, and get some help navigating the social media waters, you'll see that it provides an effective, measurable, and extensible platform for marketing campaigns. The real risk is pretending that the social media revolution isn't happening.

The global rise of social media usage has presented a huge opportunity for companies that want to acquire new customers and retain existing ones. This is why marketers and business leaders must think about the long term opportunities social media can bring to the organization, as well as the opportunity costs of ignoring it. While social media represent a wonderful opportunity for businesses to get closer to their customers, businesses could also benefit from a little soul searching (Brito, 2012). The survey at hand further confirms this to Ethiopian context. The respondents believe social media present cost reduction, greater customers attraction and engagement as major opportunities. The costs are incredibly low when compared to any type of conventional advertising; and, unlike any other advertising, it's based on performance.

Furthermore, they are taking additional opportunities brought like local language (Amharic) support, run with multimedia (text, picture, audio & video) and has different platforms and options to target different group of customers specifically. One of the joys of social media marketing is that you get the opportunity to engage in real and effective conversations with new influencers and their readers (Barefoot & Szabo 2010).

5.7. Relationship between social media marketing and brand equity.

The regression analysis of coefficient test is used to test the coefficient between the two independent variables and dependent variable. The Beta values point out which independent variable has the highest effect on the dependent variable. Beta value equals 1 means that the independent variable has a perfect effect on the dependent variable. Moreover, the Standardized ANOVA give an evaluation on the contribution of the variables to the model. The higher the value is, the larger the effect of the predictor variable on the criterion variable.

Brand equity is positively and statistically significantly correlated with the social media marketing. The regression analysis results presented in table 4.20 show that there is statistically significant association between brand equity and social media marketing. Therefore the results shows that with the chosen sample and variables there is statistically reliable evidence that there would be an association between brand equity and social media marketing.

5.8. Future Research Direction

The area of social media is a current topic especially in Ethiopia, which is developing in fast pace and has its own dynamics.

There are various perspectives and aspects to consider while approaching this topic in the marketing communication context. While conducting this study there appeared some areas that are worthy to investigate in future researches. These included evaluate the effect and impact of social media marketing in general marketing communication, and identify the roles and measure the impact of social media marketing from customers side.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this chapter, the conclusion and recommendation of the study is presented. The aim of this chapter is to review the problem of the research and conclude the findings with regards to the objectives of the study. Recommendation that focuses on how the problem identified could be addressed is also included in this chapter.

6.1. Conclusion

We are in the middle of a fundamental shift in power that is taking place across the world in media and advertising that is having far-reaching effects in industries that used to dominate the businesses of marketing, public relations, advertising, media buying, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, billboards, and even the music and film industries. The main objective of this study is to enable understanding of the strategic role of social media into Ethiopian context for strong brand equity building.

The study first looked at the major type of social media platforms being used by the organization in general and concludes that Facebook leading the pack and it is used by all organization having social media marketing. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Google+ are the top five platforms used by Marketers.

In this research has been made to evaluate the social media marketing position and the integration within integrated marketing communication in the organization. Accordingly based on the survey results social media marketing is at its infancy stage in Ethiopia. Therefore it is concluded that social media is a new element for marketing communication for the organizations. However, finding from empirical framework coincided with the social media alone cannot be effective without augmenting it with other traditional marketing communications. The integration of Social Media into the traditional marketing communication as an enhancer of the traditional mix was supported by this research. Therefore it can be concluded in this research that social media is not a passing fad or replace the traditional marketing communications rather it must integrate with

traditional marketing communication and the role of Social Media in the overall integrated marketing communication is to enhance the traditional marketing communication.

Social media plays an important role in how consumers discover, research, and share information about brands and products. In fact 60 percent of consumers researching products through multiple online sources learned about a specific brand or retailer through social networking sites (Nielsen, 2011). This research concluded that social media marketing is a platform organizations use to customer's attraction and engagement to their loyalty and potential customers to reap benefits from awareness and image through promoting their brands in social media platforms. It further concluded that based on the results from the analysis that Social Media is effective as other existing traditional communication for brand awareness and image when used for marketing communication purposes. Social Media also plays a key role in protecting brands allowing direct communication between the company and its customers although for customers to communicate each other. Thus, the researcher concluded social media marketing has branding, two-way many-to-many communication, augment, cost and technology related strategic role for building brand awareness and image. Consumer engagement in social media is becoming an especially relevant topic as social media has these important roles and provides companies with a lot of opportunities to become more noticeable and interact with consumers. Social media helps to ensure interactivity i.e. provides an opportunity to keep conversations among consumers and engage them in content and brand equity building by raising brand awareness and enhancing positive brand associations and building consumer loyalty to the strong brand equity.

The research revealed that when communication in social media is properly managed brand awareness is built and favourable brand image is formed. Therefore it is concluded that social media marketing is important in building company brand equity. However, it is important to remember that communication in SM can have the biggest positive impact on brand equity only when the degree of consumer involvement in communication in SM is high. I believe, that the CBBE model of brand equity building by employing SM will guarantee a higher consumer engagement in communication of brand in SMM. Although in the literature it was found that "Conversations are happening online about brand, with or without organization." You might as well participate and do so in a way that pays close attention to the interests and needs of your

customers – providing them with information and interactions that further support your brand. (Odden, 2008).

Every company, seeking to appropriately enhance the brand through communication in social media, should gradually engage consumers in communication and encourage observers to become active, loyal and advocating consumers. It is important to determine when consumers get engaged and contributes to the brand equity building through communication, content building, insights and other actions and what actions should a company take in order to engage consumers in the brand equity building in social media.

In general the researcher conclude that it is worth having a social media strategy in place to manage the enormous challenges and risks that social media brings. Moreover, in the analysis, the association was found to be statistically significant. It further concludes that while designing the social media marketing organization should give priority to target audience, marketing objective and finally to the organization objective.

The literature review showed that monitoring and measuring Social Media marketing is critical to build organization social media acceptance. The survey result inferred that the monitoring and measurement of Social Media marketing is incorporated with majority of the organization engaged in SMM. The researcher therefore concludes that Social Media marketing monitoring and measurement is well implemented and organizations understand its effectiveness before it is changed.

Based on the social media theories, other concepts suggested by scholars in the Social Media Marketing field and this research results it has become crystal clear that social media marketing is not challenging and risk free. The major result confirms and the researcher concluded that risk exists and lack of man power is still challenging. However, social media marketing has several opportunities. In conclusion, Brand communication on social media provides a significant new opportunity for marketers to directly communicate and interact with consumers.

6.2. Recommendation

This research has recommended the following major points based on the finding for organizations in Ethiopia having social media marketing already as well as for those planning to do so in the future.

- This study has shown overwhelmingly that social media marketing has a strategic role and vital instrument for the organization strong brand equity building. Therefore organization must consider and give attention to social media marketing.
- Organization plan to start Social Media Marketing should consider facebook as a starting platform.
- Social Media marketing should be integrated into the traditional marketing communication and not be used as a stand-alone marketing communication tool.
- Organization Social Media marketing should focus on brand equity building mainly brand awareness and image.
- Social Media Marketing should be direct communication between the company and the customers and also organization has to give highest consideration while customers communicate with each.
- Organization must combine social media marketing with traditional marketing tools for example placing the social media platform address during the advertising or public relation.
- Organizations should have social media marketing strategies as well as establish a monitoring and measurement system when trying to adopt Social Media marketing.
- Organization should keep monitoring and/or measuring the performance to understand its position before it is changed.

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ANNEX A: Online Survey

Addis Ababa University School of Commerce Department of Marke... <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aXuckrx7Jd4b7sa6j6ZnADtOk6...>

[Edit this form](#)

Addis Ababa University School of Commerce Department of Marketing Management Postgraduate Program Research Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

My name is Dawit Dagne. I am carrying out a thesis study titled the strategic roles of social media marketing on brand equity in Ethiopia for the partial fulfillment of Master of Arts degree in marketing management. The aim of this questionnaire is to collect relevant information, which will take about 30 minutes. I kindly request you to share me your valuable time and give your answer for the questions. All your answers will be treated with confidentiality and be used for this purpose only.

Thank you!

* Required

Section A. Introduction - General Data

A01. Gender *

- Male
- Female

A02. Age

- 18-25
- 26-36
- 37-50
- above 51

A03. Level of Education *

- Diploma or equivalent
- Bachelor or equivalent
- Master or equivalent
- Doctoral or equivalent
- Other:

A04. Please provide your Email?

A05. What is your official title at your place of work?

A06. Please indicate your current job level in the organization structure

- Top

- Middle
- Lower

A07. Are you in marketing position section/department? *

- Yes
- No

A07 (a). If No please specify

A08. Year of experience in marketing position

- Less than 1year
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- more than 10 years

A09. Number of employees in your organization

- 1 to 10
- 11 to 50
- 51 to 150
- more than 151

A10. What industry your organization is in? (Please select all that apply) *

- Food & Beverage
- Financial Institution
- Hotel & Resturants
- Information technology
- Manufacturing
- Media and Telecommunications
- Retailing
- Transportation
- Education
- Health Care
- Other:

A11. Where have you been marketing your brand? *

- Domestic
- Internationally
- Both

A12. What is the name of the your product/service brand?

A13. Does your company have a website? *

- Yes
- No

A13 (a). If yes please specify

Section B. The following questions are related to Social Media

B01. Please indicate the communication tool your organization use for marketing communication (please select all that apply) *

- Social Media Marketing
- Sales Promotion
- Advertising
- Direct marketing
- Personal Selling
- PR & Publicity
- Other:

B02. Please rank of each marketing communication tools in accordance with their important for your organization? *

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Social Media Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sales Promotion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advertising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Direct marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Selling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PR & Publicity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B03. Which of the following social media your organization using for social media marketing (please select all that apply) *

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Google +
- LinkedIn
- Blog
- Youtube
- MySpace

- Really Simple Syndication (RSS)
- Instagram
- Flickr
- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Other:

B04. For how long has your organization been using social media for marketing communication purpose? *

- Less than 1 year
- 2-4 years
- more than 5 years
- Don't know

B05. How is your organization social media organized for your customers in Ethiopia? *

- Has a dedicated page for Ethiopian customers only
- Use the regional or global page only
- Both

B06. What are your primary objectives of using social media marketing (please select all that applies) *

- Advertising to attract new customers
- Brand Building (image & awareness)
- Customer loyalty & retention
- Influence and Promotion of products/services
- Sharing Information
- Support Sales
- Social media presence
- Lower Cost
- Other:

B07. Who represents your business and/or brand on social media platforms?

- Social Media Marketer employee
- Marketing employee
- Outsourced
- Don't Know
- Other:

B08. How long does you organization spent for social media marketing per day?

Hrs : Mins : Secs

B09. How often do you create new content on your organization social media platforms in general?

- Hourly daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- Don't Know

B10. What is the objectives of your social media marketing contents? (Select all that apply) *

- Add value to the conversation
- Advocate for fans and their initiatives
- Brand Building
- Deliver updates
- Entertainment
- Promote products and offers
- Respond to requests
- Provide utility/solve a problem
- I don't create content
- Other: _____

B11. Please indicate your level of agreement on how the social media marketing performance in your organization? *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Social media is used as a replacement to the traditional marketing tool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Media is integrated with traditional marketing tools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media is a passing fad.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B12. Please indicate the level of your agreement on how social media marketing integrated with traditional marketing in your organization.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Integrate social media with advertising (eg. Placing advert on	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
facebook).					
Integrate Social media with PR	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrate social media with personal selling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrate social media with sales promotion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrate social media with direct marketing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B13. Please indicate the level of importance when incorporating social media marketing into integrated marketing communications which factor (s) should be addressed					
	Most important	Important	Indifferent	Least important	Not important
Brand Building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long term customer relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer Engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Media presence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Know how	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saving Cost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Easy way of communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B14. How effective social media marketing communication is compared to traditional once for brand awareness and image? *					
<input type="radio"/> 5. Very Effective <input type="radio"/> 4. Effective <input type="radio"/> 3. Moderate <input type="radio"/> 2. Low Effective <input type="radio"/> 1. Not Effective					
B15. Which of the following benefits of social media applies to your brand? (Please select all that apply) *					
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase brand awareness and image <input type="checkbox"/> Increase interaction with customer <input type="checkbox"/> Increase brand loyalty <input type="checkbox"/> Increase customer to customer communication					

Deafened brand power & value in market place

Other:

B16. Does your social media marketing reflect your brand standards? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

B17. Please indicate your level of agreement on your organization's social media marketing campaigns are concerned with building brand equity. *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

B18. Does your organization have social media marketing strategy or policies? *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

B18 (a). If No please explain why?

B19. Please indicate the level of important factors should be consider while designing social media marketing strategy *

	Most Important	Important	Indifferent	Least Important	Not Important
Organization Objective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing Objective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Existing Marketing Communication Analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Target Audience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Most Important	Important	Indifferent	Least Important	Not Important
Availability of Expertise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of running social media marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring and Measuring effectiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B20. Does your currently monitor and measure social media marketing? *

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

B20a) If yes what do you monitor and measure

B21. Your organization adjust social media marketing program to keep current. Please indicate your level of agreement. *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

B22. Please indicate your level of agreement on that your organization successes or failures of Social media marketing programs is fully understood before it will changed

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

B23. How do you rate the risk involved in launching & running social media marketing by incorporating into integrated marketing communication? *

- No Risks
- Less Risky

- Moderate
- Risky
- Highly Risky

B24. Does your organization plan to add more social media platforms for social media marketing in the next 2 years?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

B25. What are the main opportunities you have uncovered or learned in social media marketing?

B26. This is the end of my questioning. Do you have any remarks related to Social Media Marketing or the interview that you wish to tell me?

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ANNEX B: Observation Guideline

1. Identify each profile on different social networking sites
2. Does the company web site include social sharing link? To which of social media link is available.
3. When did each of the organization social media created?
4. How many members do the organizations has in each social media?
5. Does each of the organization social media contain a variety of content formats (a range of different content types including text, video, photos, graphics, presentations and audio?)
6. Count the number of posts (conversations) over the last 15days?
7. Observe how often contents created by the organization over the last 60 days
8. Observe and list the specific comments, ratings, reviews and recommendations posted by members related to the organization brand
9. Observe the content generated on social media sites by other users about brand
10. Identify the top 3 content generated by other users about brand over the last 30days
11. What are the major focuses of the contents in the social media marketing (Brand positioning, brand awareness and Image, customer relationship, customer questions)
12. What type of off-line and other type of marketing communications integrated in the social media?

ANNEX C: Questionnaire for Non-Social Media Users

Section A: Introduction - General Data

Date:	
City:	Addis Ababa
Email:	

A01. Gender

Male

Female

A02. Age

18-25

26-36

37-50

above 51

A03. Level of education

Diploma or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bachelor or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doctoral or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

A04. What is your official title at your place of work?

A05. Please indicate your current job level

a. Top

b. Middle level

c. Lower level

A06. Are you in marketing position section/department?

Yes Go to A07.

No please specify _____ go to Q.A08

A07. Please indicates your experience in marketing position?

Less than 1 year

2-5 years

6-10 years

more than 10 years

A08. Number of Employees in your organization?

1-10

11-50

51-150

more than 151

A07. Please indicate in which your organization is? (Please mark all that apply)

- Food & Beverage
- Financial Institution
- Hotel & Restaurant
- Information technology
- Manufacturing
- Media and Telecommunications
- Retailing

- Transportation
- Education
- Health Care
- Other: please specify: _____

A08. Where did your brand operate?

- a. Domestic only b. Internationally c. Both

A19. Does your company have a website?

- a. Yes b. No

A11(a) if yes please specify _____

Section B. The following questions are related to Marketing Communication

B01. Which of the following integrated marketing communication tools are used in your organization?

(Please select all that apply)

Advertising on TV/Radio/Print	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sales Promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal selling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Relation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

B02. In your opinion, which of the following marketing communication tools are effective for your organization?

	Very effective 5	Effective (4)	Neutral (3)	low effective (2)	Not Effective(1)
Advertising on TV/Radio/Print	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sales Promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal selling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Relation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B03. What challenges does your organization face in the existing marketing communication tools?

(Please mark all that apply)

Increased Cost	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hyper-Competition	<input type="checkbox"/>

Savvy customers	
Limited of outreach	
Media Convergence	
Other Please Specify:	

B04. which of the following social media platforms you are familiar with (Please select all that apply)

Facebook	
twitter	
Really Simple Syndication (RSS)	
Pinterest	
MySpace	
Flickr	
Google +	
Youtube	
Linkedin	
Blog	
Instagram	
Tumblr	
Other	

B05. How familiar with the term "Social Media Marketing" are you?

- a. Never heard of it
- b. I have heard of it
- c. I am familiar

B06. What are the reasons which held up your organization for not using social media marketing?

Lack of man power	
Risk Involved	
Not relevant	
Lack of information	
Inadequate Financial Resources	
Uncommon	
Difficult to Monitoring and Measurement	
Management perception	
Other please Specify:	

B07. Is your organization has a plan to add social media marketing on your existing marketing communication in the coming 3 years?

- a. Yes b. No c. Not Sure

B18.What will be the main opportunities you expect from social media marketing?

Social Media helps company to keep up with trends in the industry.	
Social Media helps organization to maintain competitive advantage.	
Social Media enables fast reach to consumers	
Corporate credibility is enhanced due to personalized interaction on Social Media	
Generate qualified leads	
Social Media helps reduce overall marketing expenses.	
Social Media helps build new business partnership.	
Social Media provides a platform for banks to educate consumers about services	
Other Please Specify_____	

B13.This is the end of my questioning. Do you have any remarks related to Social Media Marketing or the questionnaire that you wish to tell me?

ANNEX D: AAUSC Support letter

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
ግዴታ ሥራ ኮሌጅ
አዲስ አበባ ኢትዮጵያ
ጽ/ቤት 3131



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMERCE
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
P.O.Box 3131

Ref. No. AAU/D / 007/2013
Date, November 2013

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Madam /Sir,

The department of marketing management of Addis Ababa University –School of commerce would kindly request your esteemed organization to extend the required assistance to Mr./Mrs./ Dawit Dagnaw Kebede a graduate marketing student who is currently working on a research entitled “ The Strategic roles of Social Media Marketing on building strong Brand Equity in Ethiopia. For the fulfilment of Master of Arts degree in Marketing Management.

The department would appreciate your all-rounded assistance that will be given to the student researcher regarding the provision of pertinent information to the thesis work indicated above. The department strongly beliefs in such a university-industry collaboration that will enable it to design, develop and enrich the curriculums to meet industry requirements & standards. This collaboration will play its own role in enhancing or stimulating the research culture in the country.

Thanking you profoundly, for investing your precious time to support the student researcher in order to complete his/her thesis work successfully within the given time target.

If you have doubts or questions, you can access the department head via e-mail: get_aiwo@yahoo.com

Sincerely Yours,

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