

# To be where the consumers are

## A Stakeholder Approach to Social Media Maturity

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### Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to further the understanding of how companies develop their social media presence, as well as to lay the groundwork for a social media maturity model. In order to fulfill this purpose, stakeholder theory and organizational maturity theory were used to describe how different stakeholders are affecting the social media practices of companies. The thesis applies a qualitative research approach, with the main part of the study consisting of twelve in-depth interviews with representatives from the Swedish food and beverage industry as well as experts on social media.

While concern has been raised over how well companies adapt to what existing literature defines as the main characteristic of social media, the need for two-way communication with consumers, the results show that the companies in this study have adapted rather well, spending time and effort on being accessible to consumers and replying quickly to their concerns. The people in charge of social media however believe that the disinterest from top management leads to less resources than needed being allocated to social media. This in turn leads to a large amount of discretionary power being assigned to the person in charge to develop the social media presence according to his or her own head. Although consumers were mentioned as the main reason to go on Facebook, they were found to have little influence on a company's social media maturity.

In the final part of the thesis, a model for assessing social media maturity is presented, which can be seen as the major contribution. In addition, directions for further research are suggested. The social media maturity model would benefit from being validated and developed further. As this study does not assess the effect of social media maturity on a brand's success, this could be further examined through quantitative studies.

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**Keywords:** *social media maturity, stakeholder influence, social media marketing, brand communication, Facebook*

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# 1. Introduction

*This chapter will introduce the topic of social media as the background for this thesis and motivate the choice of topic due to its current relevance. Subsequently, the purpose of the thesis will be defined, as well as the expected contribution to academic research depicted. Afterwards, delimitation of the research will be stated, and important social media vocabulary introduced. Finally, the deposition will give an overview over the coming chapters.*

## 1.1 Background

In recent years, one of the most significant phenomena in the field of communication has been social media, which is becoming an increasingly important part of the media landscape as more and more people spend more and more time on the various social media websites (Stephen & Galak, 2009). The rapid growth and high level of user adaptation to social media can be illustrated by statistics like: Facebook is by far the largest social media website with more than 500 million active users (Facebook Statistics, 2011), now the second most visited website in the world (Schonfeld, 2011) with an average of 7.9 people joining every second in 2010 (Socialbakers Blog, 2011). As the number of user grows, so does the average time spent on social media, illustrated by that fact that in 2010, social media made up 22.7 percent of total internet usage time, an increase by 43 percent from the year before (Nielsen NetView, 2011). In Sweden, Facebook penetration is as high as 46 percent of the total population, making Sweden one of the top 20 countries worldwide (Socialbakers, 2011).

As social media grow, so does both the interest of companies to use them for marketing purposes as well the potential benefits of doing so (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). One of the reasons for this is that the high number of users and the nature of inter-user dialogue that characterizes the media lead to a high number of units of brand exposure, higher than for traditional communication vehicles (Stephen & Galak, 2009). Brands and products are not uncommon topics on these platforms. As much as 32 percent of the respondents in a study conducted by ROI Research state that they have used social media to recommend a brand or a product to a friend (ROI Research for Performance, 2010), and 81 percent of the user of myYearbook reported that they had received recommendations on products from fellow users, 74 percent of those stating that this recommendation was important for their buying decisions (Wegert, 2010). Likely, it is figures such as these that have led to the explosive growth of 192 percent of companies building their own Facebook presence, reported by Gaudin (2009).

## 1.2 Choice of topic

Despite the aforementioned growth in social media interest from a user perspective and as a result also from businesses, when it comes to actual implementation, the managerial approaches are not as sophisticated as would be suggested by the prominence of the topic. Critical voices, such as Mangold and Faulds (2009), are questioning if companies really know how to use this new channel, stating that marketing organizations are not ready to handle the reality of social media, where dialogue is required compared to the monologue of traditional marketing communications, something that is new for a company. The sentiment of Mangold and Faulds (2009) seems to be to some extent supported by figures pointing to a low level of organizational maturity when working with social media reported by Forrester in 2009, where 145 global companies were surveyed. The results show that nearly half of the sample spent less than \$ 30 000 on social media (Owyang, 2009), which was the lowest range to choose. The same report uncovered that even more often, social media expenditures are not even considered as a formal part of the budget, but money is allocated on an ad-hoc basis. Consequently, despite the rising acknowledgement from companies that social media is here to stay, the way social media is implemented within companies still seems to be in a developing stage.

In addition, as it has been increasingly noted during the last years, brands are no longer owned by the company, but are shaped by other groups like consumers (Bernoff & Li, 2008), press and competition, just to name a few. This notion can be assumed to even grow stronger in the near future, as one of the key differences of how social media works compared to the traditional media paradigm, is that the power over how the brand is being represented lies with the consumers rather than with the companies because of the enabling and amplifying functions social media provides a user with, making it much easier to voice opinions (Bernhoff & Li, 2008). Even though a lot of these opinions are positive and beneficial for brands, as the aforementioned examples of word-of-mouth and recommendations show, the large network and potential for viral spreading of a message is a two-edged sword, holding true for negative messages as well. One of many examples is when director Kevin Smith was asked to leave a Southwest Airline flight for being too fat to fly, a fact that he easily shared with his 1.5 million twitter followers (McCarthy, 2010a), which triggered further media coverage. Another unsatisfied customer experience that reached more than 1.6 million users so far was when a Comcast technician fell asleep on law student Brian Finkelstein's couch while waiting on the company's help line, which the student filmed and put on YouTube (Suri, 2006).

Furthermore, employees seem to be another group that is increasing their influence on how companies and their brands are perceived. According to Gaudin (2009), a significant part of the 192 percent increase in company presence on Facebook can be attributed to employees acting on their own initiative, without any mandate from management to do so. And once again, positive results for companies are contrasted by negative ones, like in the case of Domino's Pizza. Employees of the chain filmed themselves talking unfavorably about their employer and abusing the hygiene standards for food destined to customers, a clip that reached more than one million viewers on YouTube before it was taken down, which resulted in a million dollar loss and great brand damage to the brand (Barros, 2009; Lieb, 2009). In addition to these examples, social media also provides a platform to non-governmental organization in their protest against brand practices, as the following example shows. When Nestlé lobbied to have a Greenpeace video criticizing the food producer's practices removed from YouTube, Greenpeace supporters started posting Nestlé brand logos modified to expression like 'Killer' on the company's Facebook wall, which left the employees in charge of the page helpless, with threats to erase the pictures only provoking an even stronger response from Facebook users (McCarthy, 2010b).

Overall, these examples support the notion that company adaptation to the changed requirements in the social media environment indeed leaves room for improvement and that stakeholders other than the company's marketing or communication department seem to grow in importance when it comes to what is communicated about brands. However, academic research on social media is mainly focusing on the consumer perspective, leaving aside managerial structures within the company. As a starting point for a more organizational view on social media, it will therefore be of interest to see whether or not there are processes and capabilities in place to deal with the challenges and utilize the opportunities social media offers.

### **1.3 Purpose and research question**

As it became apparent in the examples used to introduce the topic of social media, as well as from the results of our pre-study survey and interview with experts within the field, organizational practices within social media seem far from being established, but also from being explored.

The purpose of this thesis is therefore:

- to further the understanding of how companies develop their social media presence and how advanced they are.

In addition, to contribute to theory development in the field of social media, this thesis has the purpose:

- to further development of stakeholder theory in relation to social media
- to lay the groundwork for a social media maturity model.

As a result, the thesis will cover the following research questions:

- **Research Question 1:** What stakeholder groups can be identified for a branded Facebook page and what are their characteristics?
- **Research Question 2:** How do the stakeholders influence the organizational development of using a Facebook page as a tool for marketing and communication?

## 1.4 Expected contribution

### 1.4.1 Contribution to academic research

Even though the topics of social media and Facebook in particular have been covered by a rapidly growing number of publications lately, the majority of publications are practitioner literature, while there is still a lack of academic literature in the field. Furthermore, the academic literature mainly deals with the consumer perspective of social media or external effects of managerial social media processes. This thesis therefore aims at contributing to the academic body of literature on the growing field of social media by taking an organizational perspective, while paving the way for further academic research in this area.

### 1.4.2 Contribution to managerial practice

In addition to contributing to academic research, the thesis aims at improving the understanding of social media from a managerial perspective, which will enable companies to approach practitioner literature in a more knowledgeable and qualified way. Since practitioner literature on the topic usually does not incorporate organizational aspects, but focuses on the tasks of the social media manager in isolation, this thesis will also help the person in charge of social media put their task into a broader organizational context and can thereby facilitate organizational learning and support for social media practices throughout the company.

## **1.5 Delimitation and motivation of choice**

### **1.5.1 Consumer vs. organizational perspective**

Due to the noted lack of research in the field, this thesis deals with the topic of social media from an organizational perspective rather than a consumer perspective. Therefore the primary research methods only address company representatives as well as knowledgeable experts within the social media industry. However, since the study examines processes in the business-to-consumer industry, consumer behavior is taken into account in the research due to its influence on managerial social media processes, e.g. as stakeholders in a company's marketing and branding decisions.

### **1.5.2 Local vs. global focus**

Even though social media is a global phenomenon, the study takes a national perspective and is limited to consumer good companies registered in Sweden. A national approach was chosen due to the limitation of resources for a master thesis, as well as to minimize the influence of cultural differences and the resulting implications on the processes studied. Sweden was chosen as subject, due to being the authors' residence, as well as due to the high proliferation of Internet and social media throughout the population. International influence was therefore taken into account where necessary for the study, however not picked out as a central theme.

### **1.5.3 Food and beverage industry**

As the majority of social media use is still driven by private purposes, and examples of business-to-business companies are sparse on these platforms and in particular on Facebook as the study focus, only business-to-consumer companies were examined. To further specify the study subject and increase the homogeneity of the sample, companies for the study were limited to the food and beverage industry and comprised producing companies with different product brands. The industry was chosen since its consumer base is identical with the social media population and population overall. In addition, consumer engagement in the food industry is high, as shown by the above average number of likes for pages concerning food (Hubspot, 2010), as well as the interest in food blogs. Furthermore, brands in the food industry have the possibility to utilize the majority of Facebook tools, which might not be suitable for other industries.

### **1.5.4 Product vs. corporate brands**

The thesis focuses on product brands instead of corporate brands, since the latter are not always visible or recognized by the consumer, and consumer engagement is assumed to be higher on a product than on a corporate level. However, brands in the food industry are often part of complex brand hierarchies, and might be held together by an umbrella or corporate brand with the same name, which is why their branding activities cannot be seen in isolation from corporate branding.

### **1.5.5 Facebook as social media example**

Despite the fact that a lot of companies use more than one social media channel, the study is focusing on one specific social media vehicle, since covering a variety of vehicles would demand resources exceeding a master thesis, as well as complicate the analysis and comprehensibility of results. Facebook was chosen as a subject due to its popularity in Sweden, the authors' familiarity with its use, as well as the variety of known features it offers to companies. The analysis focuses on companies' official brand pages, and to a minor extent on fan-initiated pages, as they sometimes cannot be distinguished as such. The relation to other media, including other social media, was taken into account where necessary, since a company's communication efforts cannot be accounted for in isolation.

## **1.6 Social media overview and definitions**

Defining social media is not very straightforward, as there seems to be no generally agreed-upon definition. One way of defining the term could be to list functionalities provided by the various digital platforms, such as taking part in user-generated content in the forms of text, audio, video, as well as posting one's own content (Coombs, 2009). Another way to find a definition could be to follow Sederviciute (2010) and compare social media with traditional media. She means that while traditional media can only carry a monologue, social media are well equipped for dialogue. Another important difference according to Sederviciute (2010) is content creation, as traditional media content is produced by professionals while social media content can be created by anyone with access to the Internet. An implication of this fact is noted by Mangold and Faulds (2009), as they consider one of the defining characteristics of social media compared to traditional media to be the velocity of how content is being spread across the population, which is commonly referred to as something being "viral", since the

interconnectivity of the social networks is high. The pace of development of new social media applications is fast (Thackeray et al., 2009), which could mean that finding a definition that stays consistent over time is futile.

The following definition of social media, which however hints at its incompleteness, is given by Treadaway & Smith (2010), and will serve as a basis for this thesis.

*“The term social media refers to the collection of technologies that capture communication, content and so on across individuals, their friends and their social networks. Examples of social media include social networking sites like Facebook and twitter, blogging technologies like TypePad and WordPress, crowdsourcing products like Wikipedia, photo and video sharing sites like Flickr and YouTube, and others. These technologies help users easily create content on the Internet and share it with others. [...]”*

Furthermore, they define social networks as “groups of people or communities, who share a common interest, perspective or background”, however make clear that these communities do not only exist online, but also offline. Even though the above social media definition names a variety of technologies, the authors note that social media often seems to be understood in the narrower sense of social networking sites.

Some recurring terms in relation to Facebook will be explained in Appendix 1.

## 1.7 Deposition

Chapter 1 has introduced the topic of social media, explained the purpose of the thesis and the resulting research questions, as well as the expected contribution to academic research and managerial practice, and delimited the focus of the thesis from other topics. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the research approach and design of the thesis, as well as explains the methods of data collection and analysis in more detail, and assesses the resulting quality of research. Chapter 3 illustrates the results from the pre-study survey, while Chapter 4 gives an overview of relevant literature from stakeholder and process maturity theory, which together are used to define and structure the examination of the two research questions. Chapter 5 analyses the information according to the two research questions. Question 1 first provides an overview of the studied cases and maps out the respective stakeholders in relation to

the organizational structure, which are then examined in more detail on stakeholder basis. Question 2 first identifies critical areas for social media maturity and then discusses the influence of each stakeholder on these areas. Chapter 6 reconnects to the purpose of the thesis, and introduces the blueprint for a stakeholder based social media maturity model, derived from the previous analysis.

## 2. Methodology

*The following chapter will discuss the choice of research approach and design, as well as the implications this choice has on the results of the study. Furthermore, it will provide an overview over the different steps taken during the research process, and explain in more detail how the different parts of research were conducted. Finally, research quality in form of reliability and validity will be addressed.*

### 2.1 Research approach

The initial objective for the research was to gain more insights and to improve the overall understanding of the topic, for which an exploratory research approach is suitable, due to its flexible and versatile characteristics (Malhotra 2010, p.104). The initial exploratory question was therefore kept broad with “How do companies approach their work with social media and Facebook in particular?”. After having accomplished a better understanding of the topic, stakeholder theory and process maturity were identified as key areas of interest that influence the development in this field. Relevant theory was determined during the research process, and related to the social media managerial process to develop the understanding in this field.

Research that aims at the development of theory rather than theory generation or confirmation, should be approached in an abductive way (Dubois & Gadde 2002). This approach is closer to induction than to deduction, however in contrast to induction relying on an iterative process in which the framework for a study is successively modified during the process as a result of both unanticipated empirical findings and theoretical insights. Since the exploratory set-up of this thesis aims at theory development rather than theory verification, and is characterized by successive modification of the research topic as well as mutual influence of empirical findings and theory, this thesis is following an abductive research approach. To allow for flexibility and to successively develop the research questions (Olsson & Sörensen 2007), the chosen research methods followed a qualitative approach.

### 2.2 Research design

In line with the exploratory approach according to Malhotra (2010, p.104), the main body of research was conducted in a qualitative way, using the method of in-depth interviews with experts as well as cases and qualitative data analysis. The main study

was preceded by a survey with focus on the quantitative method, with the latter being chosen to facilitate the data analysis, as well as to make respondents more likely to finish the survey from a time aspect. Alternatively, interviews could have been chosen as a pre-study method, however the authors' experience from past studies has shown the difficulty in recruiting interviewees, especially in a restricted time-frame like that of a thesis. Self-completion questionnaires are more convenient for the respondent and show an absence of the interviewer effect (Bryman & Bell 2007). In addition, the topic had already been outlined within a certain field, therefore the purpose of the pre-study was both to confirm the topic as well as to identify relevant sub-topics. Consequently, a quantitative analysis was seen as more suitable to get a timely confirmation than conducting interviews. To narrow down the topic in a more qualitative way, findings from expert interviews were then combined with the insights from the pre-study.

As qualitative research aims at understanding a phenomenon, rather than testing a hypotheses and making predictions (Merriam 1994), qualitative in-depth interviews were chosen for the main body of research. Since this kind of data collection relies heavily on the interviewees for accuracy, the collected data was compared with information from the expert interviews, the pre-study survey, as well as the companies' respective brand pages on Facebook. The number of examined cases was not pre-determined before the study, but extended during the research process until the collected material was considered sufficient in accordance with Merriam (1994). Even though it could be argued that the examination of more cases with the same resources leads to less depth in the research (Easton 1995), the interviewees showed a limited willingness to reveal more in-depth information, as well as restricted time to participate in the research, which is why more depth would have not likely to be reached anyway.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the iterative research process, and shows the interrelation of the methods of data collection and their influence on defining the final research question. In addition to the above descriptions of the research process, it can be mentioned that the range of topics and theory derived from the overall research question, the survey and the first interviews also included crisis communication regarding unofficial pages and consumer complaints, brands that failed in social media, promotional activities and integrated marketing communications. However, as the study progressed it became apparent that most if the participants described challenges on a more general level relating organizational structures and the improvement of processes, which is why focus was put on literature from stakeholder theory and

business process maturity. Both subjects were first investigated in parallel, however their interrelation soon became apparent, which is why both theoretical fields were combined for the final research questions, which guided the analysis.

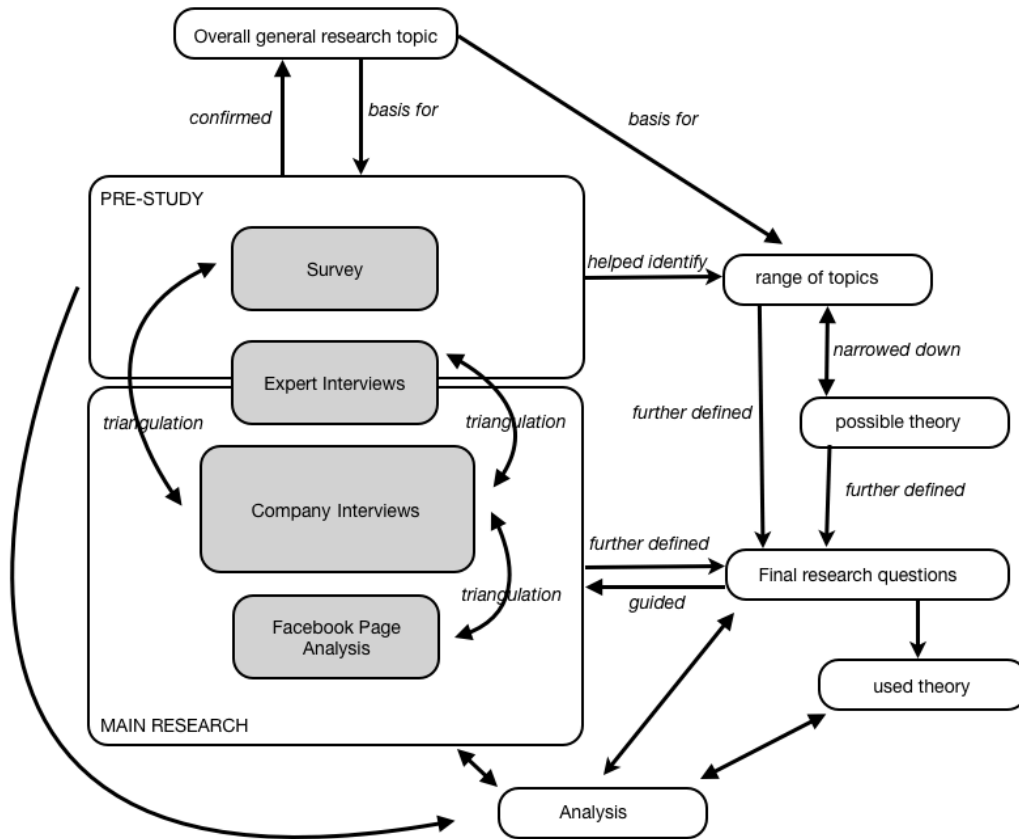


Figure 1: Research process overview

## 2.3 Data collection

The data gathered for this study are mainly of qualitative nature. Even though the thesis is only covering business-to-consumer companies, the study deals with the topic of social media from a company, rather than a consumer perspective. Therefore the collection of primary data through interviews and surveys did not include consumers, but was limited to company representatives from fast moving consumer goods companies as well as other professionals within the field of social media. The interviews with the latter are relevant in two aspects. Firstly, these social media experts were identified as possible stakeholders during the research process. Secondly, their answers were used to validate the statements given by the company representatives, to limit the influence of potential bias of company information as well as incomplete information due to confidentiality restrictions.

### 2.3.1 Pre-study survey

After establishing a company approach to Facebook as general research objective, a pre-study in form of an online survey directed at company representatives working with social media was conducted. Primary purpose of the survey was to get an overview of the company use of Facebook and its relation to other social media, as well as communication in general. The survey also covered more detailed questions about the use of Facebook pages, including purpose, responsibilities and performance of the company's Facebook presence. As a secondary goal, the survey was intended to gather possible contacts for the following research stages.

An overview of the questions and the resulting answers can be found in Appendix 2. In case the participants did not indicate the use of social media in question 1, the use of Facebook in question 2 or that they have an official Facebook in question 3, subsequent questions were skipped respectively and the respondents were forwarded to the descriptive end of the survey. Thereby, it was avoided that respondents were faced with questions that did not apply to them, which could lead them to drop out of the survey or give inapplicable answers, and thereby invalidate the survey results. The survey consisted of 14 questions, with the last three of descriptive nature. The main body of the survey consisted of multiple-choice questions with single or multiple answer possibilities and the possibility to fill in additional answers that had not been predefined. The survey design was chosen to increase the speed and convenience at which respondents could fill in answers. Only one question was specifically asking for a qualitative answer and required the participants to fill in text in their own words. This question covered the company's initial approach to Facebook, and was designed in the respective way to avoid leading the respondent with predefined answers, but instead reveal their personal opinion without being faced with expected answers.

The survey was targeted at the largest business-to-consumer companies registered in Sweden, based on reported turnover in 2009. The companies were identified through the search function at 'Largest companies' (2011), which was followed up by online research to identify suitable contacts in form of marketing or communication managers, which were contacted via email. The surveys were conducted anonymously to increase the likelihood of response and the validity of the answers, which however decreased the possibility to follow up the results. A total number of 157 surveys were sent out, of which 31 were answered, yielding a response rate of 19.7%. As Bryman & Bell (2007) note, the lower response rate of self-completion surveys in comparison to interviews

bears a risk of bias. To ensure that the received answers are representative for the contacted sample, both industries and number of employees of the participating companies were examined for variety. Company sizes range from 100 to 45 000 employees, covering a variety of industries including food and beverage, transportation and travel, retail, electronics, fashion, pharmaceuticals and paper products. A similar variety could be observed within the contacted sample, which speaks in favor of the sample being representative. However, the answers that reached significant results and were used for the study were verified through triangulation with the expert interviews. Of the 31 respondents, 20 were maintaining a company Facebook page, and therefore provided with the option to leave their contact detail for further steps of the research, which was however only done by 2 participants. Therefore, the secondary goal of gaining contacts for further research steps could not be reached through the survey.

### **2.3.2 In-depth Interviews**

After gaining a better understanding of the company use of social media, and establishing Facebook as a focal topic for the study, in-depth interviews were chosen as the method for the main body of research. Interviewees were picked from both companies owning food brands as well as social media experts working with or studying the topic. This approach was chosen to get different views on the topic, but also to validate the answers respectively, since the views as well as the illustrations of the topic might differ. The research was conducted as semi-structured in-depth interviews which were following interview guidelines to make sure they covered the same range of questions, however to also allow for deeper of examination of individual angles and topics that were not anticipated in accordance with Merriam (1994). In case the latter were coming up during the interviews, they could then be incorporated in the following interviews. The interview questions were derived from the questions of the pre-study survey, but adjusted and complemented with questions specific to the interviewee's position as either expert or brand representative, and findings from previous interviews. Appendix 3 and 4 give an overview over the interview guidelines. The interviewing process started with the social media experts to further narrow down the topic, as well as to get a different view on the survey results. As a consequence of the abductive exploratory approach, some of the questions relevant for the final study topic had not been answered in sufficient depth during the early interviews. Therefore, these questions were followed up once the focus of the thesis had been developed. Table 1 provides an overview of the social media experts that were interviewed.

Interviewee	Position	Date and Location
Johan Hedberg	Social Media Consultant & Analyst, Springtime Stockholm	March 3, 2011, 2.00pm - 3.00pm, Springtime Office, Stockholm
Jesper Åström	Digital Director, Honesty	March 15, 2011, 7.30pm - 8.15pm, private apartment, Stockholm
Jonas Blomberg	Founder and CEO of Svenska Listor	March 17, 2011, 10.00am - 11.00 am, Svenska Listor Office, Stockholm

**Table 1: Social Media experts**

Johan Hedberg of Springtime as well as Jesper Åström of Honesty have been consultants within the communication industry for several years. Both have developed social media as an area of expertise, and have been working with major brands in the Swedish market. Jonas Blomberg is the founder and CEO of Svenska Listor, and runs the website lista.se, where he recently published an overview of Sweden's 100 largest listed companies, examining if they have a Facebook page, as well as assessing the activities there. The latter brought our attention to the topic of maturity, however was developed further taking an organizational perspective instead of analyzing the nature of communication.

An overview of the interviewees representing the brand perspective is given in Table 2. One of the interviewees requested to stay anonymous, and will therefore be referred to as Communication Manager X, from Company X.

Interviewee	Position	Date and Location
Christian Bergenstråhle	Strategic PR and Sponsorship Manager, Arla	March 17, 2011, 9.00am - 10.00am, Arla Office, Stockholm
Malin Jönsson	Marketing Manager Chocolate, Marabou, Kraft Foods	April 14, 2011, 1.00pm - 1.40pm, telephone interview
Mårten Skånman	Online Communication Manager, Lantmännen	April 20, 2011, 11.30am - 12.15pm, Lantmännen Office, Stockholm
Claes Ekström	Brand Manager, Cloetta	April 21, 2011, 10.00am - 10.30am, telephone interview
Communication Manager X	Communication Manager, Company X	April 26, 2011, 1.00pm - 1.35pm, telephone interview

Stina Jakobsson	Marketing & Product Manager, Gooh	April 27, 2011, 8.00am - 9.00am, Lantmännen Office, Stockholm
Johanna Dannesund	Marketing Manager, Risenta	April 27, 2011, 1.00pm - 2.00pm, Risenta Office, Sollentuna
Henrik Strömqvist	Nordic Brand Manager, Grandiosa	April 28, 2011, 9.00am - 9.30am, telephone interview
Lars-Erik Jönsson	Brand Manager, Felix	May 4, 2011, 9.00am - 9.40am, telephone interview

**Table 2: Brand representatives**

In accordance with Trost (1993), the interviewees were chosen to fit the intended study approach and design according to the following criteria:

- company in food & beverage industry owning consumer brands
- company operations in Sweden
- person in charge of work with Facebook, or directly related to it
- prominence of brand
- amount of activity of Facebook.

### 2.3.3 Facebook examination

As already indicated, in-depth interviews as main research method bear the risk of incompleteness and inaccuracy. Therefore, information from the interviews was backed up, as well as extended, through triangulation with information received from analyzing the companies' respective Facebook page. The examination included:

- looking up the brand name in Facebook's search engine
- categorizing the pages and groups into official and unofficial pages
- noting number of likes
- assessing general information provided by the company
- determine if information goes beyond brand level (e.g. recruitment through HR, corporate communication)
- examining the number of different tools used (e.g. discussion forum, events, polls, competitions)
- analyzing communication on the wall (e.g. initiation of posts by brand or consumer, frequency and reaction time for comments, tone of voice)
- looking for links to other brands within the corporation, e.g. on likes, cross-promotion on the wall, brand overview.

## 2.4 Data analysis

As the explorative setup of this thesis follows an abductive approach following Dubois & Gadde (2002), data collection and analysis were not conducted in a completely successive, but in an iterative way, mutually influencing each other and refining the research.

For the survey, the achieved responses were coded into Yes/No answers to each question at hand in order to perform a binomial test for significance. These results were then further interpreted, and served as a basis for the first expert interviews.

The interviews were coded using a digital variation on the scrapbook method explained by Merriam (1994, p. 150), meaning all transcripts were examined page by page, and notes written in the margins including tentative categories and topics. The coded parts were then assembled by category and topic. The expert interviews were first commented on a general level to further develop the research focus. After the first company interviews had established a theoretical framework, the interviews were coded again according to the emerged categories. After having established stakeholder and maturity theory as theoretical framework, the company interviews were coded and categorized according to stakeholders, which was used for both research questions, as well as factors affecting the process maturity when managing social media.

Merriam (1994, p.152) illustrates three levels of analysis for qualitative data, namely description, categorization and interpretation of information, and conclusions and theory development. The thesis at hand uses aspects of all of these analytical levels, however the biggest part of the analysis consists of categorization and interpretation. Descriptive analysis is used to present the cases studied, while the categorization and interpretation lays the groundwork for developing theory in the discussion.

If more than one case is subject to a study, Bryman and Bell (2007) distinguish between a multiple-case study design and a cross-sectional design, depending on the focus. If the study focuses on the cases and their unique contexts, it is classified as multiple-case study; if the focus is generalizability of the findings rather than the individual contexts of the cases, the term cross-sectional is more appropriate. Due to this study's focus on comparison and interpretation across cases, the analysis follows a cross-sectional design.

## 2.5 Research Quality

In accordance with Merriam (1994), the terms internal validity, external validity and reliability were chosen instead of the terms credibility, transferability and dependability suggested by Lincoln & Guba (1985) for qualitative research, since the former ones are assumed to be more commonly known and can also be applied to the quantitative aspects of the pre-study. However, the special requirements for qualitative research should be taken into account and will be discussed.

### 2.5.1 Internal validity

Internal validity deals with the question to which degree the result represents reality. As Merriam (1994) states, the result of qualitative research in form of in-depth interviews does not necessarily present an objective portrayal of reality, but is a construct shaped by the interviewees. In addition, the results are also subject to the interpretation of the researcher. However, as Merriam (1994) notes, use of interpretation does not categorically make a qualitative approach less valid than a quantitative, since the latter also is subject to interpretation by the researcher. There are several strategies to ensure internal validity for qualitative research, which were used if applicable to the thesis. One of these methods is triangulation, which means that several researchers, sources and/or methods are used. As already described, results from the expert interviews were used to validate the statements given by the company representatives, to limit the influence of potential bias of company information as well as incomplete information due to confidentiality restrictions. In addition part of the survey results, as well as examination of the brands' Facebook pages, were used to confirm and add to the data. Furthermore, the accuracy of the collected data was checked through respondent verification in accordance with Bryman & Bell (2007) and Merriam (1994).

A factor that could influence the internal validity of the study at hand is the use of two research languages, English and Swedish. The study was initially intended to be conducted in English only, however some of the interviewees indicated they were more comfortable with expressing themselves in Swedish, which is why both languages were used to not compromise their ability to answer. In particular the telephone interviews were mainly recorded in Swedish, due to the poorer quality of the recording in comparison to the interviews in person. All interviews were then transcribed, and if necessary translated. Due to the proficiency of the authors in both languages, it is assumed that this process has not affected internal validity to a great extent.

In contrast, the survey was initially conducted in English to avoid falsification through translation. It is assumed that the participants had the required language skills to answer, since the introductory email to the survey was also in English. A pre-test for the survey was conducted with students from different specializations, to ensure that the questions are understandable and unambiguous, and to verify the proper survey flow. The survey adapted to given answers to avoid asking question that were not applicable to the respondent, thereby decreasing the premature drop-out rate and the likelihood of false answers due to insufficient possibilities of choice. To further ensure the validity, the survey was conducted anonymously, to minimize conscious falsification, which was considered more important than the possibility for an in-depth follow up with the participants.

### **2.5.2 Reliability**

Reliability covers if a measurement gives the same result if repeated. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), reliability is also the precondition for validity, since an unreliable measure cannot be valid. Reliability consists of four components: congruency, which concerns the similarity between questions intended to measure the same thing, precision, dealing with the interviewer's way of registering responses, objectivity, concerned with how different interviewers register information, and constancy, which means that the examined phenomenon or attitude does not change over time (Troost, 1993). Both Merriam (1994) and Trost (1993) note that especially the latter is only partly applicable to qualitative research, since people's behavior and interest change over time, and it is often these changes that the research is interested in. Instead of the traditional meaning of reliability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) therefore require the results to be consistent and dependent, which can be ensured by the following techniques (Goetz & LeCompte 1984). First, the researcher should clarify the assumptions and theories the research is based on, their position to the studied group, as well as the criteria for choosing informants, which is why special focus was laid on describing the setup of the study at hand. In addition, like with internal validity, triangulation in form of several methods for data collection and analysis increases reliability. Thirdly, it is asked for a detailed description of how the data was collected and which directions were taken during the research process, to enable the independent reader to follow the process and judge how the results must be read (Ekengren & Hinnfors 2006; Goetz & LeCompte 1984). Therefore, special attention was given to the methodology part of this thesis, with the provision of detailed information as well as an overview in Figure 1 to illustrate how the different steps of research are related. In addition, due to the

specialty of having two researchers, it was made sure during the research process that the researchers agree on a common understanding of what is seen and interpreted to fulfill Bryman & Bell's (2007) requirement for internal reliability.

When it comes to reliability of the survey, the consistency of measures is influenced by the same factors as the qualitative data collection. Even though the survey could be easily replicated without influencing how the questions are asked, the participants' responses are likely to change over time, since the majority of questions asks about processes and data that are likely to change over time, which is however subject of the study. Furthermore, the same arguments for triangulation and inter-observer consistency (Bryman & Bell 2007) as for the qualitative part apply.

### **2.5.3 External validity**

External validity assesses the extent to which the results of a study are applicable to other cases, which means how generalizable they are. When it comes to qualitative studies, one of the problems is that external validity is interpreted in the same way as for experimental and causal studies (Merriam 1994, p.184). However, with qualitative studies, the aim is often not generalization, but understanding of a phenomenon. According to Merriam's (1994) roundup of authors, the generalizability can be increased by collecting data from several cases. In addition, he states that giving the reader a detailed description of the context in which the research was conducted and cross-examination of the different cases, improves the possibility to generalize results from a case study. As mentioned, special attention has been paid to a comprehensive description of the study, as well as the examination of a number of cases. However, purpose of this research is not to quantify the results from this study, but to develop the framework of stakeholder theory within social media, which can then serve as a basis for quantitative research (in accordance with Bryman & Bell 2007), which is why the limited possibility to generalize is not seen as a flaw.

As already discussed, the respondents of the survey are to a certain degree representative for the contacted sample, which allows for generalization. However, the results can only be generalized within the studied group (Bryman & Bell 2007, p. 170) of business-to-consumer companies. Since the main study however narrowed down the topic to consumer brands within the food and beverage industry, significant results were used to discover tendencies, which however were attempted to verify with results from the main study.

### 3. Pre-study results

*This chapter will provide an overview and analysis of the findings from the pre-study survey, and motivate the following research steps through these results.*

The first question in the pre-study asked which forms of communication the companies had been using during the past year. The results show that social media is a common tool for companies to use, as 81 percent of the 31 companies answered that they have a presence in social media, which makes it the third most used form of communication after having an own website and using print advertising. The result was significant on a 0.01 level. The rest of the answers for this and the forthcoming questions that do not relate to social media and Facebook have been left out in the main body of this thesis and can be found in Appendix 2.

Companies who had answered “no” on the first question were then excluded from the rest of the survey, and the 25 respondents who gave a positive answer were forwarded to the second question, which concerned the types of social media used during the past year. The most common use of social media was having a Facebook presence. Indeed, it was by far the most frequently used social medium as reported by the survey, as 96 percent of the 25 companies answered yes, significant on a 0.001 level. Even if the companies who did not use social media at all are included, the overall use of Facebook is significant on a 0.01 level.

Again, companies were excluded from this question if they had answered “no” on the previous question, leaving 24 respondents for the remainder of the survey. Since there are different ways of being present on Facebook, e.g. an own page, advertisement, unofficial pages initiated by fans etc., the third question, dealt with the nature of the companies' presence. The results show that most companies are present on Facebook by having their own, official Facebook page. The finding is significant on a 0.001 level. If companies that do not use social media and/or Facebook at all are included in the analysis, the figure drops from 88 percent to 68 percent, resulting in significance on a 0.05 level. This means that the use of official Facebook pages is marginally lower than the reported use of TV commercials in our study (71 percent of all companies) and more popular than well-established, broad channels such as radio (52 percent), outdoor advertising and online banners (both 55 percent). While it should be noted that the figures for radio, outdoor and online banners are not statistically verified by the

binomial test for significance, it would appear that having a Facebook page has become a mainstream form of communication, and is not just a fad for early adopters.

Questions four and five (n: 19 for both) were of a more descriptive nature, the prior asking the respondents how long they have had a Facebook page. The majority, 53 percent, reported that they had been present for less than a year, while the rest had been on Facebook for a longer time. However, these results were not significant, and thus, no conclusion will be made from them. The fifth question concerned how many fans the Facebook page had. Not much will be said about the results of this question, other than that the number of fans varies a lot. That is the sole conclusion that can be drawn, as the mean was 15 442.2 and the standard deviation 41655.8, with responses ranging from 60 fans up to 185 000. Clearly, there was an outlier effect exerted on the sample, and when these outliers were excluded, the range was 60 to 17 000, as  $Q3 - 1.5 IQR = 20\ 392.5$ . The mean was now 4497.4 and the standard deviation 5789.9, still with a large spread.

The sixth question concerned the initial reasons for setting up the Facebook page. Here, the respondents could freely describe their decision. The answers, naturally varying in the choice of words, were then interpreted and put into specific categories. All results can be found in Appendix 2, so readers can make a judgment on the interpretation of the responses. A clear trend in the responses was that companies wanted to “be where the customers are”, a common choice of words together with rather similar sentences. The figure is significant on a 0.05 level, which would suggest that the main reason for initially starting a Facebook presence is to create a dialogue with current and potential customers in a medium where these spend their time, a phrasing that is rather broad and ambiguous. It does however show that companies seem to have an idea of how social media differ from traditional media, since the main differentiating factor is the possibility for having a dialogue with the consumers, compared to other forms of advertising where the relationship is rather one-directional.

To sum up, the pre-study indicates that social media in general and Facebook in particular are relevant media for the participating companies, with a large degree of the companies explicitly stating that they are there in order to meet consumers where they are. This supports the choice of focusing on Facebook as an example for social media. The in-depth interviews will in part deal with how the companies carry out this two-way dialogue, which will be presented in chapter 5.

## 4. Theory

*In the following, a theoretical basis for research questions 1 and 2 will be introduced. An overview over existing literature will be given and its relevance for social media research illustrated.*

### 4.1 Research Question 1: What stakeholder groups can be identified for a branded Facebook page and what are their characteristics?

When analyzing the first set of interviews, it became apparent that the social media managers' work at the examined companies was influenced by numerous people, both within, as well as outside the organization. Influenced areas comprise both the initiation of the social media presence including the job position 'Social media manager', as well as the implementation with regard to content of the presence. Therefore stakeholder theory emerged as an important basis for determining a company's approach to social media.

#### 4.1.1 Introduction to the stakeholder theory

The notion of the company as a network of, or a hub for, different agencies has existed for a long time in the field of classical and neoclassical micro economics, known as the theory of the firm (Mueller, 2003), where groups of people with different interests and intrinsic motivations, e.g. capital owners and work force, come together to create stable organizations in order to fulfill their respective goals in the form of dividends and salaries, and naturally products for the customer. Donaldson and Preston (1995) mean that this input-output model of a firm is insufficiently equipped to describe the reality of an already existing company, as it does not take into account the various other agents that have an interest, or stake, in the input, transformation and output of the firm. Furthermore, the authors mean that the linear description of the relationships and efforts between the agents and the firm does not reflect the complex reality where the different agents are many in number and different in character, producing multiple outputs that vary in level of congruency in regards to each other, and that it is for this reality that stakeholder theory was developed.

According to de Bussy et al. (2003), the main reason for the prominence of stakeholder theory in both the academic and managerial communities, is that there is proven

success in aligning an organization's interests with those of its stakeholders, thereby creating mutual trust and cooperation, leading to reductions in transactional costs and policing agreements, as well as being a source of competitive advantage (Jones, 1995), good financial results (Neville, 2004), improved positioning and assessment of organizational goals and conflict avoidance (Phillips, 2004).

Due to the popularity of this perspective on organizations, the theory has been used by many scholars, sometimes with varying levels of conceptual orthodoxy, which according to Luoma-Aho and Paloviita (2010) can be ascribed to the broad definition of what a stakeholder is, as established by Freeman (1984). In his work, one of the most cited articles on the subject, the author states that any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievements of the organization's objectives is a stakeholder. Vos & Achterkamp (2006) note that the practice and usefulness of applying such a broad definition of a key theoretical concept, have been criticized by various scholars. As Mitchell et al. (1997) point out, this wide definition has little to do with the reality, where time, effort and patience to deal with every conceivable stakeholder are scarce resources, stating that while the empirical support for a broad definition is in place, as companies are indeed affected by a multitude of agents to varying degrees, it has little relevance from a managerial perspective.

Acknowledging this critique and realizing that continuous misuse of central concepts in stakeholder theory, and scorn thereof, could potentially lead to an abandonment of the theory, Freeman and his colleagues (Phillips et al., 2003), wrote an article with a goal "[...] like that of a controlled burn that clears away some of the underbrush of misinterpretation [...]". In this article, the authors, wielding the authority of having penned key articles on the subject, state that "attention to the interests and well-being of those who can assist or hinder the achievement of the organization's objectives is the central admonition of the theory", striving towards better a definition in order to avoid what the authors call friendly misinterpretations and distorted criticism of the stakeholder theory.

#### **4.1.2 Stakeholder influence strategies**

Naturally, inter-organizational power balances were studied before the conception of stakeholder theory. One such example is the article by exchange theorists Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), studying how resources were used to manage relationships between organizations. They argued that the less dependent party accumulates increasing net

power over the more dependent party over time. Frooman (1999) incorporates their study with his own research, in turn categorizing the possible types of relationships, depending on the relative resource dependence of the companies, which determines the power of the stakeholders.

Fortunately enough for companies with low relative power, the model is dynamic and according to Frooman (1999) there are different strategies for improving or exploiting the situation, depending on which state an organization is in. The author formulates these strategies by combining strategic thinking from resource management, a science closely related to exchange theory, where there are two main strategies to exert power over an organization that needs a specific resource that you can provide. The first of these is to withhold the resource completely and the other is to continue to provide the resource, but to add stipulations, a strategy called usage. Frooman (1999) then incorporates this into the context of stakeholder theory, where an exchange between two parties is not taking place in a vacuum. This is done by suggesting that there are two pathways to use the two exchange theory strategies, either direct or indirect. Direct refers to undertaking the strategy without any other party involved, while indirect refers to convincing a third-party stakeholder to carry out the chosen strategy.

Frooman's (1999) work was mainly based on the exchange of resources, exemplified by the cases used in the research, which focused on the relationship between a supplier and its customer. While it naturally can be argued that the concept of exchange of resources can be broadened to include more than only moneterial inputs to production, Tsai et. al (2005) considered Frooman's focus on resource dependence to have lacking explanatory power for issues concerning HR management. What the authors found was that institutional legitimacy, defined as "[...] behaviors that comply with social norms [...] and are within the boundaries of legal requirements, business ethics and social expectations", is an important factor for influence strategy that is undertaken by the stakeholder. As such, the authors propose a similar matrix, exchanging the dependence the stakeholder has on the firm for the legitimacy of the decision being made by the firm.

Another development of the theory of stakeholder influence strategies was made by Henriques and Sharma (2005), who also, at least to some extent, down-play the importance of resource dependency. According to them, stakeholders who have no exchange of resources with the focal firm, may use indirect strategies by exerting

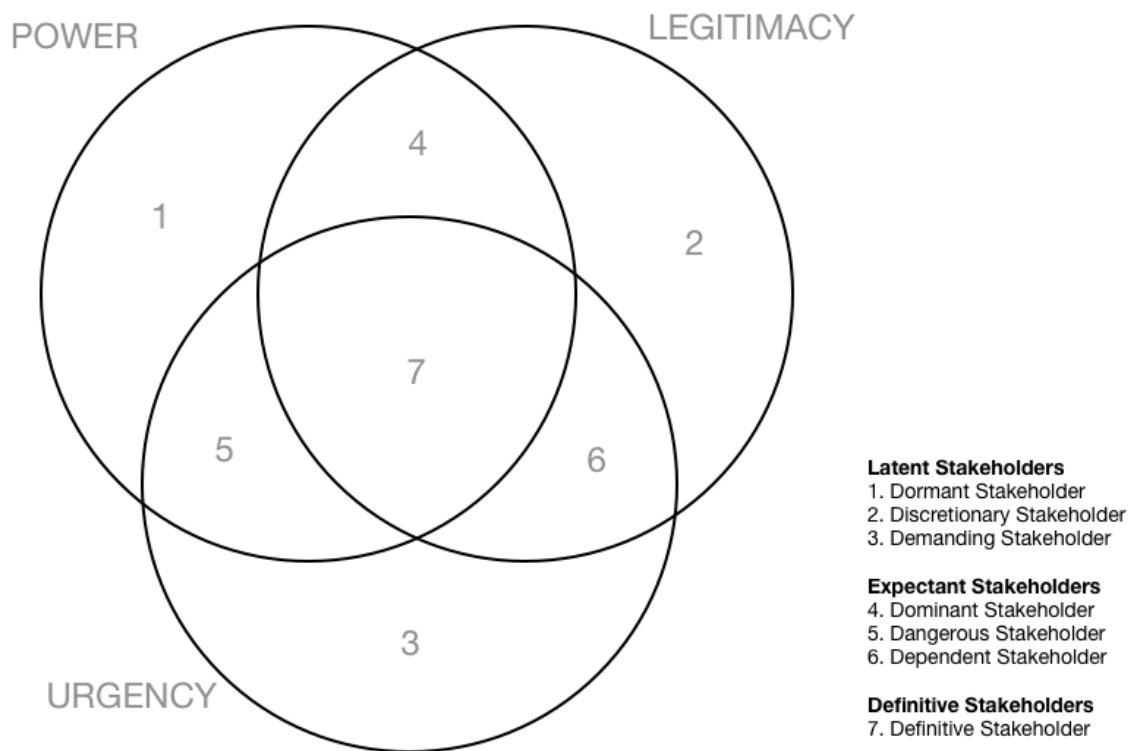
influence over a stakeholder of whom the focal firm is resource-dependent, both supporting Frooman's (1999) notion of indirect strategies as well as showing that the exchange between stakeholders does not need to be based on resources in a tangible sense, but rather showing that the term "resources" can be used more holistically, treating the good-will from an NGO as a resource in itself, in the form of social currency. It is this view on resources that will be used in this thesis, rather than treating resources as something that only can be procured and sold.

### 4.1.3 Stakeholder salience

As Phillips et al. (2003) point out, one of the main notions in stakeholder theory is not that every stakeholder should receive the same, or to a large degree similar, treatment in terms of assigned resources, something that has been a source of scorn (Marcoux, 2000). It could rather be described as a meritocracy, where stakeholders get attention and benefits based on their contribution and importance to the organization.

Mitchell et al. (1997) developed the theory of stakeholder salience, based upon theories on agent-principal relationships, transaction cost and resource management. Central in the theory is that there are three main sources of influence for a stakeholder. The first is *power*, meaning that if needed, the party has the means necessary to have its way. The second is *legitimacy*, which in this context stands for a social good or currency, meaning that a party with legitimacy has it only because it is widely recognized of having it. The third source is *urgency*, and relates to how time-sensitive the claim of a party is. Mitchell et al. (1997) add that the levels of the different sources of influence are socially constructed, dynamic and that the actors may or may not be aware of their own and others' levels of influence. The introduction of the three sources of influence was novel to the field of stakeholder theory, as previous high-profile work, such as Freeman (1984) and Donaldson and Preston (1995) considered only legitimacy as a basis for whether or not stakeholder relations should be managed.

In order to depict the salience of the actors, a model with the characteristics of a Venn diagram was created, where each of the seven fields relate to a specific type of stakeholder. This is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Stakeholder Typology according to Mitchell et al. (1997)**

According to the authors, there is a hierarchy of stakeholders, sorted after how many of the three different sources of influence they possess, or rather how salient they are to the organization. These will now be presented from lowest to highest salience.

### 1. Latent

When only one of the attributes is in place, managers will feel little inclination to tend to a stakeholder. In this group, there are three types of stakeholders. The first is dormant, who has the power to enforce its will, but no legitimacy or urgency to do so. As the name suggests, there is no real interaction between the company and the stakeholder. However, if another attribute is acquired, the situation changes, which is why managers should be aware of dormant stakeholders. The second type in this group is the discretionary stakeholder, who has legitimacy but neither power nor urgency. This means that managers have little reason to care about the stakeholder, although they might do so anyway. A typical example of discretionary stakeholders given by Mitchell et al. (1997) is the receivers of corporate philanthropy. The third stakeholders in the latent group are the demanding stakeholders, with high urgency to their claims but no power or legitimacy. They are mainly a mild annoyance.

## 2. Expectant stakeholders

When two attributes are combined, the organization is more responsive towards the stakeholders, since these expect a higher level of interactivity. The first type of stakeholders in this level is the dominants. They possess power and legitimacy, but no real incentive to do anything. A typical dominant stakeholder can be a major loan-giver, investor or community leader. Measurements to keep this group content include investor relationships, publications such as annual reports and public affairs management. The second type is the dependent stakeholder, with urgency and legitimacy, but no power to enforce them. To illustrate this, the authors mention people who get affected by oil spills as an example. These people need the help from more powerful stakeholders in order to reach their objectives. Lastly, the third type is the dangerous stakeholder, who while not having any legitimacy, can have its way because of the power it has to fulfill the urgent claim, one example being a wild employee strike.

## 3. Definitive stakeholder

When all three attributes are in place, there is little to stop the stakeholder. An example given is major shareholders of companies with plummeting stocks. If their urgency is not mitigated by effective measures undertaken by management, the management will be replaced.

The dynamic properties of the stakeholder salience model would arguably make it suitable to use for describing how stakeholders can be characterized in an enabling environment as social media, whereas the traditional bike-wheel stakeholder model gives little direction on how to manage the different stakeholder relationships, if they even should be managed. This could be combined with the work of Frooman (1999), to depict how the mitigation is carried out, i.e. withholding vs. usage strategies and direct vs. indirect paths. For this reason, these will be the two main models used to structure the analysis, although other literature on the topics is still of interest.

## **4.2 Research Question 2: How do the stakeholders influence the organizational development of using a Facebook page as a medium?**

If the stakeholder theory of the firm is accepted, a conclusion that can be drawn is that companies do not work in a vacuum, and that consideration of and/or adaptation to the different stakeholders must be undertaken to a certain degree. Indeed, there are several disciplines and schools of thought in the field of business that show how different stakeholders affect the company, although far from always using stakeholder theory explicitly. The influence of the customer has led to developments such as customer focused organizations, where companies design themselves to be more attentive to consumer information, as well as developing an agility to respond to it (Deshpandé et al., 1993), value-based pricing, where the pricing is based more on a thorough analysis of the customers willingness to pay and the value that the customer get from the product, rather than tenants such as cost-based pricing and ABC-pricing (Hinterhuber, 2004), and consumer co-creation, where companies involve the consumer in various processes, such as product development and brand building activities (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The importance of suppliers and the resources they can provide has spawned schools of thought like the interaction/network approach, where long-term relationship building is emphasized (Grönroos, 1994) and the kaizen idea of building a network of suppliers who constantly learn from each other (Iyer et al., 2009). The concept of corporate social responsibility is closely connected to stakeholder theory (Carroll, 1999), where attention is given to stakeholders who are affected socially or environmentally by the companies or take an interest in it, such as media, NGOs and various types of community leaders, as shown by Henriques and Sharma (2005).

While the examples above show the outcome of adapting business practices and organizational structure to stakeholders, little is done to explain the processes behind reaching this outcome. Therefore, this research question deals with how various stakeholders affect the organization with regards to the use of social media over time. In order to do so, a framework is needed to map how organizations evolve and develop, which will be presented in the following section.

## 4.2.1 Introduction to organizational process and capability maturity

McCormack et al. (2009) argue that there has been a shift from where controlling and using strategic assets in the best way used to be the main basis of competition, to a new reality where, imposed by an ever-changing external environment (Sussan & Johnson, 2003), the internal processes and capabilities of a company have become important strategic assets in themselves. According to the authors, this insight has led to a mass-development of organizational maturity models, mapping how companies can and should develop their processes and capabilities in order to build a competitive advantage. Indeed, the application and further development of the core concept of organizational maturity, mainly piloted by scholars such as Crosby (1979) and Humphrey (1987), have since then spawned maturity models for areas such as testing in production (Burnstein et al., 1998), human resources (Curtis et al., 2002), E-business (Xirogiannis & Glyka, 2007), and digital marketing (Chaffey, 2010) among others. The general focus of this literature is to identify drivers, key processes and capabilities, and to find ways to describe the maturity progression of a generic company.

This field is not without its critics. Cooke-Davies (2004) argues that the theory on maturity is somewhat immature itself, citing the “semantic minefield” as one of the reasons for the critique. Indeed, words such as “process” and “capability” seem to be used interchangeably. One of the reasons for this could be the fact that a great number of these maturity models stems from the seminal work of Humphrey (1987), which focuses on the rather process and project oriented software development industry (Cooke-Davies, 2004), with the following scholars using the same taxonomy to describe capabilities. This is clearly visible in Alden and Curtis (2006), stating that their Business Process Model deals with the maturity of organizational capabilities and that Humphrey’s Capability Maturity Model deals with the maturity of processes, implicitly underlining that there is no real difference between the use of the words, although there is a difference between the two models. For the further reading of this thesis, it is suggested that the reader remembers this rather confusing way of labeling the theories and models. Another point brought up by Cooke-Davies (2004) is that best-practices will look different across industries, meaning that no model can seamlessly be projected upon an industry or company. However, the findings by Pennypacker and Grant (2003) that the differences between industries with regard to the concept of maturity were not significant, would imply that using maturity models for a given

industry is less hazardous than Cooke-Davies (2004) argues. Furthermore, regardless of industry, McCormack et al. (2009) present that higher maturity, among other things, leads to improved forecasting of goals and costs, as well as a higher level of effectiveness to reach the goals.

The relative ease of understanding, applicability and implementation of maturity models (McCormack et al, 2009) might be the reason for why there are several competing models for social media produced by practitioners, mainly consultants. While most of these stem from empirical experience and evidence, only little evaluation in regards to methodology can be conducted based on the material provided. Therefore these models will not be discussed further, however useful for managerial purposes they might be. The next section of the literature review will now present the concept of organizational maturity in more detail.

#### **4.2.2 Capability Maturity (Humphrey, 1987) and Business Process Maturity (Alden & Curtis, 2006)**

As stated above, the theory of capability maturity was originally created in the field of software development (Humphrey, 1987; Paulk & Konrad, 1994), and has been applied to several other business and non-business situations. The resulting product was the Capability Maturity Model (CMM), focusing on processes in project-based organizations. Alden and Curtis (2006) have been scholars of organizational maturity for a long time, working at the institute where Humphrey developed the model for capability maturity, and set out to broaden the theory and make it possible to assess the organizational capabilities beyond processes, as well as not being as strongly linked to a project-based organization, naming it Business Process Maturity (BPM) (Alden & Curtis, 2006). Regardless of the taxonomy, the main tenant in the theory of maturity is that companies must realize how the interconnected relationships between the tasks to perform, the tools to perform them with and the proficiency of the people that are carrying out the tasks, all can be controlled, measured and improved.

As in both Humphrey (1987) and Alden and Curtis, (2006), theory states that a given company will embark on a journey towards a more mature organization, and that this journey follows a number of steps, or rather development in maturity, where each of the five levels represent a current state of maturity with suggested improvements for how to evolve to the next level.

### 1. Initial (CMM) / Initial (BPM)

In the initial stage in CMM, there are no formalized project plans or procedures, and tasks are carried out on an ad-hoc basis. If formalized procedures exist, they are not being carried out. Management has little insight and/or understanding of the processes involved, leading to detachment from the identification of problems. Because of this, the output produced is of low quality, as the problems have not been solved, if even discovered. The main reason for this behavior is a lack of experience and a naive eagerness to get going. Humphrey describes this behavior as trying to drive a car towards a destination without consulting a map.

In order to overcome these problems, several actions need to be taken. Projects need to be carefully managed, where clear responsibilities are in place and a dedication to follow-through must be developed. Top management needs to have some degree of oversight over the process, establishing process compliance and goals for productivity outputs. The quality of the output must also be assured, by mainly monitoring that the tasks are performed in the manner that have been agreed upon, and the needed changes must be controlled and managed.

BPM also calls the first stage the initial stage, and much like in CMM, this stage is characterized by ad-hoc methods, leading to a large degree of waste in terms of labor, as tasks are being carried out in such low quality and with a high error percentage that the organization needs to continuously repeat them. Similar to how it is described in CMM, the companies in this stage do not have formalized routines for the allocation of resources and responsibilities, leading to what is called “hero worship”, where people are in effect free-riding on the efforts of driven individuals who take it upon themselves to finalize tasks. It also leads to inconsistency, as these heroes will use individual methods to solve the issues. In order to solve these issues, routinized behaviors and practices need to be created. Change is however hard to accomplish, since, as in CMM, there is a lack of managerial insight and interest.

### 2. Repeated/Managed

After reaching the repeated stage in CMM, companies are at risk of being complacent. While their processes are now much more effective, Humphrey means that they only are so because the company is dealing with the same tasks in a repeated manner, as the improvements have been made to correct the problems the companies have been facing. As such, a company in the repeated stage is not sufficiently equipped to handle

changes and occurrences that have not been dealt with before. In order to overcome these problems, the routines and processes must be more carefully overseen and be described in better detail, as well as performance reviewed on a regular basis, thus creating an architecture where tasks are decomposed to the degree where a single individual can perform them, knowing to full extent what tools are required to complete them and how the output will be evaluated.

In BPM, the second stage, referred to as the managed stage, is where the organization operates after the routinized standards that have been developed, however only locally within the units, as best practices are yet not shared across the organization. The leadership is committed to the routines and the free-rider effect has largely been dealt with. In order to evolve further, the company must identify unit specific best practices, applying them to the whole organization and standardizing them.

### 3. Defined/Standardized

In this stage of CMM, the organization has a clear way of working with routinized tasks as well as procedures to handle unexpected events or even crises. What is lacking, however, is quantified measurement of how well the projects are being carried out, and there is uncertainty over which type of measurements to employ and which items and units to measure. In order to improve this, a number of quantified measurements to identify the quality of the processes need to be developed, as well as a database where the results are kept for learning purposes.

As the company becomes more mature in BPM, the best practices are shared across the organization and adapted to fit the challenges of the specific unit, leading to an organization that is capable of handling unforeseen events, much like in CMM. Another similarity is the lack of quantified measurements, leading to inability to assess the level of performance in definite terms, requiring the creation of such measurements in order to mature. In this stage, the company sees growth in productivity and economies of scale.

### 4. Managed/Predictable

The issues of semantics is visible here, as CCM chooses the nomenclature “managed” to describe the fourth state, and is therefore not similar to the managed state in BPM. It is also in this state where the fact that the theory was developed for software development is noticed. The companies in this stage are proficient in collecting quantified data to guide the projects, but the costs involved with doing so are high,

since there are most likely collected manually. Another issue is that two given factors, i.e. products and individuals, are not necessarily seamlessly comparable with each other, thus making the task of measuring harder. To solve this, automated systems for data collection should be in place and management should stop measuring products, and instead measure the processes behind the output.

In the fourth stage in BPM, the output has become predictable, due to standardization and quantitative measurability of the efforts, giving the organization stability as variation is reduced. To reach the pinnacle of maturity, the company needs to pair the existing knowledge with the new data in order to continuously improve.

#### 5. Optimized/Optimized

At the final stage in CMM, the organization can now use all of the existing improvements to the fullest, leading to practically self-improving processes, because of the high level of detail when it comes to finding errors with methods in place to correct them. This is similar to how BPM regards this state, as it describes that two characteristics of the optimized stage are that the organization is preventative, systematically eliminating defects as well as continual, never ceasing to improve the capabilities.

As is seen above, CMM and BPM are two highly similar applications of the concept of organizational maturity, with what can be seen as extensive overlapping, thus reducing the need for using both perspectives. Furthermore, BPM has a more general approach than CMM, making it more applicable to different industries or phenomena. However, the focus on managing projects is useful for creating the conceptual framework that will guide the data collection and analysis.

### **4.2.4 Stakeholder influence on organizational maturity: Internet sophistication**

In the presentation and discussion on organizational maturity above, the roles of various stakeholders in the development of a more mature organization is in most cases implicit at best. The company is mainly considered as a unit, and the only actor mentioned in regards to having an impact on the maturity development is management, despite being an important one. Furthermore, the framework could appear to be much too generic to be useful in describing a specific phenomenon, such as the level of

sophistication with which companies are using social media. This could arguably be another reason for why scholars have chosen to develop phenomenon specific maturity frameworks. In order to use the framework as a mean to analyze and guide a discussion on the process behind how stakeholders affect the maturity development of social media in companies in an effective manner, more theoretical input is useful to put the challenges of social media into better context in regards to the concept of organizational maturity. Such theoretical input can be found in literature on how companies adapt to new technology as a mean of marketing, which could be argued to be analogous to the adaptation of social media. A technology that attracted scholarly interest was the Internet, which is why examples from this literature will be used.

In the development of internet as a marketing tool, it may come as little surprise that the level of adoption of the technology from the consumers played a significant role (Doherty et al., 2003), meaning that companies targeting groups of consumers with a high level of internet usage were more likely to have a more advanced approach to online marketing than companies who did not. The authors state that an implication of this is that companies who do not develop an internet marketing program run the risk of losing customers who use the internet to their more adaptive competitors, although Teo et al. (1997) found that industry competitiveness is a weak explanatory factor for this.

While consumers are important stakeholders, almost all other factors influencing the sophistication of the marketing organization using Internet seem to have been found internally. Teo et al. (1997) found the role of management to be especially influential, as top management buy-in was heavily correlated with an advanced approach to Internet marketing, as these stakeholders are in the position to allocate resources needed to enhance the organizational capabilities. The importance of management acceptance is stressed by Lynn et al. (2002) and Doherty et al. (2003), who mean that in addition to resource allocation, the managerial view on the general usefulness of the internet and whether or not a strategy for using this channel has been developed, are of great weight in regards to organizational internet marketing proficiency.

## 5. Description and Analysis

*The following section is divided into the two research questions, which are further divided into sub-parts. Under research question 1 an overview of the studied companies will be given, and the stakeholders of their Facebook pages mapped. Afterwards, stakeholder groups will be examined separately, and similarities and differences of their roles within the companies analyzed. The analysis results will then be used to classify the individual stakeholder groups according to the stakeholder salience model by Mitchell et al. (1997). Research question 2 will give an overview of the internal company activities regarding social media management and relate them to important concepts from organizational maturity theory. In addition, an analysis of each group of stakeholders' influence on organizational process maturity will be conducted.*

### 5.1 What stakeholder groups can be identified for a branded Facebook page and what are their characteristics?

As the theoretical overview has shown, many different interpretations and definitions of stakeholders have developed over time. The following discussion is focused on information provided by the interviewees from a company perspective, which resembles the stakeholder view of Phillips et al. (2003) when it comes to the identification of the stakeholders, since the company representatives attribute attention to different stakeholder groups according to their perception of the stakeholders' importance and contribution. The following analysis of the stakeholders will then be based on Mitchell et al.'s (1997) stakeholder salience model as a framework, while incorporating Frooman's (1999) view on stakeholder influence strategy.

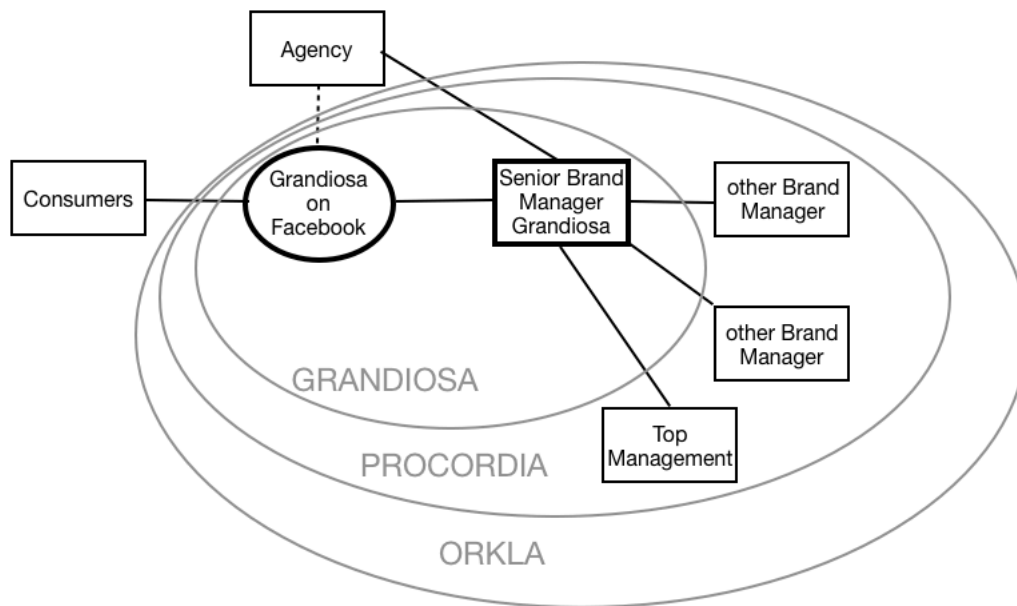
#### 5.1.1 Company organization description

In the following, an overview of the studied companies is given, with the stakeholders being mapped according to interviewee accounts. Straight connections imply direct linkage and influence of the entities, which can among others be in form of orders, decision making authority, executional activities and so on. Dotted lines are used if the respective stakeholder was influential in some way, but the authors could not clearly identify a direct involvement, or if the mentioned entity was attributed with future influence by the interviewee. However, these entities still can have indirect influence on the social media presence through influence on other entities. Furthermore, positions

and/or departments where the main responsibility lies are indicated by bolder borders. The organizational maps are not designed to represent the real organizational structure, links and hierarchies, but are a simplified illustration of stakeholder relations as interpreted by the authors based on the information from the interviews.

### **Grandiosa**

The Grandiosa brand is owned by the Procordia group, which among other brands also comprises Risi Frutti, Felix and Fun Light, and in turn is owned by Orkla. When it comes to social media, Grandiosa is active on Facebook, YouTube, and uses Smartson, a company that lets consumers test products and give feedback in the form of blog posts and comments. The person in charge of the Facebook presence is the Senior Brand Manager of Grandiosa, Henrik Strömqvist, who is supported by another employee. According to him, their work is to the greatest extent independent from Procordia, however there is input through informal meetings with other brand managers in the Procordia group. The brand also uses the help of external agencies to run the campaigns in social media. According to Henrik Strömqvist, the page 'Pizza Grandiosa Sverige' is mainly used to distribute information and marketing material like advertising films, to collect feedback and have a dialogue with consumers, which is done by actively posting questions or starting discussions. Furthermore, the brand executes competitions and campaigns, and cross-promotes other Procordia brands. According to Henrik Strömqvist, Facebook had been on Grandiosa's agenda for a while, but was only launched in the beginning of the year with an initial campaign to build a fan base.



**Figure 3: Grandiosa Stakeholder Map**

### Brand XY

Brand XY belongs to Company X, which owns other brands within the same food category, and is part of corporation Z, which in turn comprises several other companies within the food and beverage sector. Brand XY is the only one of Company X's brands that has a Facebook presence, with the Communication Manager being in charge of its maintenance. Even though the latter acknowledges the stake the marketing department has in the Facebook presence, she is critical towards their lack of social media competency, and therefore attributes increasing influence to external agencies. Their influence is also what she would like to rely on more in the future when it comes to social media maintenance, since she is not content with her current role and would like someone else to take over. In addition to the marketing department, she also describes a lack of support from top management, who she claims to be afraid of social media and to not want their employees to engage in social media activities, which she also attributes to inexperience with social media and a general reluctance when it comes to change and novelty. She is therefore using the help of other companies within the corporation for input in form of benchmarks and examples, with which she also tries to convince top management and the marketing department of Facebook. According to the Communication Manager, the main objective of the Facebook page is brand building. The activities focus on informing about other marketing activities, like the launch of new designs and mobile applications, as well as competitions on the brand website. To a certain extent, interaction with the fans in form of questions and

discussion topics about different products is initiated, however those are not used in product development. Another noticeable aspect is the number of unauthorized pages for brand XY, initiated by both fans and 'haters'. However, the Communication Manager stated that the brand does not care about those.

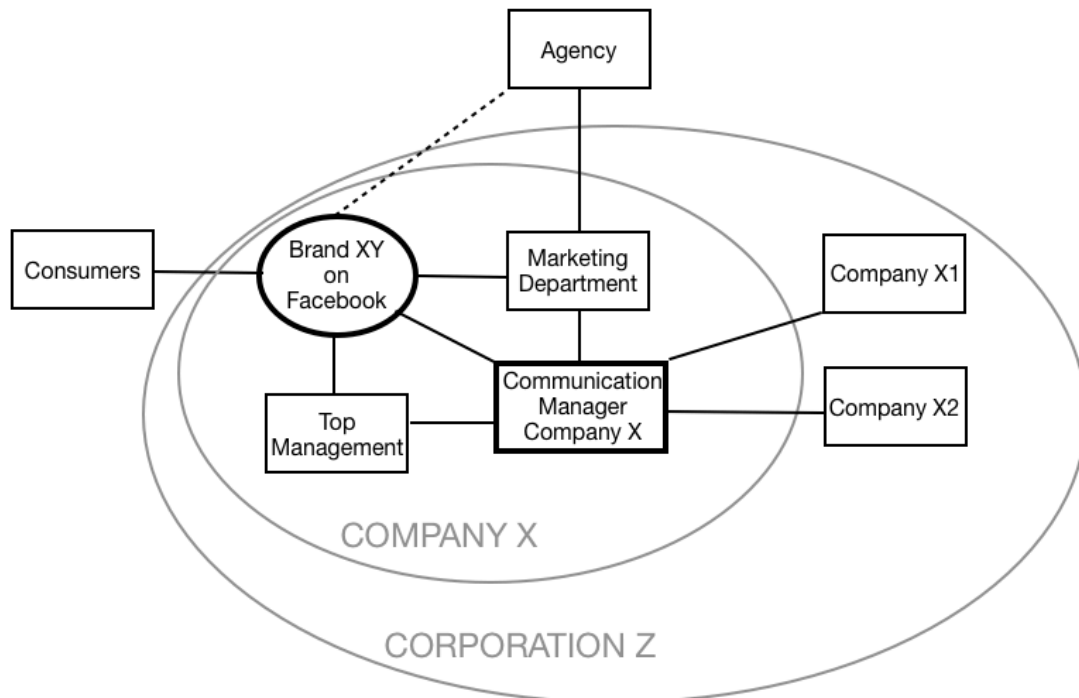
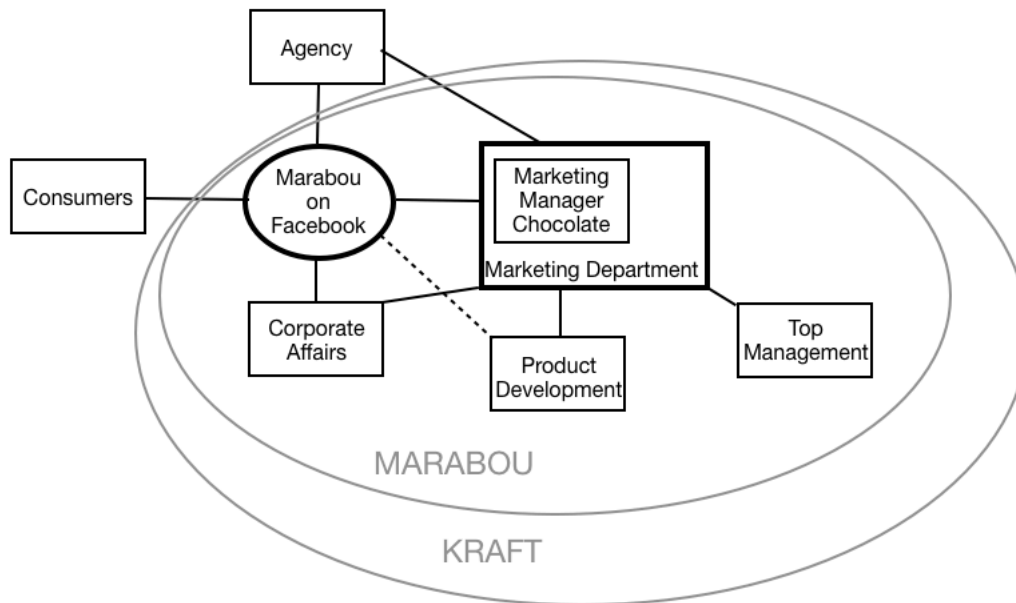


Figure 4: Brand XY Stakeholder Map

### Marabou

Marabou is part of Kraft Foods, and comprises several other chocolate brands, despite being a product brand itself. The brand's Facebook presence is divided into 3 individual brand pages for Marabou, Marabou Premium and Aladdin, since the consumers perceive them as separate entities according to Marketing Manager Malin Jönsson. She states that the main responsibility for the social media activities lies with the marketing department, with the product manager being in charge of the daily maintenance, but being supported by others. To a smaller extent, corporate affairs is also involved in the content creation, e.g. when it comes to CSR activities. Overall, their activities are not guided by Kraft Foods, but receive good feedback from top management. Malin Jönsson states the main objective for the page is brand building, which is executed through interaction with consumers, by comments on the wall, polls and discussion topics, as well as by distributing and pointing to other communication materials, like film clips and special campaigns. In addition, insights derived from this interaction is fed back into the organization and used for product development, which

has resulted in new products in the past. The Marabou page was originally created by a fan, and now after more than 2 years has around 280 000 likes. The latter are considered an important dimension by the brand manager, since they increase the reach of the brand building measures and are therefore actively driven.

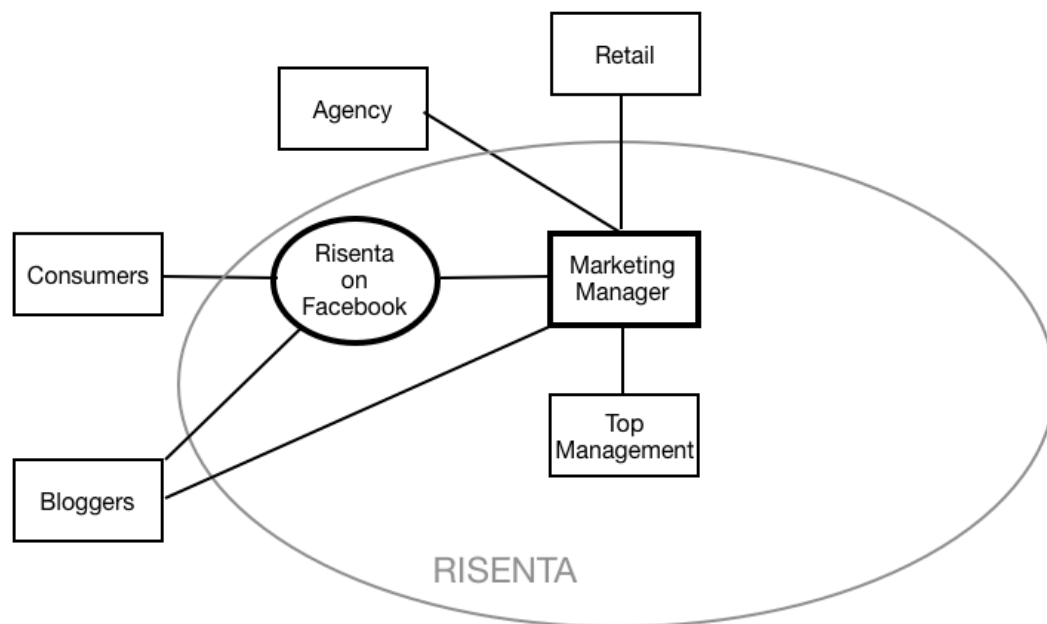


**Figure 5: Marabou Stakeholder Map**

## Risenta

Risenta is a privately owned company specialized in healthy food. The company is active on Facebook and twitter, and linked to a network of food bloggers with which they exchange ideas. The person in charge of the Facebook page is Marketing Manager Johanna Dannesund, who manages the page, which was set up on her initiative, on top of her other tasks. According to her, support from the rest of the company is rather reserved due to personal inexperience of the other employees when it comes to social media. However her efforts are not discouraged by top management either for the same reasons. The main objective for the Facebook page according to Johanna Dannesund is to communicate with consumers, and keep them updated about and interested in the brand. This is done through weekly recipes that can also be found on the website, as well information, pictures and links about new products and what is going on in the company. To a smaller extent, interaction is spurred by posting open questions on the wall, as well as conducting small competitions. However, the marketing manager plans on extending Risenta's activities in the future since she attributes increasing importance to social media as a marketing channel, and therefore considers bringing in additional support from agencies. Interestingly, Johanna

Dannesund is the only interviewee that mentions the influence of retail chains on the social media efforts of fast moving consumer goods companies, since the chains provide the possibility to launch new product during certain time windows throughout the year. This special influence of possibilities to launch products might be attributed to Risenta's lack of traditional media efforts, which is way they see their product packaging as an important medium to communicate with consumers and to drive traffic to their online channels.



**Figure 6: Risenta Stakeholder Map**

## Gooh

Gooh is a small corporation within the Lantmännen group, and offers pre-cooked meals of high quality at a reasonable price. Gooh was developed through a co-operation of Lantmännen, one of the largest groups in food, energy and agriculture in Scandinavia, and Operakällaren, one of Sweden's most renowned star restaurants, and at this point owned by both organizations with equal shares. Today, Gooh is completely owned by Lantmännen, however less integrated into the group like other Lantmännen brands, according to Gooh's marketing and product manager Stina Jakobsson. She is also the one responsible for the Facebook page, together with Gooh's marketing coordinator, who is in charge of day-to-day maintenance. Other than through general communication policies for employees, the Lantmännen group does not influence Gooh's work on Facebook. Additionally, due to a lack of personal involvement with social media from the rest of the management, as well as due to internal distribution of responsibility within Gooh, the marketing department does not receive active support

from the management group, however try to keep them updated about their work and the positive outcomes, since they consider social media as a must-have channel. During campaigns, especially the initial campaign designed to drive fans to the page by giving away free lunch, Gooh's marketing department was supported by an external agency, which to a large extent took over the planning and execution. In line with this campaign, Gooh's main objective for the Facebook page is to reach people and make them talk about Gooh, both on the page but also by spreading it to their friends. Due to a limited marketing budget, this is supposed to enforce other marketing measures. e.g. by creating awareness for new products, the main Gooh store or by recruiting people for the taste panel. For further promotion, they also actively support fan initiated Facebook groups like 'We who want to buy Gooh on the SJ trains' ( 'Alla som vill köpa Gooh på SJ').

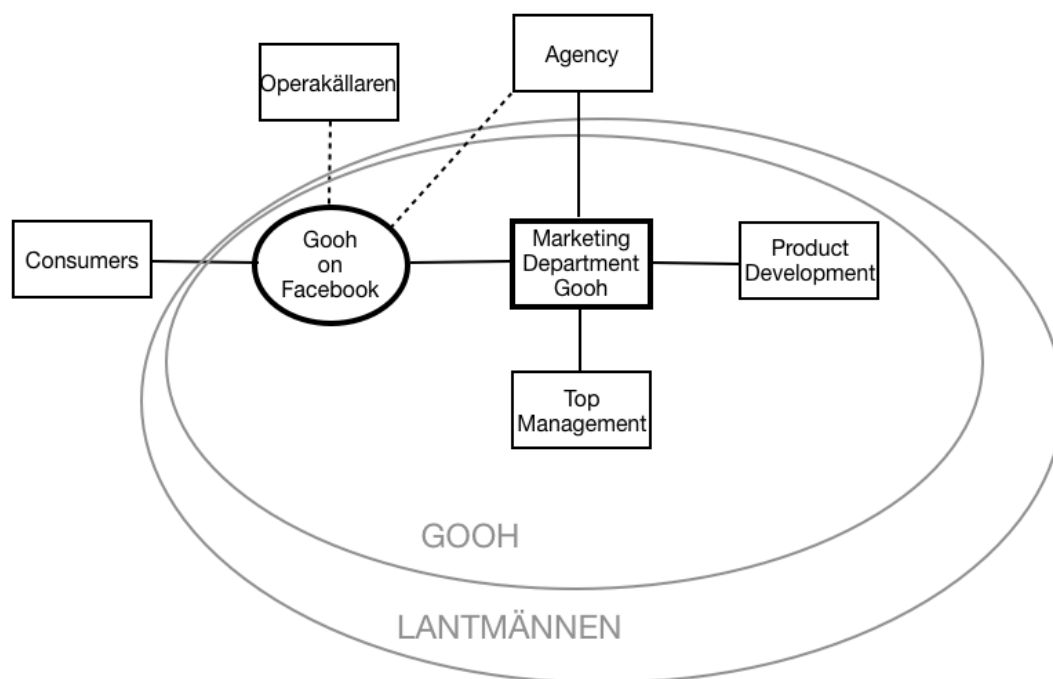


Figure 7: Gooh Stakeholder Map

### Cloetta

Cloetta is a major chocolate and confectionery producing corporation in the Nordics, and comprises several product brands including Plopp, Center and Kexchoklad. When it comes to social media, the 'Cloetta' Facebook page is their main channel. Even though the pages for product brands have been created by fans, brand manager Claes Ekström calls them "our pages", indicating his approval, which is also in line with his view on social media as an open medium. For the official page, the communication department is in charge of updates, answering questions and posting comments,

however there is a close collaboration with the marketing department. In addition, agencies are brought in for help when needed, however the focus lies on creating competency in-house. When it comes to support from the company leadership, Claes Ekström describes the reaction as very positive, which he also attributes to the Head of Communications being part of top management. When it comes to uses for the Facebook page, Cloetta provides information about the brand and new products, initiates competitions and special campaigns, as well as distributing free samples. According to Claes Ekström, the main reason to be on Facebook is to provide a forum for people that want to influence companies and brands, and thereby move from one-way communication towards a dialogue.

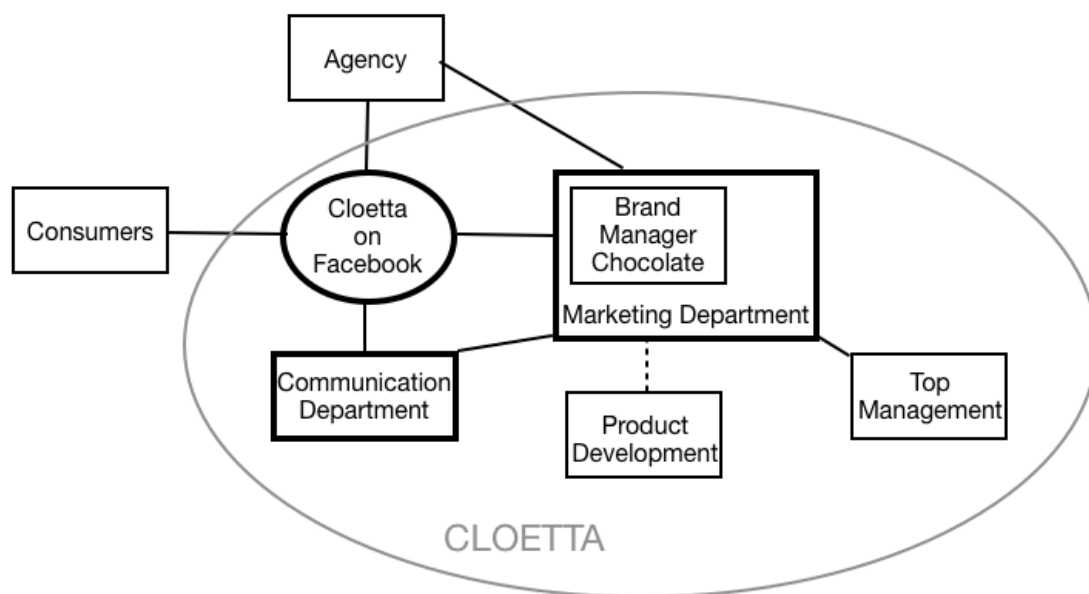
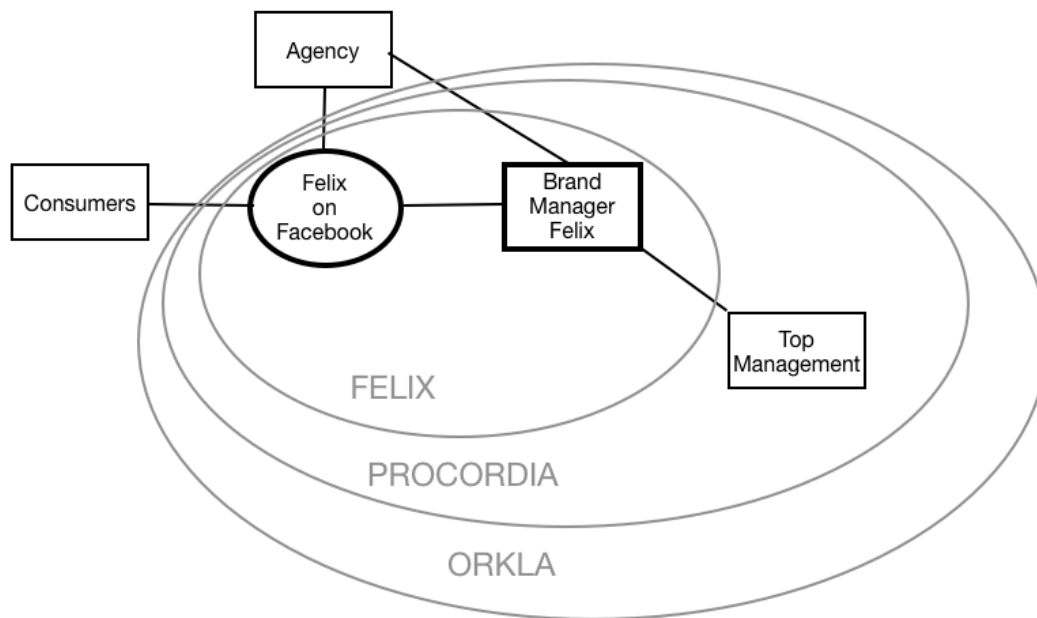


Figure 8: Cloetta Stakeholder Map

### Felix

Felix, like Grandiosa, is a product brand within the Procordia group, and one of Sweden's largest food producers in terms of turnover. Its food categories comprise preserved foods, convenience food, dressings and sauces, and above all ketchup, for which Felix is market leader. Similar to Grandiosa, the Felix brand is managed to a large extent independently from Procordia, but a general Internet strategy is followed. According to Brand Manager Lars-Erik Jönsson, who is responsible for many of the Felix products while focusing on ketchup, as well as their social media presence, the brand has been on Facebook for several years as a one-way medium distributing information, and started to create a more structured dialogue with consumers about a year ago. The dialogue was introduced with a special campaign that derived its idea from a fan-initiated group called 'I eat Felix Ketchup with everything except for

pancakes'. Both for the campaign, as well as for inspiration and social media insights, the brand was and is supported by an agency, while operational tasks stay within the company. Besides the campaign, the Facebook page provides consumers with information about new products, competitions, initiates polls about product related topics and links to marketing activities in Felix' other online channels.



**Figure 9: Felix Stakeholder Map**

## Arla

Arla Foods is a global dairy company and cooperative owned by Danish and Swedish dairy farmers, and comprises several product brands, both under the Arla brand as well as not explicitly labeled Arla. In addition, some brands are managed on a global level, while others are national, which makes coordination within the company more complex. In Sweden, Arla Foods only has one official Facebook page called 'Arla Sverige', which like the Arla brand serves as an umbrella for the product brands. The Facebook presence was initiated in the end of last year, following the creation of a combined social media and sponsorship management position in the market communication department, held by Christian Bergenstråhle. In addition to the social media manager, who is responsible for structuring the social media efforts as well as developing an international policy, the Arla Facebook page is administered by a PR manager, a representative from corporate communications, a member of the web team, and three employees of Arla Forum, the company's customer service, which are responsible to answer questions via email, phone, and in accordance Facebook. Customer support and in general dialogue with consumers is seen as the main use for Facebook within Arla at the moment according to the social media manager, since he considers it

important to make the big company more personal. However he points out the growing interest from Human Resources, individual brand managers and possibly product development in the future. Overall, this supports Christian Bergenstråhle's view on social media, which he sees from a corporate perspective involving everyone, rather than only a marketing perspective. Yet, he states that like in most companies, there has been both support and skepticism from top management, which can partly be explained by personal inexperience with social media, which is why he holds meetings for inspiration and education within the company. When it comes to activities on Facebook, Arla's entry page is linked to branded campaigns, for which the individual brand managers are supported by external agencies. In addition, the page serves as a platform to present the other brands, to promote discussions and competitions, and to provide general information about Arla.

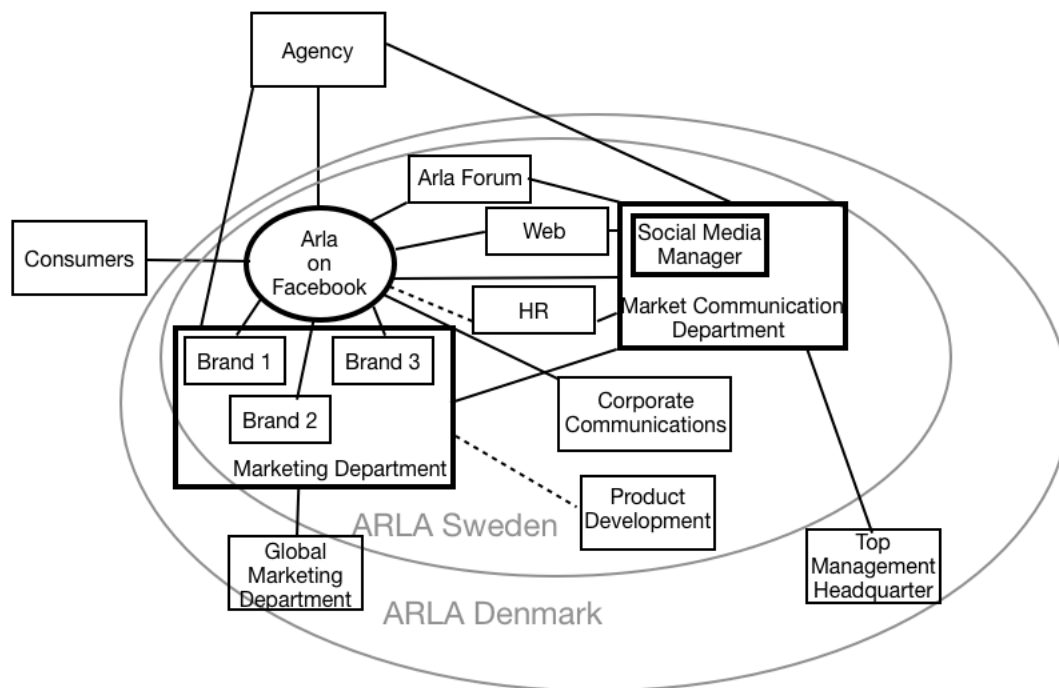
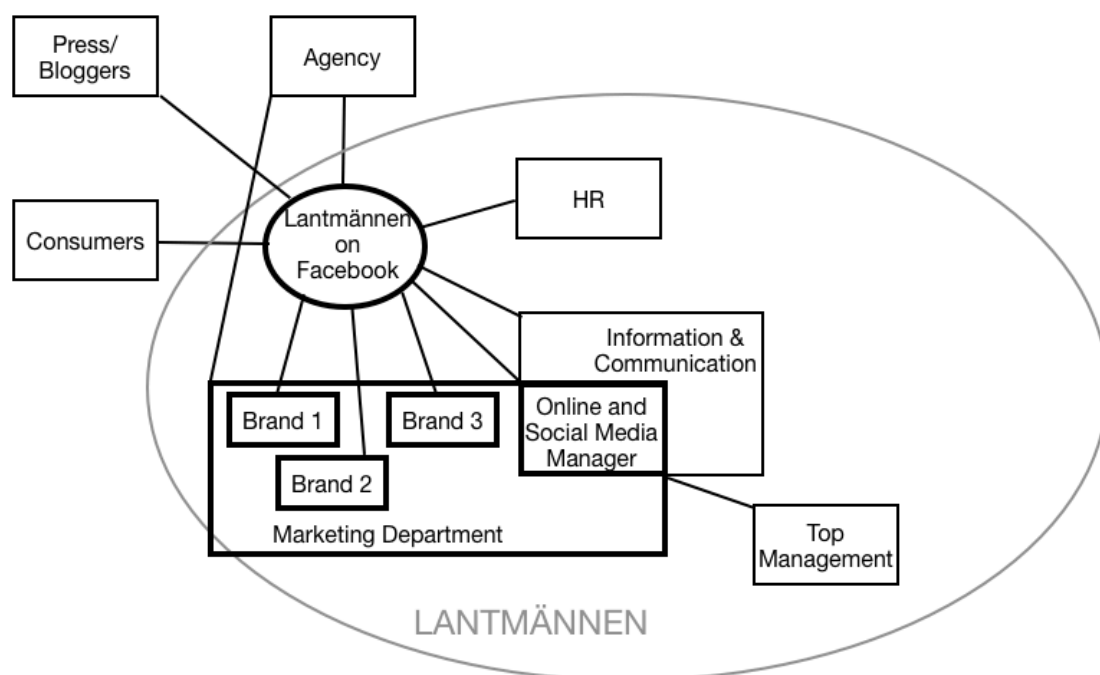


Figure 10: Arla Stakeholder Map

## Lantmännen

Lantmännen is a Nordic cooperation within food, energy and agriculture, and owns well-known Swedish food brands like AXA, GoGreen, Kronfågel and the already presented Gooh. Lantmännen's Facebook presence is divided into several pages, of which the central one when it comes to branding is 'Bra mat från Lantmännen', serving as a platform for the company's product brands, of which some also have their own brand pages. The company also has a corporate page called 'Lantmännen', providing general company information, as well as 'Lantmännen Career', dealing with recruitment

activities. The general Lantmännen presence is maintained by Online Communication and Social Media Manager Mårten Skånman, who belongs to both the marketing and the information & communication department. Responsibility for the individual brand pages lies with the brand managers, but most of them have outsourced maintenance to external agencies. However, as the strong cross-linking on the different pages also shows, Mårten Skånman describes Lantmännen as a guarantor for the product brands, and that they mutually enforce each other. Interestingly, Lantmännen's work with social media was activated as a response to an incident involving one of the product brands, where glass was found in frozen chicken. The company used both Facebook and twitter to respond to press and bloggers, and guide people to the correct information, which worked well for the brand according to Mårten Skånman. Today, the Facebook presence is mainly used to distribute product information, recipes, campaigns, as well as to manage feedback, and conduct polls about consumer opinions.



**Figure 11: Lantmännen Stakeholder Map**

## 5.1.2 Stakeholder influence and salience

As we saw in the presentation of the organizational maps, a number of social media stakeholders were reported by the companies in the study. Here, the behavior of these stakeholders will be presented more generally and thoroughly by using the stakeholder salience model by Mitchell et al. (1997) and the stakeholder influence strategy model developed by Frooman (1999), with the previously discussed considerations made in regards to Tsai et al. (2005) and Henriques and Sharma (2005). Mitchell et al.'s (1997) definitions of power, legitimacy and urgency will therefore be specified for a Facebook context. Here, power refers to the availability of means to influence a brand's Facebook presence. Legitimacy in this context refers to the extent that companies acknowledge the influence a group has when it comes to a brand's Facebook presence. Urgency refers to the time-sensitivity of the stakeholder's matter. It is important to note that here, the person and department in charge of the Facebook presence will be considered as the focal point in the network of stakeholders, since the analysis is based on their accounts. Furthermore, space will only be given to stakeholders that were reported by the interviewees, although others might exist, the main reason for this being that a broader stakeholder analysis would rely on speculation rather than gathered data.

### 5.1.2.1 "Social Media Manager"

As the overview over the interviewees has shown, most of the persons responsible for the Facebook pages do not hold a title related to social media, but to marketing or communication in general, which is why social media manager is rather a description than a job title. However, as already indicated by the company overviews, the social media managers are the focal point of this analysis due to their importance for the social media presence. It is often the social media manager that initiated the brand's Facebook presence, as well as often being the one maintaining it or supervising the ones doing so. Therefore, they can without much doubt be attributed a certain degree of power, legitimacy as well as urgency, which makes them definite stakeholders. However, as it will be illustrated in the following, a large extent of these characteristics is attributed to them by other stakeholder groups.

### 5.1.2.2 Consumers

The results from the pre-study on the question on why companies chose to be present in social media were unsurprisingly confirmed in the interview. Based on the material provided by the company representatives, the customers can undoubtedly be said to be the most important stakeholder for companies in social media, and as such, this

group will receive significantly more space in this section compared to the other stakeholders.

It seems like the companies consider themselves to be acting in a consumer dominated sphere, where the latter set the agenda. This is something that companies accept, being worried about what will happen if they fail to pay attention to consumers in social media because of how fast rumors of bad treatment can spread in this channel. Johan Hedberg at Springtime explains that social media forces companies to develop their ability to listen:

*“It’s like having a telephone. You can of course unplug it and no one will call you. Or rather, they will still call you, but you won’t hear it” - Johan Hedberg, Springtime*

Indeed, many of the interviewees make the comparison to older types of media, such as print advertising or TV commercials, to describe what they see as the main differentiator of social media, namely the innate two-way dialogue of the medium.

Several of the company representatives say that they have to deal with different types of consumers depending on the reason for why they decided to like the fan page. Some are enthusiastic about what the brands stands for and like the products, some do it to conform to peers, some because they had a monetary incentive to do so and some to voice their objection towards the company or complain about a bad product experience. The people in charge of the social media describe that they publicly take a “customer-is-always-right”-approach, typically answering the discontent fan page member quickly and politely without trying to get into an argument, and as long as the message posted is not obviously offensive, none of the companies would ever try to censor or hide complaints. However, the fact that unhappy customers or non-customers so publicly can have a conversation with the company is, according to several of the interviewees, one of the major challenges involved with social media.

*“In social media, all of a sudden a person can press an issue very strongly and make it bigger than it really was from the beginning, simply because the person has an interest in doing so.” - Claes Ekstrand, Cloetta.*

*"When you discuss something with an individual consumer over the telephone, it's easier. It's between me and that consumer. And although I have to handle what I say with care, it's less directly sensible then when it's in front of an audience in a public forum." - Stina Jakobsson, Gooh.*

*"You really need to listen. It's not a solution to just say 'Here you have seven apple pies, be happy now.' You really need to listen, because I think that's more important than just sending coupons, and so on." - Johanna Dannesund, Risenta.*

One respondent went so far as to compensate an unhappy customer who had what can be argued to be an illegitimate claim, which also was how it was seen from the company's perspective. Nonetheless, the company representative decided to oblige the person, since the conversation through Facebook took too much time and effort, as well as being watched by several other people. While this example was not the norm, most companies meant that by diligently responding quickly to the concerns of consumers to show that they care about the issue, future problems that would potentially have been caused by the individual can be averted, instead of seeing the criticism spread through a snowball effect.

This suggests that in regards to Mitchell et al. (1997), people who up to recently found themselves in the latent group, for example demanding stakeholders with urgency but no power or legitimacy, now become more salient to the company, costing resources in the process. A plausible explanation for this, based on Mitchell et al. (1997), could perhaps be found in how companies consider this to be a part of the rules of social media, where power comes from being able to spread their concern through the medium to several other people and legitimacy coming from "owning" the media. As Claes Ekström of Cloetta puts it "Social media are open". Whether this explanation holds true or not, the fact remains that companies are effectively assigning power and legitimacy to the consumers by choosing to give them this attention.

Jesper Åström means that a way of decreasing the risk of consumers using the Facebook page to push an issue is to implement tactics for controlling the discussion, for example by posting updates in the form of specific and rather safe questions, such as "Spring is coming, what is your favorite color to wear when it gets warmer?" for a clothing retail company. According to Åström, the specific question narrows down the

forthcoming discussion, and when someone tries to take over the comment thread with a complaint or a critical counter question, this person will be considered as someone who ruins the discussion on spring colors and stands a higher probability of being reprimanded by the rest of the community, which decreases the legitimacy of the person while still allowing the company to be neutral and polite. This can arguably be an example of relying on indirect paths of influence, using the softer view on exchange of Henriques and Sharma (2005) in regards to the stakeholder influence strategies formed by Frooman (1999). In the interviews, little proof was given on the propensity of companies to employ this strategy path, although some of the company representatives mentioned that consumers reprimanding others still occurs without implicitly soliciting it by employing any tactics.

Another way that consumers can voice their opinion about brands is to start their own Facebook page for a brand. Most of these pages are started by fans, often before the brand decided to create its own official page, while some are anti-pages, for example the one for Swedish sports team AIK, "We who hate AIK", with over 85 000 members. Both Claes Ekström of Cloetta as well as Christian Bergenstråhle of Arla mention that fan initiated pages exist for some of their brands, which the companies accept, while both the Marabou page and the brand XY page were initially created by a fan and then taken over by the brand. When it comes to negative pages, the companies in this study were not concerned with this issue, some because they were fortunate enough to not have encountered an anti-page, while others meant that consumers are entitled to their opinion about them as long as the criticism was honest. Almost all of the company representatives said that if they were to discover an anti-page, they would leave it, thereby acknowledging its legitimacy. Only in case of unfounded or untrue claims, interviewees denied their legitimacy and took actions against them into consideration.

It would appear that consumers who start these anti-pages are not considered to be nearly as important for companies as those who show their dissatisfaction by posting on the official wall, based on how resources are allocated in order to deal with them. This is interesting, since anti-pages certainly can attract a large group of people, arguably giving them more power and legitimacy than one disgruntled customer, but it would appear that companies choose to focus their attention on urgency. The purpose of the anti-pages are rarely to bring about any change, they are rather statements, and lack the urgency of a dissatisfied customer who wants his or her problem resolved as

quickly as possible, but they still collect people under a common cause against the brand.

While the company representatives in the study showed a lack of interest in the anti-groups, the interviewees from the consultancies said that they have encountered clients who want to solve the problem an anti-page creates. Jesper Åström described that some companies try to exert pressure on the person who created the page by threatening with legal action or by going through Facebook's abuse system, practices that according to him often are futile, or even counterproductive. If the page gets taken down, it is probable that the individuals in that group will create their own thus spawning a multitude of new anti-pages, visible to anyone who searches for the company on Facebook. He gives an example from a client of his, anonymized here as brand A, who after launching a TV commercial found a Facebook page called "We who hate the girl in the brand A's commercial", collecting over 50 000 members who disliked the girl featured in it. The severely abusive and aggressive tone in the group towards the girl made brand A take the commercial off the air and its YouTube channel, only to find that new versions of it were quickly uploaded by other YouTube users, where brand A could not moderate the comments.

Another measure that was taken by brand A was to contact the creator of the group, urging him to take it down, or at least change the name of it. The name was changed to "We who strongly dislike the girl in brand A's commercial", and although the effect of this was not very strong, Åström means that creating a dialogue is key to mitigate harm created by these groups. If the company manages to uphold this dialogue over time, his opinion is that the anti-page can be turned into a strength by serving as a source for market intelligence and product development. This view is supported by Johan Hedberg, who had a similar experience with a client, here brand B. Much like brand A, an anti-page with over a 100 000 members was created about a TV-commercial for brand B. At first, the managers of brand B were very uneasy about this, but Hedberg assured them that the group was an opportunity rather than a threat. Brand B created a dialogue with the members of the group, urging them to give suggestions on how they would want the next commercial to look like, thus creating a way for the people to interact with the brand and its communication. These examples given by the consultants, show that there could be benefits of assigning more legitimacy to the anti-groups by being interested in what they have to say, rather than to only focus on stakeholders with urgent demands.

The topic of these empowered dissatisfied consumers and brand opponents is interesting, as it is considered to be one of the main self-reported challenges involved with social media, as well as from a theoretical perspective. It shows how the dynamic relationship between companies and consumers is changing in social media. However, this type of consumers is not all too typical. Normally, the people who the interviewees have a dialogue with on their Facebook pages are appreciative of the brand and its products, and show their interest in the brand by posting simple kudos, a story about a particularly good product experience, a picture of the person and the product, pressing the like button when the company posts something, or even come with their own ideas for how to develop the product further. This interaction could either be unsolicited by the company, suggested by asking for it, or solicited by incentivizing the consumers to do so, for example in the form of competitions.

All respondents in the study said that they at least take note of what the consumers suggested when it came to improvements, but most of them said that there were no real plans on incorporating suggestions from consumers on Facebook into product development. The main reason for this was that the ideas often were too unrealistic, that the number of people suggesting it was too small to really replace more traditional forms of market research and that they did not have time to keep track of these suggestions. There were however a few examples of ideas stemming from consumers, such as Marabou releasing a white chocolate product after being encouraged to do so at the Facebook page. It is important to note, however, that a number of companies that stated that they did not use Facebook to any certain degree for product development, still used other social media websites for that purpose. One site in particular, Smartson, was mentioned, where consumers sign up to be test pilots for products under the condition that they rate them, write about them and come up with suggestions on how to improve them. However, this practice seems to have more in common with a focus group in the later stages of product development rather than the idea generation made by fans of Marabou on Facebook.

In contrast to the unhappy customers, the fans seems to be a very easy group of stakeholders to manage based on the interviews. In the terms of Mitchell et al. (1997), it would appear that the fans are not considered to have an equivalent to the anti-fans' empowering implicit or explicit threat of spreading his or hers bad opinion of the company nor any urgency. However, fans are powerful in the sense that they are reason for most brands to be on Facebook, with crisis management only being the

activator for more intense work with social media in one of the studied cases. Even though fans do often not execute the potential power they have together, the company assigns resources to keep them satisfied and from using their power, which effectively also makes them dominant stakeholders.

What can be said in regards to Frooman (1999) is that apart from the example with consumers reprimanding peers who do not conform to the general discussion climate, the predominant influence strategy between companies and consumers is direct usage, where influence (for anti-groups) and time and effort transformed into swift acknowledgement of a problem (dissatisfied customers) are the main resources involved.

To sum up, consumers are not seen as one homogeneous group, but rather divided into subgroups, with different importance. Brand opponents, like those creating anti-pages, are overall acknowledged power and legitimacy, but now urgency, thereby making them dominant stakeholders, however unfounded claims by hate-groups withdraw their legitimacy, turning them into dormant stakeholders. In contrast to opponents on unofficial pages, unsatisfied customers on the official pages are also attributed urgency, making them definite stakeholders. Fans, like opponents, possess legitimacy and power, however do not execute it in the same way, and are therefore closer to unsatisfied customers, but lacking the urgency, which makes them dominant stakeholders.

### **5.1.2.3 Top management**

The involvement from top management was in general rather low. In some cases senior officers were consenting to the use of Facebook, however without taking any interest in it. Other respondents said that management were explicitly positive towards using Facebook, but with no involvement. Most of them did not use Facebook in their private life and had little understanding of its possible business applications according to some of the respondents, who saw this as an obstacle to convincing them of the benefits of using social media as a marketing or communication tool. None of the interviewees had met any direct opposition from top management, despite Communication Manager X, who stated that top management was afraid of the unforeseen consequences of social media use and did not want employees to engage in social media. However, several of the interviewees stated that the lack of interest makes it harder to get resources allocated.

Here, power and legitimacy is in place, but there is a clear lack of urgency, thus making top management a dominant stakeholder in the taxonomy of Mitchell et al. (1997), in theoretical terms sharing characteristics with other strong but passive stakeholders, such as community leaders and creditors. The people responsible for the social media presence are in most cases trying to pitch in the idea to the top management in order to get more resources and support, i.e. increase the level of urgency. The most common way is to show inspirational examples of other companies succeeding in order to educate senior staff on the usefulness of social media. This is usually to no avail, at least for the time being.

The general lack of involvement and in some cases disinterest, which although being interesting in itself, makes a discussion on influence strategies surplus, which will thus not be conducted.

#### **5.1.2.4 Agencies**

All but one company reported that they used communication agencies as consultants for their Facebook page. However, the nature of these relationships varied. Simplified, it could be said that about half of the companies used the agencies as passive advisors, where the agencies came with suggestions on what could be done on the page in general terms, but where the main responsibility for strategy, idea generation and daily operation stayed with the company. The other half allowed the agencies to take greater control over the Facebook presence, having them come up with campaigns and manage the site during these campaigns, returning the responsibility when the campaign was over. Christian Bergenstråhle at Arla, one of the interviewees who prefer to remain in control, meant that the direct relationship should never be given up to agencies, since they are not equipped to quickly answer questions from consumers that are not related to the campaign, something that would still be needed. Jesper Åström, himself being a consultant, agrees with this, stating that consultants can never learn the language of the company or respond quickly enough to questions from consumers. The companies who chose to partly delegate responsibility to the agencies did so mainly because they did not consider themselves to have the time to sufficiently handle the peak in consumer interaction that comes with a campaign. However, most of them said that they still keep track of the Facebook page to make sure that all consumers get their questions answered during the time when the agencies are involved.

It is difficult to discuss the salience of agencies in general terms, mainly because the opinions on the level of proficiency of the agencies varied greatly, which has an effect on whether or not agencies are seen as a legitimate stakeholder or not. One reason cited for being skeptical towards the legitimacy of the agencies was that since social media is new, it is questionable how much competency exists within the agencies. In addition, social media competency within the companies was overall considered low, which reportedly makes it hard to assess the agency work, or know what to ask for. However, the companies who relied on their agencies during campaigns or for advice awarded the agencies with legitimacy and power, which makes them dominant stakeholders in the examined cases. In addition the companies' own lack of competency could also be seen as potential source of legitimacy for agencies as companies are relying on an agency to help educate them on what they can and cannot do. The influence strategies that were mentioned as being used towards the agencies were not surprisingly the usage of money with the potential of withholding it if the company was dissatisfied.

#### **5.1.2.4 Other stakeholders**

The following stakeholders were either only addressed by a few companies, or differed greatly in influence across the studied brands, which is why no comprehensive analysis can be conducted. However, since the development of social media practices still seems to evolve, they may become important for a greater variety of the brands, as well as a study subject in the future.

#### **Marketing and communication department**

A common way of organizing social media was that the brand managers and marketing departments were responsible for the Facebook page, with no delegation to other company functions. Alternative designs included overall responsibility lying with the marketing department, but upkeep of the page being delegated to the communication department; responsibility and upkeep lying solely with the communication department; and a highly cross-functional team with an appointed social media manager having the overall responsibility, working for the marketing department, and the operative tasks being delegated to the customer relations function. Overall, the marketing and communication departments hold legitimacy, however their power and urgency varies to a great extent. In some of the cases it can be speculated that the marketing departments power will increase over time, as brand communication is intended to become more integrated. A contrary route is depicted by Christian Bergenstråhle of

Arla, as he sees marketing loosing its strengths and predicts there will be no marketing departments in a couple of years, while social media will be a central unit in organizational structure.

## **HR**

Even though this study focuses on product brands, it is interesting to note that in both examined corporate brands, Arla and Lantmännen, the HR department had a stake in the brands social media presence. Lantmännen maintains their own recruitment page 'Lantmännen career', while Arla's social media manager indicated interest from the HR department to be present on the Arla page. As the other internal stakeholders, the HR departments have legitimacy, and power to a certain extent, however urgency seems to vary.

## **Other employees**

Employees outside the described functions were only addressed by a couple of companies, despite being described as important initiators in the introductory examples. Christian Bergenstråhle of Arla sees social media as something involving everyone within the company, while some other brand representatives stated that they used employees to spread the page in the beginning, thereby attributing power and legitimacy to employees. Company X reportedly is uncomfortable with employees using social media, and does not legitimize them to represent the brand online, however sees an urgency to prevent them from doing so, thereby considering them dangerous stakeholders.

## **Press/Bloggers**

Even though several of the interviewees mention that they promote their brands through bloggers, only two consider them to directly influence their work with Facebook. Risenta is the only company that described pro-actively encouraging bloggers to link to their Facebook site, as well as doing the same in return, or even conducting special events together like 'Lentil Soup Day' in the beginning of this year. A contrary example for the influence of bloggers and press can be found with Lantmännen's more reactive approach to use Facebook for crisis communication in response to media coverage. In both examples the power and legitimacy of the bloggers is demonstrated, however the crucial factor is the urgency of their claim, which is apparently not given for the other companies.

## Facebook

Surprisingly few companies attributed importance to Facebook as a stakeholder, taking it granted as a platform, that however does not influence their daily operations. Only Communication Manager X mentioned the limitations Facebook imposes on their brand page, claiming she was restricted in her work. Yet, Facebook can be considered as having both power and legitimacy, however it looks like a lack of urgency seems to keep the interviewees from recognizing its stake.

In the following graph, an overview over the main stakeholder groups according to Mitchell et al. (1997) will be given. Due to the limited consistency of information across the 'other stakeholders' group, these stakeholders are not taking into account. What stands out is the fact that most stakeholders can be found in the dominant group, owning power and legitimacy. Furthermore, all groups except the haters have legitimacy, which can however at least partly be attributed to the company perspective of this analysis, meaning that the interviewees were more likely to mention stakeholders they chose to actively deal with, thereby attributing them legitimacy. In addition, as the aforementioned example of bloggers and press hints, there might be stakeholder groups that are not considered unless they pose urgent claims.

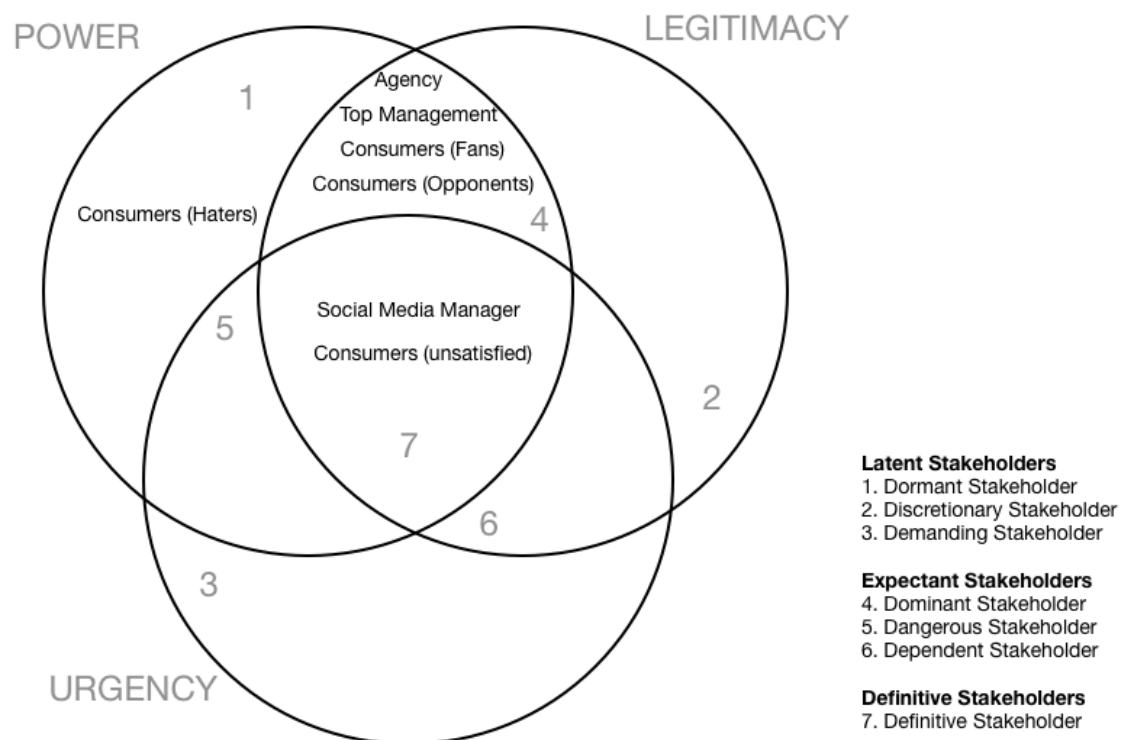


Figure 12: Thesis Stakeholder Typology based on Mitchell et al. (1997)

## 5.2 How do the stakeholders influence the organizational development of using a Facebook page as a tool for marketing and communication?

This research question deals with how the stakeholders affect the proficiency of the organization over time. In order to answer it, an analysis will be conducted on the maturity levels of the companies in this study in regards to critical issues in social media that corresponds to concepts and notions in the organizational maturity models. After that, the role of the different stakeholders' influence over these issues will be discussed. Due to the limited amount of information on some of the stakeholder groups, the discussion will only focus on groups with sufficient information from several company cases.

### 5.2.1 Critical areas in social media maturity

Based on the interviews with the consultants, a number of critical areas that companies need to deal with in order to have an effective social media presence were identified. How companies deal with these areas is compared to the more generic examples given in Humphrey (1987) and Alden and Curtis (2006) in order to establish the general level of social media maturity of the companies.

#### 5.2.1.1 Initial reason for starting and goal formulation

The consultants in this study state that companies often lack an idea of what they want to accomplish in social media, and want a Facebook page mainly because they want to conform to trends.

*"I ask 'what goals do you want to achieve by being on Facebook?', and in nine cases out of ten they say 'we don't have any goals'. This is problematic, because then you have just chosen technology. It is like if I were to buy a train ticket without knowing where to go; it is pointless to buy a train ticket that does not lead anywhere." - Jesper Åström*

There was a certain degree of variety in the responses from the companies when asked what the initial spark for creating a presence on Facebook was. Some Facebook initiatives were founded based on personal preference, where the page was started because the person in charge had a personal interest in social media and liked the

platform, like in the case of Risenta. Another type of reason was that it was a consequence of scarce resources, and what was considered as low cost and relative potential reach of a Facebook page made it a good addition to the media mix without straining the budget. Some companies decided to do it as part of a campaign, and encouraged by the results, decided to continue. The last type of reason for starting was as a response to a PR crisis, such as when people allegedly found glass in the products of one of the examined brands. Regardless of what the initial reason was, in almost all cases respondents added that the decision to enter social media was primarily done to meet customers where they spend time.

When it comes to formulating goals and objectives of the Facebook page, most companies did not show any specific goals. The typical opinion was that Facebook is much more of a communication tool, allowing them to be where their customers are and engage in conversation with them, rather than trying to achieve anything in particular in regards to creating more sales or reaching new target segments. With that said, most of the company representatives considered their efforts on Facebook to positively affect people, which in turn should lead to higher sales, but no specific goals were set, nor measures taken to monitor this assumption.

This behavior is in line with the quote made by Jesper Åström above, but also with the allegory made by Humphrey (1987) who talked about how an eagerness to get going without having a plan on where to go was much like driving a car towards a destination without consulting a map before leaving home. An objection to this way of looking at the lack of goal formulation could be that interaction with the consumers can be a goal in itself, which certainly seems to be the standpoint of the companies in this study. While such an objection would not be without its merits, a counter objection would be that by not formulating goals, it will be hard to assess the level of quality on what is being done (Humphrey, 1987; Alden & Curtis, 2006). If this view is subscribed to, this would suggest that with regards to formulating goals, the companies in the study show signs of being in a lower level of maturity.

#### **5.1.2.2 Assigning roles and formalization**

As we saw in the results of the first research question, there are different types of design for the organization regarding social media. When it comes to who carries out the work, an interesting finding was that there had often been no formal decision on who should handle the Facebook page, at least not in the beginning. Instead, the

person with the largest interest in Facebook tended to get this responsibility just by taking the initiative to get it started. This was typically without objections from the respondents, as the people in charge mean that they like working with Facebook. The only exception was the interviewee at brand XY, who was unhappy with the situation and wanted more involvement from the marketing department, while desiring to outsource the upkeep of the page to an agency.

In all but two of the cases, handling social media was a task that was simply added to the rest of the work description of the person in charge, for example the brand manager or the marketing manager, rather than to create a specific position for handling social media.

While the responsibilities in general initially were allocated mainly by who took initiative without any real assessment done on whether or not it was the right choice, the way of deciding on who does what usually became more formalized after a relatively short time, when the companies realized that they needed a more structured approach and to define who should be responsible for the Facebook presence. This did not lead to any changes in the organization, but rather served as a way to officially designate a person to be responsible as well as approving the use of social media.

In terms of organizational maturity theory, it seems like the companies usually started out with what can be described as a type of hero worship, where driven individuals led the process and took on responsibility, carrying out tasks by using their own judgment rather than relying on a formalized and agreed-upon way of doing things. This practice is typical for organizations with a low level of maturity according to Adler and Curtis (2006). The initial stage was in general rather short, as the responsibilities were defined after a while, and although these “heroes” continued to do the same tasks, this is a sign of maturity development. Since all but one organization had decided to define social media responsibilities, rather than to just silently approve of the hero, it is a sign of companies having left the initial maturity stage.

However, while responsibilities had been clearly defined, it did not always lead to a more formal approach to handle social media. There were clear differences on how detailed the plan for how to act on Facebook was, if a plan even existed. Shortly, there were three main approaches. One type of companies worked with very detailed plans, where a weekly schedule was done, stating what type of material should be posted each day. Another type had a general overview on what they thought should happen

on Facebook in the foreseeable future, connected to the overall marketing plan of the brand, but exactly what and when was up to the person in charge. The last type updated their Facebook pages whenever they felt like doing so, without any consideration of a marketing plan.

Clearly, traces of hero worship remained in some cases, as the people in charge continued to use their own discretion on an ad-hoc basis to carry out tasks instead of developing a more formal process, which would be a prerequisite in order to be considered as more mature according to Humphrey (1987) and Alden and Curtis (2006). However, this behavior was not as prevalent as the companies with a more scheduled process, suggesting that the companies in this study are rather mature in regards to formalization of processes.

#### **5.2.2.2 Knowledge sharing**

A typical characteristic of an organization in the second stage of maturity is that while they have moved away from ad-hoc practices, low formality and hero worship, they could develop further by sharing best practices from other parts of the company. Not all companies had an organization that allowed for this, for example Risenta, since the respondent had no colleagues with similar work descriptions in other parts of the company. Apart from these exceptions, the respondents described that they regularly talk with colleagues in the organization about their experiences, what works well, what does not et cetera. Another source of knowledge was agencies, and it was common practice to let agencies find inspirational success stories that companies could benchmark against, as well as show to top management for educational purposes.

Sharing knowledge and best practices is something that according to the presented maturity literature corresponds to the third level of maturity, and since the companies in the study are prone to sharing knowledge, they will be considered to be moderately to highly mature in this sense.

#### **5.2.2.3 Measuring and follow-up**

One of the central tenants in the organizational maturity literature is the focus on measuring, since continuous improvement is based on following up on how well the organization is performing. According to the consultants, this is something that companies in general do poorly when it comes to social media.

*“They do not have any interest in data. There are many marketing managers that yawn when you present figures for them, but applaud when you play them a jingle or show them a commercial or a an outdoor ad, because that is more tangible for them. The main problem is that they want to create marketing instead of creating business.” - Jesper Åström*

*“They are terrible [at measuring]. They are really not that good.” - Johan Hedberg*

Hedberg means that companies do not use any money related measurements, such as return on investment, but rather measure engagement. In quantitative terms, that means for example number of fans, “likes” and comments on Facebook, followers and re-tweets on twitter and views and comments on YouTube. This shows in the interviews with the companies, which, while keeping track on how consumers interact with them in social media, make no real effort to measure what the social media presence brings in monetary terms. There is often an ambition to do so, but the respondents state that they do not believe that it is possible to find a measurement that allows them to do an ROI analysis. Some exceptions to this exist, such as Gooh who gave out cell phone vouchers for a free Gooh meal to consumers if they started liking the Facebook page, after which the effect on sales was measured, but the general practice of the company representatives was in line with how Hedberg described how companies measure effects of their social media presence. According to him, this is partly a result of a generally low level of practical experience of the people working as social media consultants.

In terms of maturity, it is clear that companies do measure how well they are doing in social media, implying that there is in general a higher level of maturity. The question is whether or not the companies are measuring the right things. There seems to be a difference between the consultants’ view of social media as a way to drive business and that of the company representatives, who look at it as a tool primarily for consumer interaction and brand building that may or may not lead to sales in a more indirect way. As such, it would seem severe to say that companies are immature when it comes to measuring their efforts, since the measurements that are in place arguably are metrics that fit the ambitions that the companies have. However, the consultants do not see a conflict in creating engagement and creating business, but rather the opposite. According to them, social media engagement and increased revenue go hand in hand,

and mean that for some reason, companies stop after measuring engagement. Regardless of this view, the interviews show that companies have a practice of measuring what they consider to be measurable, which will here be considered as a sign of maturity, although improvements could be made in regards to what they actually measure.

The companies mean that there is a lot of information to be collected from their Facebook page. As already mentioned, the consumers provide input in terms of suggestions for new products and alterations to existing ones. Another type of information comes from the possibility to analyze demographics of the people who have clicked the like button, providing a clearer picture of who the companies' fans are. While almost all of the companies in this study look at this information, not all of them used it in any specific way, or spread to the rest of the organization. The companies that do usually try to compare the characteristics of the fans with the overall target group to see if they converge, as well as look at what type of material posted by the company consumers responds well to in order to improve. This can be social media specific, such as continuing with having a weekly small competition if the consumers seemed to like a previous competition, but also relating to more general consumer research, where insights about the consumers are gathered from the dialogue. Most of the companies in this study tend to collect information with the purpose of trying to improve the social media behavior, which will here be regarded as a moderately mature practice in regards to Alden and Curtis (2006), while a few companies took what can be considered as the more advanced route of trying to use the information as a way to get to know the customer in more general terms.

## **5.2.2 Stakeholder influence on organizational maturity**

Above, a discussion on the level of maturity of the companies in the study with regard to social media has been conducted. However, an explanatory element is missing, which would help to uncover which factors drive the organizational development. Here, the stakeholder perspective will be used in order to discuss which roles the different parties involved have and how they influence the organization.

### **5.2.2.1 Consumers**

As seen in the presentation of the results of the first research question, consumers are highly salient to the organizations in the study. Indeed, the widespread consumer adaption of Facebook was what initially drove the following company adaption, as the

companies realized that the consumers spend a significant amount of time on the platform as well as acknowledged that a discussion about brands were already taking place. The companies in the study seem to have argued in line with what was proposed by Doherty et al. (2003) concerning the Internet, not wishing to lose customers who are active on social media to competitors who are adapting to the technology. The influence of the consumers is also seen in how companies moved from an unstructured process to a more formal approach, at least in the sense of defining responsibilities, as the workload of handling fans grew over time.

It would appear that the role of consumers in the development of a more mature social media presence was mainly played in the beginning, and there are no signs of a general shift towards a higher level of maturity as an effect of consumer behavior. An example of this is how companies dealt with the feedback they received from the consumers on the Facebook page. While all interviewees claimed to get a constant stream of suggestions on new products, improvements to existing products or more general opinions, the sophistication of how this information was dealt with internally varied greatly.

#### **5.2.2.2 Agencies**

As seen earlier, all but one of the companies in the study had involved a communication agency in their social media presence to varying degrees. While often sharing the responsibility of managing the daily work on the Facebook page from time to time, the results from the interviews suggest that agencies have relatively little effect on the level of maturity of their clients. Their main involvement is to create concepts, such as competitions, to have on the Facebook page to draw in and engage the consumers, while critical areas such as measuring are left to the companies. It is not clear if this is caused by demand side factors, exemplified by how Cloetta prefers to be as self-reliant as possible, or supply side factors, exemplified by how some of the interviewees considered the agencies as not being skilled enough in handling social media to entrust them with more tasks.

#### **5.2.2.3 Top management**

As proposed by Teo et al. (1997), Lynn et al. (2002), and Doherty et al. (2003) the main influencers on how sophisticated a company is when adopting new technology, are the internal stakeholders. It was shown, in line with what the authors proposed, that top management had an important influence on organizational maturity. However, this was

not done by taking the initiative and leading the development. Rather, the top managers were in general exerting their power and legitimacy in a more passive way by not taking any real interest in social media. Based on Teo et al. (1997), who state that top management could influence the organizational capabilities by deciding on how to allocate resources, this is likely to be the reason for why the interviewees generally stated that in order to develop the social media presence further, they would require more resources in the form of time and money. As such, top management can be said to have a rather passive, but important role in the development of the social media presence, and based on the interviewees and on Lynn et al. (2002) and Doherty et al. (2003), it could be argued that if top management were more actively supporting social media and allocating more resources, the social media practices of the companies would be more sophisticated.

#### **5.2.2.4 Initiators**

The group that seems to have the most influence on moving towards a mature organization is the person who took the initiative to start it, as this person typically remains in charge of the social media presence. Because of the lack of interest from top management, this person has the executive control to implement any type of changes in practice. This makes the combination of training, ambition and skills of the initiator the perhaps most determining factor for the social media maturity. The steps between maturity stages might be initiated by other stakeholders in ways described above, but the changes are implemented or not implemented on the discretion of the initiator. What was found was also that the person in charge of social media in many of the cases represented in this study, try to influence the top management by educating them on the topic, by for example presenting inspiration in the form of success stories, either from inside the organizational network or outside.

## **6. Discussion and Conclusion**

### **6.1 Reconnecting to the purpose and research questions**

The purpose of this thesis was to further the understanding of how companies develop their social media presence and how advanced they are, as previous work on the topic had questioned the readiness companies have to handle social media. In order to fulfill this purpose, two research questions were formulated, and the findings corresponding to those questions will be summarized below.

#### **6.1.1 What stakeholder groups can be identified for a branded Facebook page and what are their characteristics?**

Here, it was shown that companies have adapted to the social media environment, where consumers expect companies to engage in a dialogue with them. A number of stakeholders were particularly prevalent, namely consumers in different forms, agencies, top management and internal stakeholders, especially the social media manager, with the latter already being implied by the set-up of the study. From a salience perspective, companies have assigned the consumers with power and legitimacy, considering this as a must when acting in social media, often meaning that an unwillingness to discuss a small problem can lead to a bigger problem later. Unsatisfied customers were the most salient type of consumer, and handling them was what the interviewees in general considered to be the biggest challenge involved with Facebook. The companies chose to focus most of their attention on these stakeholders, who have a high level of urgency, while overlooking potentially more influential types of consumer stakeholders who did not have a specific matter to resolve. Top management is another potentially strong group of stakeholders, but due to a combination of a lack of knowledge and a lack of interest, they are not involved to a significant extent. Agencies have a varying degree of power and legitimacy based on the approach and attitude of their clients, where some are happy to assign them with executive influence over the social media presence while others are more reluctant to do so, arguing that the agencies do not have the required social media skills or that the companies would rather want to develop skills in-house.

### **6.1.2 How do the stakeholders influence the organizational development of using a Facebook page as a tool for marketing and communication?**

Accounting for how important the companies considered their consumers to be, it was interesting to see that the consumers have relatively little effect on how maturely companies work with social media. As companies often stated in both the pre-study survey and the in-depth interviews, they want to be where the consumers are, but after companies take the first step to move into social media, the only way consumers influence the social media maturity of the companies is by coming together on the Facebook page and interacting with a company in such a quantity that the companies feel a need to use a more structured approach, leading to a step up in maturity. This step up in maturity can also partly be ascribed to agencies. When they were involved, they drove this increasing consumer response by implementing creative concepts on the page, as well as handling the dialogue with the consumers during the implementation period. Top management were passive, but yet had an important role to play. Their lack of interest and involvement leads to them not allocating the resources necessary to develop the social media presence further, and it is likely that a higher degree of interest would increase the social media maturity. The last stakeholder group with an influence over the social media maturity level of the company is the person who took the initiative to start it. Due to the lack of interest from the top managers, this person has the largest influence of all groups on how the company acts in social media, being the one who decides on whether or not a change is implemented in practice. There were also signs of stakeholders affecting other stakeholders, where one of the examples was how the initiators try to educate the top management on the benefits of social media.

### **6.1.3 The social media maturity model**

To reconnect to the second purpose of this study, the results from the research questions will be taken as a basis to develop a social media maturity model. Before the model is presented, some space will be taken to discuss its weaknesses. First of all, it is important to clarify that being more mature does not necessarily mean the same as being better, more efficient or more effective as in the models made by Humphrey (1987) and Alden and Curtis (2006). Instead it is possible that having a high level of maturity across the board is more of a sign of overkill than having an optimal organization. The level of ideal maturity must be determined on a case-to-case basis,

at least until further studies have been conducted to determine the effect maturity has on company performance. Secondly, the studied companies were in general moderately mature, and there was no company that showed a consistently very high or very low level of maturity. Because of this, there is a lack of sufficient evidence for some of the descriptions of the different levels. These have rather been determined by a more hypothesizing “filling in the blank” methodology based on the observation on some of the cases, the steps the interviewees considered for improvement, as well as what is seen as logically following the incremental steps. In order to help the reader to be able to judge the quality and amount of information that the criteria were based on, the different fields are coded, with \*\*\* indicating empirical support for that particular practice taking place, \*\* referring to weaker, more anecdotal evidence that was only covered to a certain extent and \* indicating the result is a derivation of how a practice could look like in that level based on the aforementioned information. Because of this, it is possible that there could be even more mature practices, as well more immature practices, that could be added to the model.

With this being said, there is to a large degree support for the model, which is presented in a simplified form in Table 3, which assigns the critical maturity areas in the left column with the practices corresponding to the different maturity stages, however without separately mentioning the stakeholder groups. The influence levels of the latter are then incorporated in Figure 13. It is important to note that these examples are caricatures, as the research suggests that the maturity of social media practices varies within the companies, where some practices are more mature while others are lower.

	Low	Moderate	High
<b>Assigning responsibility</b>	Self-appointed or implicitly appointed person in charge ***	Formal appointment, social media added to job description ***	A social media specialist role is created ***
<b>Formality of process</b>	Ad-hoc approach to upkeep without link to overall marketing plan ***	Ad-hoc approach to upkeep guided by overall marketing plan ***	Detailed schedule on what to post, clear link to overall marketing plan ***
<b>Approach to stakeholder communication</b>	One-way communication *	Focus on dialogue by reacting based on urgency ***	Pro-actively engage with strong, but non-urgent stakeholders ***
<b>Role of top management</b>	Uninterested and uninvolved ***	Positive, but passive ***	Actively supporting *
<b>Agency involvement</b>	No help from agencies OR complete outsourcing to agencies ***	Agencies come up with creative concepts and are responsible for implementation during shorter periods ***	Internal competency, agency as coequal partner *
<b>Measuring</b>	No measuring carried out, except for number of likes in some cases **	Measure engagement ***	Link engagement to effect on revenue *
<b>Goal formulation</b>	No goals ***	Goals are made specifically for social media ***	Goals are made in terms of marketing and sales objectives *
<b>Knowledge sharing</b>	No sharing *	Informal exchange ***	Formal process **
<b>Consumer research</b>	No research undertaken *	Social media specific research ***	General research **
<b>Influence paths</b>	No interaction with stakeholders *	Using direct paths ***	Can rely on help from fans when needed **

Table 3: Practices in the different levels of maturity

### Low maturity

A company with a low level of social media maturity is mainly characterized by ad-hoc methods and low levels of formality. The initiative was started without any considerations of how social media is supposed to relate to the overall marketing

and/or communication strategy, where the person in charge has no explicit organizational mandate to act, although it can be implicitly consented based on the position of the person. Although the initiative is undertaken in order to be where the customers are, interaction with consumers does not take place, and the social media outlet is used to distribute information, such as press releases, without answering questions from consumers. Agencies are not involved, or alternatively, they manage everything. Nothing is done to formulate goals, and as a consequence, nothing is measured.

### **Moderate maturity**

The step up to a moderate level of maturity is often caused by consumers responding well to the Facebook page, which may or may not be a reaction to a campaign initiated by an agency, and causing a need for a more structured approach. After making an official decision, the task of managing the page remains with the person who initiated it. The social media presence is guided by the overall marketing plan for the brand, but the daily work is conducted with the discretion of the person in charge. Top management approves of the use social media, but has no real interest in what happens there. Communication agencies are involved by creating creative concepts to use in social media, as well as handling the interaction with consumers during the implementation of the concept. A rather undefined goal of creating a dialogue exists, and this is measured by engagement, i.e. likes, fans, followers, comments et cetera. The moderately mature company also takes an interest in the people who interact with it, taking notes of who they are and what they say, but the information rarely leads to any type of action. The main obstacle in order to develop the social media presence further is resources, mainly time.

### **High maturity**

Perhaps the feature that defines companies with a high level of maturity the most is that they connect their social media presence to measurable business goals. Where moderately mature companies see social media as a way to connect with consumers, their highly mature competitors see it as a way to create sales and to find consumer insights to improve their offer. It is predicted based on Lynn et al. (2002) and Doherty et al. (2003) that this increasing maturity is initiated by top management taking an interest in social media, which results in more resources being allocated. The daily maintenance of the page is scheduled in detail, based on the buying behavior of the consumers. While this can be considered cynical, the company would not be able to reach the

goals if it did not have a sincere relationship with the consumers, proactively seeking out ways to interact.

When the way stakeholders influence the maturity levels is integrated with the different levels of maturity and the practices corresponding to each level, the social media maturity model is complete and presented in Figure 13.

It is important to note that it is possible for a practitioner to use only the right side of the model as an internal assessment tool to benchmark the own social media practices. However, using the full model gives a better understanding of who is involved and how higher maturity is achieved.

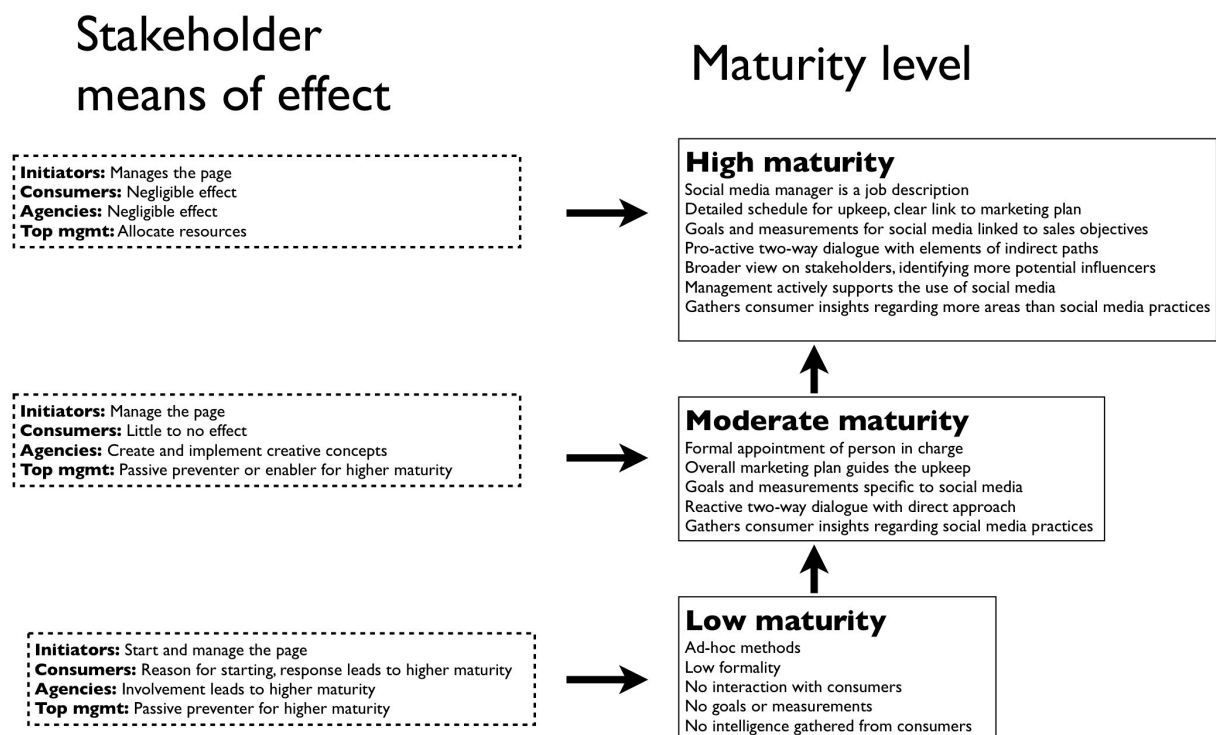


Figure 13: Social Media Maturity Model

## 6.3 Limitations

Apart from the aforementioned issues with the maturity model, there are some potential weaknesses to the study that need to be addressed. With regard to stakeholder analysis, this thesis relied on stakeholders reported by the participants. The main reason for this was because the study was conducted from an explicit company point of view, and as such, only the stakeholders that the respondents talked about were included in the discussion on stakeholder influence. However, stakeholders can exist even if they are not considered by the focal organization and it is possible that an inclusion of unreported stakeholders would have altered or added to the results.

In this thesis, plenty has been said on how companies work behind the scenes, dealing with matters that are not all too visible on a Facebook page. However, little is said concerning the things that the consumers actually see. A different approach to the one taken here could have been to look at it from a more tactical level, judging companies based on how the interaction with the consumers actually looks like.

The study relied mainly on stakeholder theory and organizational maturity theory, and while this literature is argued to have been relevant and useful, other perspectives might have been able to do even more with the collected material, adding to the analysis.

Furthermore, the study is limited to a specific study subject, as indicated in the delimitation. The examined companies were all based in Sweden, which limits the applicability to other countries, since consumer behavior as well as managerial practices might vary from culture to culture. Furthermore, the food & beverage industry as a study subject exhibits a high level of consumer engagement, which might not hold true for the fast moving consumer goods industry in general, which in turn could influence the salience of consumers as stakeholders and thereby the power balance in the model. Finally, Facebook was chosen as a study subject due to its prominence in Sweden, and variety of usage possibilities. Since the latter differs between social media channels, the quantity and quality of maintenance from the company side might also vary, thereby limiting the findings to Facebook.

## 6.4 Theoretical contributions

This thesis contributes mainly in two ways. Firstly, it has furthered the research on the business applications of social media, and as discussed in section 6.1, demonstrated how organizations have responded to the new technology, how they carry out their work as well as shown which factors affect this work, something that is considered to have been lacking in previous studies. A model that helps to assess how mature a company is in regards to social media was suggested, although having certain weaknesses. Secondly, it has added to the literature on how stakeholders affect companies, especially regarding the adaption to new technology, providing further evidence for the importance of internal stakeholders and their effect on how sophisticated the use of that technology will be in a marketing setting.

## 6.5 Managerial implications

Practitioners may find this thesis useful in different ways, depending on their position. The people in charge of the social media presence of a company may use the maturity model as a way of benchmarking their own organization and as inspiration for improvement. A manager for a communication agency could note that it could be beneficiary for him or her to develop or recruit social media competence and, if that is in place, introduce more strategic services than the mainly tactical ones that are being sold now. One such service could be to help with the measuring of effectiveness. Top managers, if any of them would happen to come across this, might find that their involvement would be just as beneficiary when it comes to social media as it is for the rest of the company's marketing activities and business overall.

## 6.6 Suggestions for further research

Apart from what it is implied by the discussion on limitations and what could be added to this thesis by employing one of the paths not taken here, it is the hope that this thesis will inspire studies using applications of the social media maturity model. Firstly, the social media maturity model here should be considered as a first attempt, and as previously stated, the suggested practices need to be validated by further research. When the model itself is more mature, it would be interesting to see to what degree social media maturity matters in business terms, as this thesis does not deal with what the benefit of a high level of maturity is for a company, and what risks a company faces by having a low level of maturity. This could be assessed by analyzing companies based on the model, and quantifying the effect of social media proficiency. Possible

topics include assessing the value received from the word-of-mouth effects of the different companies, such as likeliness to recommend the company to friends or the monetary value of virally spread message impressions; correlate social media maturity to different firm performance measurements, such as Tobin's  $q$  and revenue; and assess how social media maturity affects the acquisition cost of customers, or the effects on the conversion rates for online stores.

## 6.7 Concluding remarks

A rather discouraging problem with studying a phenomenon such as social media is that the half-life of the contribution might not be very long. Social media is developing quickly, as more people and companies join the various platforms, and the platform developers are constantly adding new features that have the possibility to redefine how companies use social media to connect with their customers and build their brands. It will be interesting to see what social media as a business practice looks like in five years from now and how it will have affected the relationship between company and customer, both online and offline. Regardless of what the future looks like, the hope of the authors of this thesis is that the contribution will be lasting, if not the results and conclusions themselves, at least in the form of a description of how social media looked like in the beginning of the 2010s.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Facebook terminology

**Facebook:** A social networking site that allows registered users to create their own profile, connect with friends, upload and share photos, videos and links, and exchange messages both in private as well as more publicly on their wall.

**Facebook Profile:** Site where registered users can provide pictures and information about themselves and have a dialogue on their wall. Access to a personal profile can be restricted according to the preferences of the user.









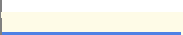

**Facebook Page:** also Fan Page, is a business equivalent to a Facebook profile, where organizations, products, brands, celebrities but also supporters or opponent can present information about themselves or their subject of interest, receive feedback and interact with others through discussions and polls. Often, users need to “like” a Facebook page to access all its information.

**Facebook wall:** An area on a Facebook profile or page, where different user types can post information and status updates, leave comments on the former, share links, pictures and videos, which are displayed in chronological order.

**Like:** Firstly, a user can ‘like’ activities, comments, activities or pictures by pushing a ‘like’ button, which is then indicated to other users. Secondly, users can ‘like’ pages by pushing a button, which is then publicly displayed on the page and often used as an indicator for the popularity of the page’s subject.

## Appendix 2: Survey Questions and Results

### 1. Which communication channels did your organization use in the last 12 months? (Please check all channels you have used)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	TV		23	72%
2	radio		16	50%
3	print (e.g. magazines, newspapers...)		29	91%
4	out-of-home (e.g. billboards, public transport...)		18	56%
5	own website		30	94%
6	social media (e.g. twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube...)		26	81%
7	online banners (on other websites)		18	56%
8	sponsored links on search engines (e.g. google, yahoo, etc. ...)		18	56%
9	mobile marketing (e.g. smartphone applications, iAds, ...)		12	38%
10	other (please name)		4	13%
11	none		0	0%

#### other (please name)

sponsorship

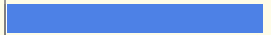




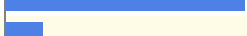

In store adv./Point of sales material

Press releases, intervjun med media, Katalog, Kundklubb magazin, newsletter till kundklubb medlemmar

answer relate to Corporate Communications

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	10
Total Responses	32

### 2. You indicated that you have used social media channels. Which channels in particular have you used? (Please check all social media channels you have used)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	twitter		14	54%
2	Facebook		25	96%
3	Linkedin		5	19%
4	YouTube		19	73%
5	web forums		6	23%
6	blogs		13	50%
7	other (please name)		2	8%

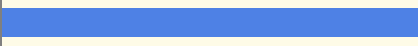

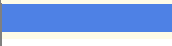

other (please name)

social media newsroom

flickr

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Total Responses	26

### 3. In which ways is your brand present on Facebook? (please indicate all ways in which your brand is present)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	It has its own Facebook page initiated by our organization		22	88%
2	Someone else has created a unofficial Facebook page for it (e.g. consumers, fans, ...)		6	24%
3	It has used Facebook ads		9	36%
4	It has used Facebook in other ways (please indicate in which ways)		3	12%

It has used Facebook in other ways (please indicate in which ways)


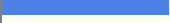
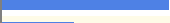

campaigns fb for our products/themes

Spreading competitions and pr/news virally on Facebook

Campaign pages, about to launch our official

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Total Responses	25

### 4. The following questions are only concerning the Facebook page initiated by your organization. For how long has your brand had a Facebook page?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	less than 1 month		0	0%
2	between 1 and 6 months		3	15%
3	between 6 and 12 months		7	35%
4	between 12 and 24 months		7	35%
5	more than 24 months		3	15%
	Total		20	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	5
Mean	3.50
Variance	0.89
Standard Deviation	0.95
Total Responses	20

**5. How many "Likes" does your brand's Facebook page have? (please write approximate number)**

Text Response
230
300
4000
440
21000
3000
5000
dont have the number
60
approx. 185 000
17000
900
3000
1229
13 000
approximatly 2000
3500
18 000
300
20000

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	20

## 6. In a few words, what was the initial reason for setting up your brand's Facebook page?

### Text Response

Making ourselves available for customers on platforms where they spend time. However, we focus mostly on Twitter for customer service.

Meet customer expectations

getting closer to our customers

Easy and good way to communicate directly with people who favour our brand.

brand presence where our customers are

we want to take be active part and meet people where the dialoge take place -

We need to be were our customers are.

to create a dialogue with our customers, get input what do they like and dislike, spread information both commercial and non-commercial

Communication with different target group

We feel that it is very important to communicate with our costumers through social networks.

Creating a dialogue with consumers, getting direct feed-back, possibility for sampling

the reason is first of all it is a good social media

We have to be where our customers are and create a dialogue with them

För att skapa en dialog och en aktiv relation med våra konsumenter, presentera kampanjer och nylanseringar och mycket mer

dialoguing with clients/fans

For reaching our consumers where they choose to spend their time

Engage with employees and potential employees












campaign platform

n/a

ideal environment, talk action

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	20

## 7. Currently, your brand's Facebook page is being used ...

#	Answer		Response	%
1	to provide customer support		8	42%
2	to collect feedback from customers		11	58%
3	to provide background information about the organization and/or brand		12	63%
4	to recruit new employees		8	42%
5	to launch news		17	89%
6	to give special offers/discounts		8	42%
7	to promote competitions		10	53%
8	to provide entertainment		6	32%
9	to show popularity, e.g. through number of "Likes"		4	21%
10	others (please name)		2	11%
11	no particular purpose, just to be present		1	5%




others (please name)

pr

sampling activities








Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	11
Total Responses	19

## 8. Who is currently managing your brand's Facebook page?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	handled internally		13	68%
2	external consult, e.g. PR agency, advertising agency		1	5%
3	both		5	26%
	Total		19	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.58
Variance	0.81
Standard Deviation	0.90
Total Responses	19

## 9. How would do you rate your page's actual performance in comparison to the expected results?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	far below		0	0%
2	moderately below		0	0%
3	slightly below		4	21%
4	slightly above		3	16%
5	moderately above		4	21%
6	far above		4	21%
7	too early to tell		2	11%
8	didn't measure results		2	11%
	Total		19	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	3
Max Value	8
Mean	5.16
Variance	2.70
Standard Deviation	1.64
Total Responses	19


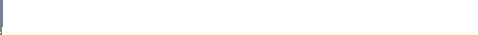

### 10. If the results for different goals have varied significantly, please specify the respective performance (optional)

#### Text Response

Sidan har bara varit igång i 2 månader och vi har redan fått många fler fans än förväntat men viktigast av allt - feedbacken och kommentarerna från våra fans, deras engagemang var över all förväntan.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	1

### 11. Considering the resources needed to maintain the Facebook page and the results it achieves, do you think that your brand benefits from having it?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		17	89%
2	No		0	0%
3	I don't know		2	11%
	Total		19	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.21
Variance	0.40
Standard Deviation	0.63
Total Responses	19

## 12. Which industry does your organization belong to?

Text Response
Telecom
Foodproducer
Wholesale in fruit and vegetable
Tourism
Finance
Transport & Turism
Retail
Home electronics
Telecoms
Tobacco
transportation
retail
Ferry business/travel business
retail
pharma
Clothes industry.
Food
Food industry
Transport
The travel industry
FMCG
Bageri, konfektyr , hotell- & konferens samt måltidsservice
Food and Bevarage
Seafood producing company
Global hygiene and paper company
detaljhandel
beverages

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	27

**13. How many employees does your organization approximately have?**

Text Response
700
2500
270
400
3800
6000
4500
150
30000
1300
5300
3000
5700
10000
500
1500
2300
900
4500
100
1400
3500
12000
350
45000
500
1100

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	27

**14. This survey is part of a study which is analyzing how organizations can improve the Facebook presence of their brands. In the next stage of this study, short interviews about how individual organizations use and maintain their Facebook pages will be conducted. If you are is willing to take part in this, please leave your contact details below. Your participation is highly appreciated.**

### **Appendix 3a): Interview guideline social media experts (consultancy)**

- Personal information, job description
- What clients have they worked with?
- How do clients usually approach you for social media services? Existing clients? New clients?
- Integration with other services/media?
- What do they state as reason for approaching social media/Facebook?
- Help with existing page, launching page? Campaign? Crisis communication?
- What social media channels do clients ask for in general?
- Are there differences between industries? Any industry that is made for using social media/Facebook? Any that is not? Other kinds of social media?
- Where are the common problems in the way companies approach social media/Facebook?
- In what ways are they using Facebook?
- Which areas could they improve in? Which possibilities are currently neglected?
- Who is managing the Facebook page?
- Have any companies you have worked with had trouble with unofficial pages? How much of a problem do you think unofficial pages pose?
- Any other relevant examples?
- Is there any other area you think that needs to be explored more?

### **Appendix 3b): Interview guideline social media expert (Facebook list)**

- personal information, job description
- How did the idea for a list about the 100 biggest listed companies come up?
- Criteria for the study?
- Why Facebook, why not twitter, or other social media?
- Overall outcome of the study? Any surprises?
- Are there differences between industries? Any industry that is made for using Facebook? Any that is not?
- Where are the common problems in the way companies approach Facebook?
- In what ways are they using Facebook?
- Which areas could they improve in? Which possibilities are currently neglected?
- Did you gain any knowledge who is managing these Facebook pages?
- During your study, did you come across unofficial Facebook pages? How much of a problem do you think unofficial pages pose?
- Is there any other area you think that needs to be explored more?
- Any other relevant examples?

## Appendix 4: interview guideline companies

- personal information, job description
- How is communication at Arla organized in general? How are the different brands structured?
- Which communication channels are you using/have you used during the last year?
- Which social media channels are you using?
- In which ways have you used Facebook? (ads, pages...)
- How long have you had your Facebook page, and how many likes?
- What was the initial reason for setting it up?
- What is the Facebook page used for now? (support, feedback, recruitment, information, offers, competitions...)
- How is Facebook coordinated with other media?
- Who is managing the page? Internal, external?
- How is it managed? Meetings, stakeholders, who decides about content?
- What problems have you experienced with the page, and how have you overcome them?
- How would you say Facebook has met your expectations so far?
- Where could you perform better now?
- How are you dealing with unofficial pages?
- Do you think being in the food industry makes it harder or easier to use Facebook in comparison to other industries?
- How do you think the way you/industry/companies are using Facebook will develop in the future?