

# Small businesses' adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence

A qualitative study exploring why small businesses adopt emerging technologies

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The constant development of online technologies and the Internet offers new opportunities for small businesses to improve their business. In the past couple of years the development of the online is pointing to the emergence of three new areas of the Internet labeled under the fields of social, mobile and local. Previous research has found that there is a widespread acceptance of new technologies among small businesses, but that the extent of adoption varies widely. Previous research in the field of small business adoption of new technologies suggest several models and frameworks for studying why small businesses choose to adopt new technologies. However, as new technologies emerge the models for adoption need to be revised to fit the new characteristics and requirements of that technology. As such, this thesis aims to research adoption and suggest a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses. The main results of this thesis identify the four categories of *external drivers*, *strategic reasons*, *technology characteristics* and *individuals' characteristics* as areas that influence adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses. The study goes on to identify subcategories for these areas for each field of social, mobile and local respectively and presents support for the influence of these four category areas in the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses.

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Thesis Presentation Tuesday 5 June 2012

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

The constant development of online technologies and the Internet offers new opportunities that are suggested to be increasingly important marketing and communication tools for small businesses. There is already evidence that small businesses have benefited from implementing emerging online strategies and there are many areas in the value chain where small businesses have an opportunity to improve their business with the help of the Internet (BCG, 2011). As such, with the emergence of new technologies it becomes relevant to understand why some small businesses adopt these technologies, while others do not.

There are several reasons why small businesses should use the Internet to a greater extent. An internet presence is shown to increase business growth, productivity and to a certain extent even profitability; e.g. 65% of the Swedish businesses with higher Internet presence have experienced growth in the past few years, compared to a figure of 37% for businesses with low Internet presence (BCG, 2011). Furthermore, small businesses are faced with increased difficulty to reach the customer with their marketing messages (Duncan & Morariarty, 1998; Weilbacher, 2003) as the world of the customer becomes increasingly cluttered (Blackwell et al. 2006; Elliot & Speck, 1998). Therefore, small businesses need to find new way to reach their customers (Dahlén et al. 2008; Reid 2005). The Internet is a technological channel in constant development that opens up for these types of new marketing opportunities (Ducoffe, 1996; Leong et al., 1998; Dahlén et al., 2003).

In the beginning of the Internet businesses used marketing via websites and advertisement as the main marketing tools online. In the past couple of years several new technologies have emerged that enable new ways for individuals and businesses to interact with each other online. For example, more and more people are signing up on social network sites and almost 4 million people in Sweden were registered to Facebook in the beginning of 2011 (BCG, 2011). The introduction of social media has both shifted the way people find and receive information as well as how businesses can communicate to their current or potential customers (Qualman, 2010). Furthermore, release and subsequent growth of smartphones has shifted the online environment. Individuals are becoming more mobile in the way they use the Internet

and as a consequence businesses are increasingly observed to adapt their communication to suit mobile use (Google, 2012a). A third area of change in the online context is observed to be consumers increased ability (with for e.g. GPS functionality) and willingness to use the internet to find information based on their location (Contagious Communications, 2011). While the internet used to be a worldwide medium, it now offers more possibilities for businesses to connect with their customers on a local level (Google, 2012a).

All of these changes offer opportunities for small businesses (Google, 2012a). However, small businesses are observed to vary in the level that they adopt new technologies (Mehrtens et al., 2001). Previous research in the field of small business adoption of new technologies suggests several models and frameworks for studying why small businesses choose to adopt new technologies. However, as new technologies emerge the models for adoption need to be revised to fit the new characteristics and requirements of those technologies.

## **1.2 Area of research**

Based on what has been said above, the online arena seems to be a clear road for small businesses to grow. Previous research with a focus on businesses online presence has found that there is a widespread acceptance of Internet use in the corporate environment. However, the extent of Internet use continues to vary widely among small businesses (Sadowski et al., 2002). While some businesses have benefited from the rapid Internet growth, others do not seem interested in the medium at all (BCG, 2011) If there are clear potential benefits to be gained by small businesses by increasing their online presence, why have we not seen it to a larger extent?

Previous research within adoption of for example mobile Internet and mobile commerce has mainly focused on why consumers adopt these technologies rather than why businesses decides to do so (e.g. Anckar & D’Incau, 2002; Davis, 1989). Furthermore, there is limited research done on adoption of new technologies by small businesses, in particular, and research focused on small business adoption of the Internet draws conclusions on a technology that has long since developed into something new (Iacovou et al., 1995; Mehrtens et al., 2001). Specifically, the development of the online is pointing to the emergence of three new areas of the Internet, which are labeled under the areas of social, mobile and local (Google, 2012a; Meeker, 2011).

Given that small businesses make up a large portion of most economies and have been observed to be fundamentally different in their adoption strategies compared to larger corporations, it is considered important to research the adoption strategies of small businesses in particular. Also, with the emergence of the three new areas of online; social, mobile and local, there is a need to revisit the models proposed for the adoption of the Internet and the online and revise the frameworks for adoption to fit the new characteristics of these technologies. As such, this thesis aims to research adoption and suggest a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses.

### **1.3 Purpose and aim**

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate why small businesses adopt the new areas of online defined as a social, mobile and local online presence and what areas that influence this adoption. The aim is to propose a framework for the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses.

More specifically the research question is:

*Why do small businesses adopt a social, mobile and local online presence?*

### **1.4 Research contribution**

Given the novelty of the definition of an online presence to include all three areas of social, mobile and local this thesis hopes to provide a contribution to the emerging theories of adoption of these strategies. Specifically given the limited research done on the relation of these three areas and the adoption strategies of small businesses in particular the results of this thesis can be part of the background and first hypotheses regarding the reasons for small businesses to adopt these new technologies. The proposed framework hopes to provide an addition to the understanding of the factors that influence adoption.

### **1.5 Delimitation**

1. The context of this thesis will be framed by **social, mobile and local**

In this thesis we will only focus on examining the adoption made within the three areas of social, mobile and local online presence and exclude all other technologies. The following definitions helps to further understand how we have limited the scope within each of these three areas:

*Social:* Social adoption is defined as the company running their own Social Network Site that is implemented under the company brand.

*Mobile:* Mobile adoption is defined as the adoption of any online marketing method that is specifically adapted to suit a mobile (smartphone) experience. This includes a mobile-optimized web page, but also mobile online campaigns.

*Local:* Local adoption is defined as adoption of any online marketing methods that are specifically adapted to include the physical location of the business. This includes presence on online maps, but also local search campaigns and location-based offerings.

## 2. The scope of this thesis is limited to only include **small businesses in Sweden**

Firstly, the adoption of the Internet has been rather high in Sweden, comparable only to countries such as Finland, the Netherlands or the United States. Secondly, small businesses have not just a predominant place in the Swedish economy, but have also been rather innovative in adopting new technologies compared to small businesses in other countries with high levels of Internet adoption.

A small business is defined as a business that is privately owned and operated, with a small number of employees and relatively low volume of sales. The European Commission defines Small Business as an enterprise that has a headcount of less than 50, and a turnover or balance sheet total of not more than €10 million<sup>1</sup>. This definition will be used in this thesis as a frame of reference.

Organizational characteristics, such as top management support and size, will not apply to our study. First of all, the studied firms do not have this kind of hierarchy within the organization and no distinction will be made between the roles within the company. Also, all firms we study are of similar size, meaning that we will not examine any differences between them that could be caused by such matters. The idea is to investigate general adoption patterns in small firms rather than to make distinctions between them.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lib.strath.ac.uk/busweb/guides/smedefine.htm>



3. The business types will be limited to businesses that sell products or provide services via a **physical shop**.

The reasoning behind this limitation is firstly that it allows us to study the impact of a social, mobile and local online presence for businesses that historically have not been online in order to further focus on the forces that made them adopt a new technology. Secondly, businesses that started out to only sell their products or services online can be regarded to have a higher degree of Internet knowledge than the average small business, which would generate a skewed result. Thirdly, businesses that only sell their products or services online are not as attached to their physical location, meaning that “local” in our meaning would not be perceived as important for them.

4. The empirical study will be limited to businesses that have a **well established online presence**.

A well established online presence is defined to be a business that includes activities in all three categories of a social, mobile and local online presence, and that the business utilizes these channels strategically in their business.

5. The focus of study will be limited to **online marketing and sales activities**.

This delimitation allows us to focus on the interaction between the small businesses and their customers and the functions within the small business organization that are geared towards customer interaction. This allows us to study the implications of social, mobile and local for small businesses.

## **2. Research background**

*In the following section the three areas of social, mobile and local are presented more closely. This in order to provide a background for the research areas considered in this study.*

### **2.1 The new Internet**

The definition and best practices of an online presence for a business has developed and changed over time. In the early days of the Internet a website was one of the few, if not the only, ways for a business to be present online. This however, is not the case anymore. A big contributor to the change of a online presence is the technological development and the rise of three “new” areas of online and the web; social, mobile and local. These forces sum up the major powers that are affecting all aspects of business faster than most people, and managers in particular, have realized (Langton, 2011). This is backed up by Sherman (2011) who claims that increased importance is put on social, mobile and local has been said to be the three major levers in building successful businesses in the upcoming decade. According to Sherman (2011) the main drivers of social, mobile and local are (1) the rise of interdependent communities of interest labeled *Social Networks*, (2) the introduction of *Smartphones* that provide instant empowerment and scale, and (3) *Targeted data* both in terms of increased knowledge from captured consumer data, but also in terms of location based information. In the following section we will describe these forces one by one in order to provide an understanding of what they are, how they have changed consumer behavior and how they can provide opportunities for small businesses.

### **2.2 Social**

*“We’re at the beginning of a new era for social Internet innovators who are re-imagining and reinventing a Web of people and places, looking beyond documents and websites.” - John Doerr, (Partner, KPCB)*

Social media has been around for some time now and social network sites like Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter and Google+ have grown to take over a big part of individual’s online presence. Social networking is experiencing an exceedingly rapid growth that has resulted in a revolution in the way people relate to one another and to corporations (Qualman, 2010). According to O’Reilly (2005) social media derived from the development of Web 2.0 sites, that give the users a greater possibility to influence and cooperate online (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2010). According to Sledgianowski and Kulviwat

(2009), social network sites enable computer-mediated communication between people with common interests. With social media, the communication has changed from being a monologue to a dialogue (Qualman, 2010) and the use of social media as a marketing tool is increasing (Stelzner, 2010).

### **2.2.1 Consumer Behavior**

The social media wave has permanently shifted users' expectations and habits (Cavazza, 2011). Individuals are no longer limited to find and receive information through traditional channels such as newspapers, television, or by talking to a friend in a one-on-one conversation. Instead, people are now sharing information on a "many-to-many" platform that is global (Qualman, 2010). Through social media, consumers can easily spread the word of a brand, product or service through the press of a button and this has become the most common way to communicate this type of information (Hast & Ossiansson, 2008). This enables people to easily spread a message to lots of people in a way that was not possible a few years ago. This worldwide communication wave is referred to as "*world of mouth*" as we are now able to hear about the experiences of people from all around the world (Qualman, 2010).

Internet and social media has not only changed the way that people are communicating, but also the way that people gather and exchange information regarding products and services (Henning-Thurau, 2010; Qualman, 2010). Consumers are turning to each other for advice on anything and everything from pre-purchase info to services or health problems. More and more people are coming to trust their friends and what they say more than what the brand says about itself (Faulds & Mangold, 2009). Studies have found evidence for consumers being more receptive to information that comes from people they have a relationship to, rather than communication that comes straight from the company or brand (Dahlén & Lange, 2003; Dichter, 1966; East et al., 2005; Gremler & Brown, 1999; Söderlund, 2001). This affects the trust in messages from social media.

### **2.2.2 Business opportunities**

According to Christensen et al. (2008) traditional methods with a one-way communication is no longer effective. Instead of trying to convince the consumer it becomes more important to inform, listen, and answer. Several researchers supports this new form of marketing that builds on interaction, relationship building, and transparency (Christensen et al., 2008; Grönroos, 1997; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Also, media that encourages interaction has proven to be more effective than other media (Calisir, 2003) and with the development of a more social Internet, companies have greater opportunities to interact

with their consumers. The ability for a company to successfully interact with their consumers can become a competitive advantage (Ramani & Kuvar, 2008). The real time interaction that social media has enabled has created need for change in business behavior. It has become increasingly important for businesses to remain authentic on social networks and legitimacy and honest is necessary to achieve meaningful interactions and relationships (Qualman, 2010).

The power of the consumers has increased with the rise of social media sites and they are now the ones in charge of the communication (Faulds & Mangold, 2009). In order for companies to create trust in this new medium they have to learn how to communicate in the right way; namely the way of the users. Social media can be used as a great marketing tool and one of the purposes with social media should be to create engagement with the customers (Faulds & Mangold, 2009). In order to create engagement it is important for the company to open up for a two-way communication so that consumers can interact more easily with the company. As opposed to traditional media, the customers should not be considered as a target audience but rather as brand building collaborators. By allowing customers to express their complaints through social media, businesses receive a unique opportunity to monitor their brand and pick up insights on the problems their customers are facing when using their product or service (Qualman, 2010).

Since social media is considered to be a more reliable source of information regarding products and services (Faulds & Mangold, 2009) it may be utilized by small businesses to promote their products or services in a more efficient way. A message from a company that is passed on from a friend to another within a social network can be considered more reliable and increase the likelihood of the message being perceived in a positive way. The primary objective with a social presence online for a company should not be to sell products, but rather to share information in order to create increased trust and increase the loyalty among the followers. (Hast & Ossiansson, 2008). Businesses that have found success in the social media environment have adopted an entertainment dimension and realize that to engage users and customers the communication has to be increasingly interactive and interesting (Qualman, 2010). Also, sites that have built up a high credibility can have a strong impact on customers' purchase intentions (Min Lee & Park, 2009).

## **2.3 Mobile**

*"Smartphones are the first step towards escaping PC dependency."*

- Fred Cavazza (Online Consultant and Forbes freelancer)

Mobile can either refer to mobile devices or to the ability to be mobile. In fact, the force of mobile could be argued to be a little bit of both, where mobility is viewed as a consequence of the mobile devices. Mobile shifts the Internet usage from desktop-based online usage to a more mobile and diversified usage (Cavazza, 2011). In 2011, there were 5.6 billion people with mobile phones in the world. Comparing this to the fact that there were only 2 billion Internet users during the same time, and that the number of people with mobile phones was one billion less in 2010, displays what a fast moving force mobile is (Meeker & Murphy, 2011). The increased mobile penetration is supported by the fact that smartphone and tablet sales and shipments surpassed PC shipments in late 2010 (Cavazza, 2011) and in a prediction of the future, more Americans will access the web via mobile than desktop already by 2015 (Google, 2012b).

### **2.3.1 Consumer behavior**

For consumers, the mobile phone has become increasingly important in their everyday life. With the introduction of smartphones, people do not only use their phones to call and text anymore. They now use it as an entertainment platform and a source of information (Appelqvist & Miller, 2011). Through this development consumers usage behavior is changing and consumers are now using their phones to compare prices, find product information, read reviews, receive promotions and coupons, and in order to locate retailers (Google, 2011). 60% of the time spent on smartphones is today spent on "new activity". This includes 12% use of the web or apps and 47% spent on other activities (including Maps, Games, Social Networking, and Utilities) compared to 32% spent on telephony and 9% on mail apps (Meeker & Murphy, 2011). Consumers are always online and they have come to expect to find businesses on their mobile devices. According to Kunur (2010), mobile advertising has become the new point-of-purchase and 79% of smartphone owners use their smartphone to help them with shopping and 70% use their smartphone while in the store (Google, 2011).

Research has shown that the mobile phone has become so essential to the user and adds such a high level of value that the users feel emotionally attached to it. It has also been suggested that this

attachment results in mobile phone users being more open to receive marketing messages through their phone (Kolsaker & Drakatos, 2009), which enhances the response towards such advertising (Farley, 2011).

### **2.3.2 Business opportunities**

For small businesses, the increased use of mobile devices to search the web increases the importance of being visible in this new medium. One such way is by creating a mobile-optimized website. In other words, a site that is built specifically for the mobile experience that use advantages of mobile features, such as click-to-call and click-to-map, in order to make it easier for potential customers to get in contact with- or find the store (Google, 2012b). Research has found that 57% of users would not recommend a business with a mobile site that is poorly designed. 40% have turned to a competitor's site after a bad mobile experience (Google, 2012a) and 19% of mobile users form a negative perception of the company if they are dissatisfied with the mobile experience (Google, 2012b). A mobile friendly website produce an average of 75% higher engagement on the site per visit for mobile users. It has also been proved that users on mobile-friendly sites take action where 20% of the visits to the site lead to an immediate phone call to the business (Google, 2012b).

The rapid development of modern wireless communication technology, coupled with the increasingly high penetration rate of the Internet, is also promoting mobile commerce as a significant application for both enterprises and consumers (Pascoe et al., 2002. Rupp & Smith, 2002) and transactions continue to grow (Meeker & Murphy, 2011). According to Kim et al. (2005), the major characteristics that differentiate mobile commerce from other forms of e-commerce are mobility and reach. Mobile consumers use their devices frequently and have high expectations on the sites they visit. As such, a mobile-optimized website can increase transaction opportunities. 51% of consumers are more likely to purchase from retailers that have mobile friendly websites (Google, 2012b).

## **2.4 Local**

*“Making sure your message is delivered only to people most likely to be your customers — those within 10 miles or 10 minutes of your door.” - Tom Feltenstein (Founder of Power Marketing Academy)*

Local online marketing is the practice of getting online traffic funneled into offline business. Local online marketing is becoming increasingly popular, and possible, with the aim of reaching individual

communities, down to individuals, with specialized and customized messaging. Scholars predict that the era of mass marketing, driven by large corporations that could afford the costs it entails, is beginning to be replaced by what is instead being called “mass personalization” (Cavazza, 2011). The latest trend is to bring marketing down to a neighborhood level and making it personal to each individual customer. While the internet for years has been about breaking borders and reaching out worldwide, mobile devices are the key to unlocking local opportunities, experiences and information (Contagious Communications, 2011). The mobile medium offers new and more unique ways of communicating with a target audience that has been impossible through traditional media. Companies can use personalized, interactive messages that are targeting people within a certain location (Bauer et al., 2005).

#### **2.4.1 Consumer usage behavior**

Internet on mobile devices has driven customers to use the web to find local products and services. Local information search is one of the most common activities on mobile devices and 95% of smartphone users have searched for local information (Google, 2012a). 40% of the total amount of mobile searches has a location in the search query. To locate a retailer is a frequent purpose for these types of searches (Google, 2011). From the amount of people that search for local information through their smartphones 61% call the business, 59% visit the business and 44% make a purchase online or in the store (Google, 2011).

Geographical positioning based on satellites (GPS) is now common in most mobile devices on the market. This can aid people in their searches for locations by showing directions, provide local information, and show local deals and offers. It has been found that people have a clear desire to get improved hyper-local information and services, meaning a higher quality of information available on businesses and opportunities that are just around the corner (Contagious Communications, 2011).

#### **2.4.2 Businesses opportunities**

With the high degree of local searches through smartphones (Google, 2011) and the high amount of actions that are taken from these searches (Google, 2012a) there is an opportunity for small businesses to utilize this behavior by making themselves visible online. GPS enable operators to localize the user and adapt the marketing impulse to that person's current position (Barnes, 2003). This technology can be used by businesses to inform customers about new product offers at the point-of-sale and thereby influence impulse purchases (Bauer et al., 2005). By knowing the location of a customer, companies can

create more relevant messages for their target audience. Previous research found that location based Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) messages lead to a more positive perception and can be of value in terms of relevance, personalization, and timeliness (Xu et al., 2009). Location based advertisements are also perceived to supply information more effectively than traditional methods (Appelqvist & Miller, 2011).

In prior research, location based services through MMS have also been suggested to result in a higher purchase intention (Xu et al., 2009). If customers can receive a message based on how close they are to the store, location based advertisements have a great potential to increase company sales in a cost efficient way (Xu et al., 2009). By adapting a service to take into consideration the user's position, the provider is able to perform a selection of services that better fits what the consumer is looking for. When it is easier for the customer to select a service the satisfaction and willingness to pay will increase (Rao & Minakakis, 2003).

Customers are beginning to expect to find businesses based on their own location, businesses need to be where the customers are and reach customers when they are near. As such, the strategy for businesses is changing (Cavazza, 2011).



### **3. Method**

*In this section the method for the research conducted in this thesis is presented and defined. The steps are summarized to be; (1) a literature review, (2) Study of Experts interviews, and (3) Case Study case analysis.*

#### **3.1 Research design**

##### **3.1.1 Aim**

The research purpose of this thesis is to explore the adoption new technologies, and in particular the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence among small businesses. The intended outcome is thus to provide insight into the factors that influence adoption. In order to achieve this, the research orientation of the study starts of as deductive where previous models for adoption of new technologies by small businesses are reviewed to deduce general category areas that have influenced technology adoption strategies. The study then moves to carry out an inductive study where the research results of the study are used to derive a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

##### **3.1.2 Choice of method**

The research will follow a qualitative methodology in order to investigate the drivers for adoption among small businesses. The benefit with qualitative research is that the focus lies on the perspective of those being studied and what they see as important and significant. While quantitative research is often focused on people's behavior, qualitative research is focused on the meaning of action. The focus is on understanding why people behave as they do (Bryman & Bell, 2011) to gain a holistic overview of the context that is being studied (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This method of research falls under the category of interpretivism and phenomenology, as the reasons for adoption of new technologies can be assumed to be socially constructed. As such, the research strategy selected is a case study approach in order to answer the question of why adoption occurs (Yin, 2003). It furthermore allows a study and analysis of the different accounts that individuals' and businesses provide of the topic and their accounts of the processes by which they make sense of the topic (Fisher, 2010).

The novelty of the concepts of social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses means limited amount of research has been made regarding adoption of these technologies. Research areas with limited theories developed are favored by a case study approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; Ryan et al., 1992). Case studies allow research to capture "reality", which is useful when studying contemporary events or trends (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and allows for more detailed and in-depth results. The results of the research conducted in this thesis will enable the development of a proposal for a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses.

### **3.1.3 Developing a framework for adoption**

A framework for understanding the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence is the favored result of this thesis. Furthermore, the study will not build on completely new concepts, but rather build upon the knowledge acquired from previous literature. This is of interest in this study as it aims to build on existing models to create a proposal for a framework for adoption that better match new emerging technologies. These steps are the bases for the steps taken in this thesis to enable a definition of a framework for adoption.

1. Literature review of previous adoption models to define concepts and category areas.
2. Study of Experts to identify subcategories in the category areas and draft a preliminary framework proposal.
3. Case Study to theorize and achieve final framework proposal for small businesses' adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence.

### **3.2 Step 1: Literature review**

The first stage of this thesis deals with the previous literature on the subject of technology adoption of small businesses. This in order to identify and clarify the concepts associated with technology adoption as well as the main areas that influence adoption for small businesses (Fisher, 2010). As the areas of social, mobile and local are new concepts the literature section of this thesis reviews technology adoption models of other technologies, as they are believed to be able to provide similar adoption patterns that can be generalized and used for guidance in the search of a new framework for adoption of a social, local, and mobile online presence.

### 3.3 Step 2: Study of Experts design, method and process

In the second stage of this thesis an exploratory Study of Experts is conducted to gain insights about each of the areas influencing adoption defined in step 1 and to identify the subcategories, included as influencers under each of the category areas. In order to conduct an empirical study of adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses, the Study of Experts is intended to identify suitable research factors of contemporary relevance within the areas identified in the literature review.

In order to define subcategories, which are previously not known and have not been determined or found out in prior research due to the novelty of the technologies studied, and because the aims of the Study of Experts are largely exploratory, unstructured qualitative interviews are used (Gillham, 2005). The interviewees are selected to provide as wide a perspective as possible on the areas deduced in step 1. As such, interviews are conducted with actors and experts in the fields of social, mobile and local with a small business focus that are involved in the field directly, through consultancy and through research. The interviewee selection is based on a snowball sampling technique, i.e. through personal contacts and/or references (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The individuals selected for the Study of Experts are listed in table 1.

<b>Interviews conducted for the Study of Experts</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Company (Organization) / Position</b>	<b>Location / Duration</b>
2012-03-23	Christoffer Klemming	Google Sweden / Product Marketing Manager	Google Stockholm / 40 minutes
2012-03-29	Eric Östberg	Google Sweden / Agency Relations Manager	Google Stockholm / 30 minutes
2012-03-29	Camilla Folkesson	Maze Media / Marketing Manager	Google Stockholm / 30 minutes
2012-03-29	Magnus Äng	Top Visible / CEO and founder	Google Stockholm / 30 minutes
2012-03-29	Jonas Colliander	Stockholm School of Economics / PhD Student Centre for Consumer Marketing	Stockholm School of Economics / 25 minutes
2012-03-30	Henrik Hallengren	Isobar Sweden / Integration Manager	Google Hangouts / 30 minutes

*Table 1: List of individuals interviewed for the Study of Experts*

The resulting Study of Experts consist of six interviews conducted face-to-face lasting from twenty-five to forty minutes each. All interviews are conducted in Swedish. In order to gain insights in the specific

areas identified in step 1 the interviews are loosely structured around these topics and the discussions are framed in the context of small businesses' adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence. Apart from this, the interviews are of an unstructured nature, and as such neither pre-planned questions nor standardized prompts are used (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Evidence from the Study of Experts is then used to create a preliminary framework proposal for adoption, based on the results and the their interconnections (Fisher, 2010). This framework is subsequently tested by evidence from the Case Study.

### **3.4 Step 3: Case Study**

#### **3.4.1 Case study approach**

The Case Study is conducted using a case study approach intended to test if all of the subcategories that influence adoption that are identified and summarized as a result of the Study of Experts are also reflected within small businesses and their adoption strategies. Case studies can be used to generate, describe and test models, which is the aim of the third step in the process of developing an adoption framework (Fisher, 2010). As the objective of the thesis is to provide a description of the reasons for why small businesses chose to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence, rather than predict future action, and in turn develop an updated version of a predictive framework for this, a case study method is appropriate (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

#### **3.4.2 Selection of cases**

The cases are selected based on literal replication logic, where the multiple cases are expected to provide similar conclusions in order to achieve stronger evidence (Yin, 2003). Six cases are used, which is within the range of four to ten that is generally recommended (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The cases are selected using a systematic method (Bryman & Bell, 2011), where an Internet search is first conducted to create a shortlist of potential case businesses. The criteria for selection includes the business fitting into the definition of a small business and having adopted a presence in each of the three areas of research; social, mobile and local. This to make sure that the businesses interviewed have a complete understanding of the technologies investigated and to ensure that relevant results are possible to achieve. Each case is selected on the basis of being unique (Bryman & Bell, 2011) in that each case is perceived as a whole study, rather than a contributing statistical component of an aggregated sample

(Yin, 2003). This allows cross-case analysis in order to gain evidence to determine a final framework proposal.

<b>Cases for Case Study</b>		
<b>Case</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Industry</b>
Case 1	Shop and candy factory specializing in the hand-made production of candy canes. Single shop.	Confectionary
Case 2	High-end optician focused on exclusive frames. Single shop.	Optician
Case 3	Fully sorted supermarket of only organic products. Single shop.	Organic groceries
Case 4	Retailer focused on high-end kitchen utensils. Single shop.	Retail, utensils
Case 5	Florist specialized on ecological production and design. Single shop.	Ecological florist
Case 6	Pastry shop specialized on cupcakes. Two shops.	Pastry

*Table 2: List of case-businesses for Case Study*

The final case-businesses selected for the Case Study are presented in table 2.

### **3.4.3 Assigning individuals as case representatives**

Although the study refers to small businesses as the case subjects, individuals from each business are assigned to represent their business. The individuals selected are those that are or were involved in the adoption and implementation of the social, mobile and local online presence for their business so that an adequate base for analysis can be achieved from interviews conducted with these individuals.

### **3.4.4 Data collection process**

Given that this thesis aims at studying the influence of factors on adoption strategies of small businesses interviews are conducted to provide in depth understanding (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and is the main method for data collection in the Case Study. Semi-structured interviews are conducted where the interviewer has a schedule to remind him of the main issues and topics that need to be covered by the respondent, but the respondents are free to respond to the questions in the ways that are sensible to them (Fisher, 2010).

<b>Interviews conducted for the Case Study</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Case</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location / Duration</b>
2012-04-13	Case 1	Co-founder	In case-store / 1 hour 30 minutes
2012-04-14	Case 2	Optician	In case-store / 1 hour
2012-04-20	Case 3	Co-founder	In case-store / 45 minutes
2012-04-20	Case 4	Store manager	In case-store / 45 minutes
2012-04-20	Case 5	Co-founder	In case-store / 1 hour
2012-04-23	Case 6	Co-founder	In case-store / 45 minutes

*Table 3: List of interviewees for the Case Study*

A total of six interviews are conducted with representatives from the six case studies included in the Case Study and last between forty-five to ninety minutes. Interviews are recorded and transcribed. The questions reflect the subcategories identified as a result of the Study of Experts and literature review and each subcategory is explicitly asked about. All interviewees selected for the Case Study are listed in table 3.

### **3.5 Data analysis and conclusion**

To build a solid base to propose a framework the data gathered, both from literature and the two studies, is reviewed and referenced. Due to the open nature of the study methods the data, i.e. transcripts, notes and documents, is reviewed and sorted under themes, in accordance with survey coding methods (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The analysis also draws heavily on the cluster matrix methodology, where items that belong together are identified (Miles & Huberman, 1984). This is done through a within case analysis where transcripts are organized to notice patterns and coded accordingly. This is followed by a cross-case analysis to achieve analytical generalization (Yin, 2003).

For the Study of Experts more extensive coding is done to identify the subcategories of the areas identified in the literature review. Codes are grouped into concepts based on frequency of mention. Once coded, the results are summarized into ideas and concepts and grouped into a table (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Though coverage may be an approximate measurement the results enable an evaluation of the relative significance of a mentioned subcategory (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In the Case Study, the data and answers obtained are sorted, also using coding techniques and within-case analysis, under the subcategories identified in the Study of Experts and determined to support, partially support or dismiss the subcategory as an influence for adoption. The data is linked to the theory in the inductive approach and a cross-case analysis results in a proposal for a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence in small business organizations (Yin, 2003).

### **3.6 Limitations and research quality**

There are several areas where this methodology presents limitations for the results of this study and thesis. Firstly, there are limits to the possibility of generalization, which often refers to extrapolation of results to a general population. For the purpose of this thesis, though, the aim is analytical and theoretical generalization, which is inherent to a multiple-case study research approach (Yin, 2003).

Secondly, there are limitations associated with the selection of case studies and in particular how well they represent the population aimed to be studied. However, the selection is intended for literal replication where similar characteristics are valued and which is a common method to achieve research generalization (Yin, 2003).

Thirdly, there are limitations associated with the quality of the research in terms of replicability, reliability and validity. Replicability is often difficult when it comes to qualitative research, as it is difficult to replicate circumstances of a study. However, there are methods to mitigate this, for example by adopting similar interview methods as the original research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Furthermore, there are limitations regarding reliability of the results associated with the interpretation of the observed results of case studies (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This is addressed by both members of the research team being present at all stages of the study and cooperating in the development of the analysis and proposed framework to ensure limited risk for misinterpretations or faulty observations. Lastly, there are limitations associated with the validity of the results of qualitative research and case study methods. Lincon and Guba (1994) refer to validity in terms of credibility of the results, which is addressed through data source triangulation (Stake, 2005). In other words, validity is ensured through the examination of multiple cases to allow multiple viewpoints for the same phenomenon. As such the results of the studies in this thesis are designed in an attempt to mitigate possible limitations to contribute to a credible and robust result.

## **4. Literature review**

*In this section we will review prior adoption theories in order to withdraw those factors that may be relevant for the adoption of a social, mobile and local Internet presence by small businesses. In order to find category areas for further research, previous models are reviewed within three theoretical areas; system adoption, technology adoption, and innovation adoption.*

### **4.1 Small businesses and adoption**

Research indicates that small businesses differ to a great extent from large businesses in their adoption of new technologies. Often there is a lower level of awareness of the benefits of a technology and a lack of technical skills within small businesses (DeLone, 1988; Lees, 1987; Neidleman, 1979). Reasons for this includes the fact that small businesses tend to employ generalists rather than specialists (Blili & Raymond, 1993) and that there are difficulties in attracting skilled staff as a result of the limited career path available within the company (Gable, 1991). This is supported by Ballantine et al. (1998), who identifies that small businesses lack business and information technology (IT) strategies and have limited information skills. Several other researchers have also found similar results (e.g. Chen & Haney, 2003; Cragg & King, 1993; Kagan & Lau, 1990; Malone, 1985; Poon & Swatman, 1999; Raymond, 1985).

Additional differences from large organizations are that small businesses often have a highly centralized structure where the CEOs take most critical decisions (Miller & Toulouse, 1986; Mintzberg, 1979). This increases the role of the individual leader in decision-making (Miller & Toulouse, 1986). Furthermore, there are differences in the financial management of small and large businesses where small businesses tend to lack financial resources (Welsh & White, 1981).

Studies have shown that small businesses have different technology adoption patterns that larger ones (Benbasat et al., 1993; Cragg & King, 1993; Massey, 1986; Rogers, 1995). Therefore, findings from studies that have been made on large businesses are not likely to be useful in the case of small business adoption because of the fundamental differences between large and small businesses (Blau, 1966; Blili & Raymond, 1993; Cohn & Lindberg, 1972; Dandridge, 1979; DeLone, 1981; Senn & Gibson, 1981;



Welsh & White, 1981). As such, the literature review will only be focused on theories of adoption by small businesses in particular.

## **4.2 System adoption in small businesses**

### **Iacovou et al. – EDI adoption**

With the emergence of new IT-technologies, studies were made to understand factors that influenced small business' adoption of these technologies. In the well cited article by Iacovou et al. (1995) the authors made a study of the adoption of electronic data interchange (EDI<sup>2</sup>) and developed a small business-focused adoption framework, based on reviews of past conceptual research and empirical studies of both technological adoption and EDI adoption and impact. Three major factors were identified to influence adoption practices in small firms; *perceived benefits*, *organizational readiness*, and *external pressure*.

#### ***Perceived benefits***

Perceived benefits refer to the level of recognition of the relative advantage that the technology can provide the organization. This encompasses the attitude of the managers where firms with management that recognizes the benefits of integration will be more likely to adopt (Benbasat et al., 1993; Iacovou et al., 1995). Benefits identified include internal efficiency improvements of the organization, e.g. reduced transaction costs and higher information quality. As well as opportunities for the business processes and relationships, e.g. increased operational efficiency, better customer service, and increased ability to compete. Their study showed a positive relationship between perceived benefits and adoption (Iacovou et al., 1995).

#### ***Organizational readiness***

Previous studies suggest that costs and technical knowledge are two of the main barriers to IT growth in small organizations (Cragg & King, 1993). These factors are part of what is defined as organizational readiness and the relative availability of the organizational resources needed for technological adoption. More specifically, organizational readiness is defined to refer to the level of *financial* and *technological*

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<sup>2</sup> EDIs are cooperative interorganizational systems (IOS) that allow trading partners to exchange structured business information electronically between separate computer applications (Swatman and Swatman, 1992).

*resources* of the adopting firm. Financial resources are to cover costs for implementation and ongoing usage while technological resources include the level of IT usage and IT management in the organization. Smaller businesses tend to lack the resources necessary for IT investment, and as such this factor is defined by Iacovou et al. (1995) to be determinant for small business adoption. Findings indicate that organizational readiness does not alone lead to adoption. Rather small businesses need both an understanding of the perceived benefits and organizational readiness.

### ***External pressure***

External pressure refers to influences from the organizational environment. Iacovou et al. (1995) define external pressure to be a combination of two factors; *competitive pressure* and *impositioning by trading partners*. Competitive pressure is in theory defined to be an influencer of adoption of new technologies in order for for small businesses to maintain their own competitive position in their respective industry (Damanpour, 1991). Adoption is further defined to be affected by whether or not partners have adopted the system (Bouchard, 1993), and trading partners are often the initiators of EDI implementation in particular (Hart & Saunders, 1994; Swatman & Swatman, 1991). The findings of Iacovou et al. (1995) showed that the willingness to adopt EDI is most often due to external pressure and in particular from trading partners rather than the competitive pressure. Smaller firms are often the weaker partners in interorganizational relationships and are, as a consequence, very susceptible to pressures from its larger partners (Hart & Saunders, 1993). These results are also supported in later research (Chwelos et al., 2000; Van Heck & Ribbers, 1999).

### **Kuan and Chau, 2001 – EDI adoption**

In another study of EDI adoption by small businesses, Kuan and Chau (2001) compare the model presented by Iacovou et al. (1995) with a framework suggested by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990) where three contexts are defined to influence the process by which technological innovations are adopted by small businesses; *the technological context*, *the organizational context*, and *the environmental context*. Within this framework Kuan and Chau (2001) develop a perception-based model for EDI adoption that uses a technology, organization, and environmental framework.

### ***The technological context: perceived technological benefits***

The technological context refers to perceived technological benefits, or the degree to which EDI is perceived as providing benefits to the organization rather than benefits that actually are provided. In consistency with prior studies, including Iacovou et al. (1995) it was found that perceived benefits was significant in the EDI adoption of small businesses (Kuan & Chau, 2001).

### ***Organizational context: perceived organizational resources***

Two businesses with the same level of financial readiness may perceive their financial readiness differently, one perceiving itself with high financial readiness and the other with low financial readiness. Kuan and Chau (2001) suggest that this might explain why Iacovou et al. (2001) found only a weak relationship between organizational readiness and adoption. As such, Kuan and Chau (2001) suggest in their results that it is exclusively the perceived characteristics of the organizational resources, both financial and technical, that affect adoption by small businesses, rather than their actual resources.

### ***Environmental context: perceived environmental pressure***

Kuan and Chau (2001) refer to influences from the external environment defined to be *perceived external industry pressure* and *perceived government pressure*. The first factor captures pressure from industry business partners and competitors, similarly to what Iacovou et al. (1995) refer to as external pressure. The latter factor refers to government policies as an influence for adoption (Kuan & Chau, 2001). In contrast to Iacovou et al. (1995) the firms that had adopted EDI perceived a significantly lower pressure from the industry than those firms that had not adopted the technology. However, perceived government pressure proved to be a strong driver for small business adoption.

### **Mehrtens et al. 2001 – Internet Adoption**

In a research made by Mehrtens et al. (2001) the authors make a first attempt to create a model of Internet adoption as a new technology by small businesses. Internet was then defined to include email, web browsing and web site development. According to the authors there were some evidence that the factors that affect the adoption of EDI provided by Iacovou et al. (1995) would also apply to adoption of the Internet by small firms. Their analysis showed that the key adoption factors were similar to those provided by Iacovou et al. (1995) and the result of their study concluded that *perceived benefits*, *organizational readiness*, and *external pressure* significantly affect Internet adoption by small

businesses. Their final model was similar to the EDI adoption model with the exception of the specific definitions of organizational readiness and external pressure.

### ***Perceived benefits***

Mehrtens et al. (2001) found three types of perceived benefits; *relative advantage*, *communication*, and *Internet as a business tool*. The studied businesses often gave examples of relative advantages that the Internet could provide in comparison to more traditional methods of communication, advertising and retailing. The communication aspect of the Internet was also identified as having advantages over more traditional methods and the opportunity to present information via a web site was considered to be a good reason for small businesses to adopt the Internet. Furthermore, the Internet was considered a business tool to support business objectives (Mehrtens et al., 2001). As with many other innovations, perceived benefits were often the factor that most influenced small businesses adoption (Rogers, 1995).

### ***Organizational readiness***

A factor that Mehrtens et al. (2001) identified as significant for adoption of the Internet was the level of knowledge among non-IT professionals within the business. Small businesses that had innovation champions with influential roles decreased the resistance of adoption of the Internet. These people would sponsor or even champion the Internet adoption of their company. Other studies also indicate that the CEO of small businesses often has a significant role in the adoption of IT by these firms (Brancheau & Buckland, 1996; Thong & Yap, 1995). The results of the study found little support for the importance of organizational readiness in terms of organizational size and financial resources. However, the importance of technological readiness was supported (Mehrtens et al., 2001).

### ***External pressure***

In contrast to the findings of Iacovou et al. (1995) small businesses felt *expectations* from Internet users, who are typically customers but also suppliers and potential employees, rather than *external pressure* from competitors and trading partners (Mehrtens et al., 2001).

## **4.3 Technology adoption in small businesses**

### **Davis, 1989 - TAM**

With the introduction of computer technology, researchers studied what factors that influenced adoption among users. In order to explain end users acceptance of computers, Davis (1989) proposed the

technology acceptance model (TAM). The original model focuses on two theoretical constructs; *perceived usefulness* and *perceived ease of use*, as determinants of technology adoption. *Perceived usefulness* refers to the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology would enhance his or her job performance. This determines whether or not the application is used. *Perceived ease of use* is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology is difficult or not. Even if an application is useful its complexity might outweigh the performance benefits. Both perceived usefulness and ease of use were found to be significantly correlated with technology adoption (Davis, 1989). The results also showed that usefulness had a stronger link to usage than perceived ease of use. This indicates that users are primarily driven to adopt an application based on the functions it performs for them, and secondary based on how difficult the application is to use.

### **Igbaria et al. 1997 – Personal Computing Adoption**

In a later study Igbaria et al. (1997) analyze factors affecting personal computing acceptance in small businesses. The authors expand TAM to include *intra-* and *extraorganizational variables* that are expected to influence technology acceptance indirectly through perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. This based on previous research that found that exogenous factors influence technology acceptance of information system (IS) implementation in small businesses (Davis, 1989; DeLone 1988; Igbaria 1993; Montazemi 1988; Raymond 1988; Soh et al. 1992; Thompson et al. 1991; Thong et al. 1993; Yap et al. 1992). In contrast to the findings of the original study by Davis (1989) the total effect of perceived ease of use proved to be a greater determinant in acceptance than the total effect of perceived usefulness. According to Igbaria et al. (1997) this may suggest that small businesses primarily are driven to accept computer technologies on the basis of user friendliness and secondary because of the functions it performs for them, rather than the other way around.

### ***Intraorganizational factors***

The intraorganizational factors included internal personal computing support and internal personal computer training. The results showed no significant effects on perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness from internal computing support. For internal personal computer training the authors found partial support with positive effects on perceived usefulness but no effects on perceived ease of use. Intraorganizational factors also include management support in terms of being able to ensure sufficient allocation of resources and act as a change agent to create a more suitable environment for adoption. For

example Miller and Toulouse (1986) found that the CEO of a smaller businesses has greater impact than the CEO of a larger firm. The primary finding of DeLone's (1988) study was that the successful use of computers in small businesses was strongly linked to CEO knowledge of computers and active involvement in the computerization efforts. Yap et al. (1992) found a positive correlation between IS success and CEO support. Abdul-Gader (1992) concluded that management support had a positive influence on computing acceptance. The results of (Igbaria et al. 1997) confirmed the importance of management support in influencing both perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness directly, and hence system usage indirectly.

### ***Extraorganizational factors***

The extraorganizational factors include external computing support and training; that small businesses rely on external sources, such as consultants and vendors, for implementation of IS and training. Raymond (1990) proposed the importance of availability and quality of external support for computing success in small firms. Cragg and King (1993) found that small firms were very reliant on the advice and support from external sources. Often, such reliance on external help was due to insufficient internal technical expertise. In support of these studies, the results of the study by Igbaria et al. (1997) found that external computer support showed to have a positive effect on perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, while external training only had a positive effect on perceived ease of use.

### **Grandon and Pearson, 2004 – E-commerce Adoption**

In a study by Grandon and Pearson (2004), the authors examined the determinant factors of strategic value and adoption of e-commerce in small businesses. By combining TAM presented by Davis (1989) with other factors found relevant in prior research, the authors created a model that suggests five determinant factors for e-commerce adoption in small businesses; *perception of strategic value*, *organizational readiness*, *external pressure*, *perceived ease of use*, and *perceived usefulness*.

### ***Perception of strategic value***

The authors considered three major variables as sources of strategic value of e-commerce; operational support, managerial productivity, and strategic decision aid. In the results all of these variables were found to be significant. The results also showed that the perception of strategic value have a significant impact on managers' attitudes toward e-commerce adoption. Therefore, top managers who perceive e-

commerce as adding strategic value to the firm were positive towards adoption (Grandon & Pearson, 2004).

### ***Organizational readiness***

Gordon and Pearson (2004) define organizational readiness to include financial and technological resources, as well as compatibility and consistency of the technology with a business' culture, values, and preferred work practices. Their results dismiss financial and technological resources as influencing adoption but confirm that compatibility influences e-commerce adoption, supporting earlier studies (Beatty et al., 2001; Chin & Gopal, 1995; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Thong, 2001).

### ***External pressure***

External pressure is defined by Gordon and Pearson (2004) to include five factors; *competition, social factors, dependency on other firms already using e-commerce, the industry, and the government*. Their results conclude that external pressure, as a combination of these factors was a significant determinant of e-commerce adoption.

### ***Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use***

The results confirm the study by Igarria et al. (1997) regarding the factors that influence personal computer adoption in the context of small businesses. Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use were found to be the most influential factors of e-commerce adoption.

## **4.4 Innovation adoption in small businesses**

### **Kwon and Zmud, 1987 & Premkumar and Roberts, 1999 – Innovation Adoption**

In a study made by Kwon and Zmud (1987) the authors review the innovation adoption literature in order to identify five major categories of factors that influence adoption of innovation technology. These categories are identified to be; *product or innovation, organizational, environmental, task characteristics and individual characteristics*. In a later study by Premkumar and Roberts (1999) factors that influence the adoption of four modern communication technologies (e-mail, online data access, internet access and EDI) in small businesses are examined. The suggested adoption model builds on the research made by Kwon and Zmud (1987) but excludes two of the identified factors. The first is individual characteristics. Previous research has found that individual characteristics, such as education, age and experience strongly influence the adoption of innovations (Rogers, 1995; Thompson et al.,

1994). However, according to Rogers (1995) the IT adoption literature examines adoption under two broad categories; organizational adoption and individual adoption. For individual adoption, individual characteristics are taken into consideration, however this is usually not the case for organizational adoption. The reason for this is that adoption decisions in organizations are often collective decisions based on consensus within a group of people, rather than one individual. As Premkumar and Roberts (1999) examine adoption at an organizational level, individual characteristics are not considered. The other factor left out is task characteristics. As the examined technologies include multiple tasks the task specific characteristics are not considered appropriate. This leaves three factors assumed to influence the adoption of communication technologies by small businesses; *innovation characteristics*, *organizational characteristics* and *environmental characteristics*.

### ***Innovation characteristics***

Premkumar and Roberts (1999) define innovation characteristics to include the *relative advantages of the innovation* and the characteristics related to *cost-effectiveness*, *complexity* and *compatibility*. The results from the study indicate that relative advantage is a determinant in the adoption of communication technologies by small businesses. In other words, if the innovation is perceived as better than other solutions, the likelihood of adoption increases.

### ***Organizational characteristics***

The organizational characteristics refer to *the support provided from top management*, *expertise within the workforce*, and *the actual size of the firm*. According to the results, top management's commitment to the innovation is essential in order to get the resources and support needed to adopt a new technology, especially in small businesses. Furthermore, size was found to be an important factor even within the small business category (Premkumar & Roberts, 1999).

### ***Environmental characteristics***

In terms of environmental characteristics the factors included were; *competition within the industry*, *vertical linkages between a subsidiary and the parent organization*, and *external support*. The results indicated that competitive pressure, or the strategic necessity for firms to have a technology, was an important factor for adoption. Also, the closely related factor external pressure was shown to influence



adoption as many firms requested, and sometimes even required, their trading partner to adopt the technology (Premkumar & Roberts, 1999).

### **Thong, 1999 – Information System Adoption**

In a study by Thong (1999) the author develops an integrated model of IS adoption in small businesses by reviewing previous literature within technology innovation literature that identify characteristics of predictors of innovation adoption (Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990). Thong (1999) identify four elements influencing IS adoption by small businesses; *characteristics of the organizational decision maker*, *characteristics of the technological innovation*, *characteristics of the organization*, and *characteristics of the environment in which the organization operates*.

#### ***Characteristics of the decision maker***

Previous research has found that the characteristics of the decision maker are crucial in determining the innovation attitude of small businesses (Rizzoni, 1991). The attitude is found to be comprised of level of innovativeness and IS-knowledge of the decision maker. The results indicate that both factors are positively correlated with the decision to adopt IS in small businesses. If the decision maker does not have the will to innovate (innovativeness) or the ability to overcome a lack of knowledge of the innovation, the likelihood of adoption will be low (Thong, 1999).

#### ***Characteristics of the technological innovation***

The innovation characteristics that affect attitude for adoption are identified to be; *relative advantage*, *compatibility*, and *complexity* and are similar to factors in previous studies (Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Tornatzky & Klein, 1982). The results in the study by Thong (1999) indicate that all factors identified affect the adoption decision. If the innovation is viewed as beneficial, consistent with the needs of the adopting business, and easy to use and understand, the likelihood of adoption is greater.

#### ***Characteristics of the organization***

In terms of organizational characteristics, Thong (1999) include business size, employees' IS knowledge, and information intensity as factors that influence adoption. Once again there is a similarity to the model provided by Kwon and Zmud (1987) who included firm size and expertise within the workforce. The results also support the earlier findings in terms of size being the most significant

discriminator between adopters and non-adopters among small businesses. However, Thong (1999) also shows that small businesses with employees that are more knowledgeable about IS are more likely to adopt.

### ***Characteristics of the environment***

In the research by Thong (1999) environmental characteristics refer to competition within a firm's business environment. The hypothesis was that more intense competition would lead to higher adoption rates, in line with previous research (Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Link & Bozeman, 1991; Utterback, 1974). Studies have also shown that a more intense competition leads to environmental uncertainty that is associated with both a higher need for and rate of adoption (Ettlie, 1983; Ettlie & Bridges, 1982; Globerman, 1975; Levin et al., 1987). However, the results showed no indication that environmental characteristics have a significant effect on the decisions of small businesses to adopt IS. Competition, on the other hand was shown to be positively correlated with relative advantage and compatibility of IS and might have an indirect effect on adoption.

## **4.5 Summary: Definition of Category Areas**

With the help of a combine and conquer tactic, category areas that are prominent in this review are identified and defined to be; external drivers, strategic reasons, technology characteristics, individuals' characteristics. The theories reviewed in this thesis are presented in table 4 below.

	<b>External Drivers</b>	<b>Strategic Reasons</b>	<b>Technology Characteristics</b>	<b>Individual's Characteristics</b>
<b>System Adoption</b>	<b>Iacovou et al. 1995</b> - External pressure (Trading partners) <b>Kuan &amp; Chau 2001</b> - Perceived environmental pressure (Government) <b>Mehrtens et al. 2001</b> - External pressure (Expectations from Internet users)	<b>Iacovou et al. 1995</b> - Perceived benefits (direct benefits) <b>Kuan &amp; Chau 2001</b> - Perceived technological benefits (direct benefits) <b>Mehrtens et al. 2001</b> - Perceived benefits (relative advantage, communication aspect, business tool)	<b>Iacovou et al. 1995</b> - Organizational readiness, (financial and technological resources/knowledge needed) <b>Kuan &amp; Chau 2001</b> - Perceived organizational resources (cost) <b>Mehrtens et al. 2001</b> - Organizational readiness (technological readiness)	<b>Kuan &amp; Chan 2001</b> - Perceived organizational resources (perception of internal technical competence) <b>Mehrtens et al. 2001</b> - Organizational readiness (level of knowledge among non-IT professionals, innovation champions)
<b>Technology Adoption</b>	<b>Igarria et al. 1997</b> - Extraorganizational factors (External support and training) <b>Grandon &amp; Pearson 2004</b> - External pressure (Competition, social factors, dependency on other firms, the industry, the government)	<b>Davis 1989</b> - Perceived usefulness <b>Igarria et al. 1997</b> - Perceived usefulness <b>Grandon &amp; Pearson 2004</b> - Perception of strategic value (operational support, managerial productivity, and strategic decision aid)	<b>Davis 1989</b> - Perceived ease of use <b>Igarria et al. 1997</b> - Perceived ease of use <b>Grandon &amp; Pearson 2004</b> - Perceived ease of use	<b>Davis 1989</b> - Perceived ease of use <b>Igarria et al. 1997</b> - Perceived ease of use + Intra-organizational factors (management support influence perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness directly, and hence system usage indirectly) <b>Grandon &amp; Pearson 2004</b> - Perceived ease of use
<b>Innovation Adoption</b>	<b>Kwon &amp; Zmud 1987</b> - Environmental characteristics (competition, external pressure) <b>Premkumar, Roberts 1999</b> - Environmental characteristics (competitive pressure, external pressure) <b>Thong 1999</b> - Environmental characteristics (Competition - indirect effect)	<b>Kwon &amp; Zmud 1987</b> - Innovation (relative advantage) <b>Premkumar, Roberts 1999</b> - Innovation characteristics (relative advantage) <b>Thong 1999</b> - IS characteristics (relative advantage)	<b>Kwon &amp; Zmud 1987</b> - Innovation (cost, complexity, compatibility) <b>Thong 1999</b> - IS characteristics (compatibility, complexity)	<b>Kwon &amp; Zmud 1987</b> - Individual characteristics - Organizational characteristics (expertise within the workforce - Top management commitment) <b>Premkumar, Roberts 1999</b> - Organizational characteristics (top management commitment) <b>Thong 1999</b> - Decision maker characteristics (innovativeness & knowledge) - Organizational characteristics (knowledge of employees)

Table 4: Overview of literature

The category areas presented are assumed to have influence on the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence as new technologies by small business. The following sections provide an overview of the categories and their rationale.

#### **4.5.1 External drivers**

A common factor in all areas of research has been to include influences for adoption from outside of the company. The system adoption theories focus on external pressure and its influence on adoption in terms of trading partners (Iacovou et al., 1995), government (Kuan & Chau, 2001), and expectations from Internet users (Mehrtens et al., 2001). Within technology adoption, external factors are not included in the original TAM-model provided by Davis (1989). However, Igbaria et al. (1997) found that the extraorganizational factors of external support and training can affect both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, indirectly affecting the adoption of a technology. Also, Grandon and Pearson (2004) found external pressure to be a complement to the TAM in determining adoption of e-commerce. Within innovation adoption external drivers are found to affect adoption in all models in terms of competition (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Thong, 1999) and external pressure from trading partners (Premkumar & Roberts, 1999).

Based on this research, external factors are proposed to be a general driver for new technology adoption. For the purpose of this thesis the common name for this category is assigned to be “external drivers”, which includes all external factors that may influence small businesses to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence.

#### **4.5.2 Strategic reasons**

A second factor that is identified to be prominent in previous adoption research is the relative importance of the benefits that a new technology can provide. The system adoption theories refer to perceived benefits. Iacovou et al. (1995) and Kuan & Chau (2001) discuss benefits that a new technology can create for the business, while Mehrrens et al. (2001) find perceived benefits of the Internet in terms of relative advantage, communication advantages, and the technology as a business tool. In the technology adoption research, all studies show that perceived usefulness affects technology acceptance in small business (Davis, 1989; Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Igbaria et al., 1997). Grandon and Pearson (2004) also find a relationship between managers perceived strategic value of e-commerce and the attitude towards adoption. Innovation adoption theory indicates that the relative advantage of an

innovation is a determinant factor in the adoption of new technology by small businesses (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Thong, 1999).

As such, benefits are observed to be a dominant influencer for adoption in all areas of adoption research for small businesses and can be assumed to also have an effect on the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence. In order to cover all forms of benefits identified, this category area is defined as the strategic reasons for adoption and named accordingly.

#### **4.5.3 Technology characteristics**

The specific characteristic of the technology is a third factor proven to influence small businesses adoption behavior. System adoption theories show that the cost, or the perceived cost, of a system will influence adoption by increasing the demand for financial resources (Iacovou et al., 1995; Kuan & Chau, 2001). Iacovou et al. (1995) and Mehrtens et al. (2001) also find that an advanced technology can increase the need for technological readiness within the firm. In the technology adoption theory perceived ease of use is found to affect technology acceptance in all studies (Davis, 1989; Igbaria et al., 1997; Grandon & Pearson, 2004). In innovation adoption theories, both Kwon and Zmud (1987) and Thong (1999) indicate that the complexity and compatibility of an innovation affects adoption. In other words, if the technology is easy to use and understand as well as consistent with the needs of the business, the likelihood of adoption increases.

The characteristics of the technology appear as a third consistent influence of adoption of new technologies by small businesses. Therefore, the category area of technology characteristics is included in the continued research of this thesis. This refers to all characteristics of a technology that may affect small businesses adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence.

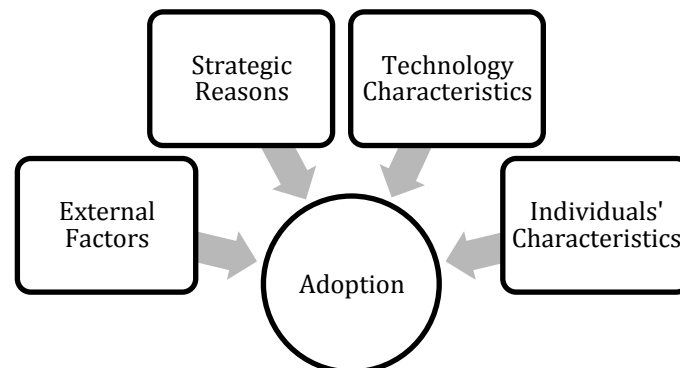
#### **4.5.4 Individuals' characteristics**

The final area identified in previous adoption research is the characteristics of the individuals within the small businesses. Kuan and Chau (2001) refer to the perception of internal technical competence while Mehrtens et al. (2001) talk about the level of knowledge among non-IT professionals in the organization, in their research of system adoption. Individuals with a high level of knowledge and influential roles in the organization are observed to decrease the resistance of adoption of new technologies by sponsoring or even championing the adoption in their organization. In the technology

adoption theories, perceived ease of use falls under this category, where it is suggested that an individuals' knowledge may increase the perceived ease of use and affect acceptance (Davis, 1989; Igbaria et al., 1997; Grandon & Pearson, 2004). In the innovation adoption research Kwon and Zmud (1987) included individual characteristics, such as education, age and experience, as a major category affecting adoption. Kwon and Zmud (1987) and Thong (1999) also include the expertise and knowledge of the workforce as a factor influencing adoption. Thong (1999) also focused attention towards the importance of the decision maker. In contrast, individual characteristics were excluded in the study by Premkumar and Roberts (1999) as they were studying adoption at an organizational level. They do however still include top management commitment as a factor effecting adoption of new technologies.

Given this background a category area concerned with individuals' characteristics is suggested to influence the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses. The category includes all individual characteristics that may affect adoption.

#### 4.5.5 A proposal of a framework for adoption



*Fig 1. Initial framework for adoption*

The category areas that are proposed to influence adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses are summarized in figure 1.

#### 4.6 Extended research questions

The literature review provides four areas that are assumed to be prominent influencers of the adoption of new technologies. These findings provide the basis for further research into the areas that determine adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses. Therefore, the original research question of this thesis is complemented by four additional research questions to cover these

areas. These research questions will provide the basis for the Study of Experts, which in turn is intended to produce subcategories for these research areas that will be tested in the Case Study to produce a proposal for a framework for adoption.

*Original research question:*

1. Why do small businesses adopt a social, mobile and local online presence?

*Additional research questions:*

1. What general external drivers are influencing small businesses to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence?
2. What are the strategic reasons for small businesses to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence?
3. What are the technology characteristics that affect small businesses to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence?
4. What are the individuals' characteristics that affect small businesses to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence?

## **6. Results from the Study of Experts**

*In the following section the results from the Study of Experts interviews will be presented. Each of the three forces; social, mobile and local, will be presented one at a time and subcategories will be structured under the four category areas found in the literature review.*

### **6.1 Social**

#### **6.1.1 External Drivers**

##### **Customer expectations**

One factor that emerged in the discussion of external drivers was the expectations of customers. With the explosion of social media among customers, businesses are often faced with a pressure to adopt social media in order to reach current and potential customers (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012). Given that smaller businesses often have a closer relationship with their customers, this pressure is often more prominent. However, it is believed not to be the case that it is a direct and explicit demand from customers (Folkesson, 2012).

##### **Competitive pressure**

Another factor discussed to influence the adoption of social media by small businesses is the pressure from competitors within the same industry that have already adopted a social online presence (Östberg, 2012; Folkesson, 2012; Hallengren, 2012; Colliander, 2012). When competitors adopt marketing and communication strategies, in particular in a small business context where competitors are often more direct, businesses are pressured to follow suit (Östberg, 2012).

##### **Mass media**

As social media is both used by- and mentioned in mass media channels, it is likely to affect the general interest in social media. This can be assumed to affect the adoption of a social online presence by small businesses. (Folkesson, 2012, Östberg, 2012, Hallengren, 2012). In many cases managers or owners who have heard about social media and how it drives conversion have an increased interest in adoption (Äng, 2012).



### **6.1.2 Strategic reasons**

#### **Be where the customers are**

Small businesses can benefit from a social online presence as it allows a business to be present where their customers are already active. This enables small businesses to utilize the fact that their customers and their potential customers already have a social presence, rather than attracting the customers to their own web space. This is particular a benefit for small businesses with little time and financial resources to spend on marketing activities and awareness building (Östberg, 2012; Folkesson, 2012; Hallengren, 2012).

#### **Enables a two way communication**

Respondents pointed out that social media provides small businesses with the possibility to create and maintain an open dialogue with their customers online (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012; Äng, 2012, Hallengren, 2012). This is something that has not been possible to the same extent through other media for communication online (e.g. website) and offers the opportunity to engage both existing and potential customers (Äng, 2012). Social media enables businesses to find out and keep track of how customers perceive and interact with the product or service they offer. Since small businesses often are very dependent on their existing customers this is of importance. Specifically, it enables businesses to learn what it is their customers are satisfied with or are missing in their products and services. The social media platform becomes a feedback tool in this sense, which is powerful for small businesses in particular to build loyalty and increase sales (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012; Folkesson, 2012).

#### **Cost-effective marketing channel**

According to the respondents, the low amount of financial resources needed for a social online presence is an important strategic factor. A social presence can be a highly cost-effective way of communicating with your customers compared to other online (and offline) media (Klemming, 2012). Most often, social media is free to use and because small businesses often have a limited budget to spend on external communication, using social media is a way around that. The marketing opportunities of an online social presence include the possibility to make yourself heard with small means. (Klemming, 2012; Äng, 2012; Colliander, 2012). By using social media in the right way, small businesses can reach out to a lot of people with little effort (Colliander, 2012).

### **Customers as promoters**

Social media also offers the possibility of consumers spreading the word about the business. Given that customers are increasingly turning to their social networks in search for information regarding products and services, and individuals are more receptive of messages from their friends, this is a potential benefit (Colliander, 2012). A specific example is the "share" buttons that social networks such as Facebook and Google+ offer businesses to put on their sites. This allows customers to share their experience of the business with their friends, which is a source of new potential customers for small businesses (Klemming, 2012).

### **6.1.3 Technology characteristics**

#### **Time demanding**

A factor that was found to have a potential negative impact on adoption was lack of time. A social online presence requires time in terms of both implementation and maintenance (Äng, 2012; Klemming, 2012). Time is needed to learn about social media, to create a social online presence, and to handle the ongoing communications via the new channel (Äng, 2012). Looking at bigger organizations there is often a person or a department that is specialized in managing and administering the social online presence of the business. In terms of small businesses, it is often the same person who runs the daily business that is also in charge of running the social presence online. As such, time is often a resource required by the technology of a social online presence that is not available within small businesses. It is often a reason why small businesses never even try to set up an account (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012; Folkesson, 2012).

### **6.1.4 Individual characteristics**

#### **Level of understanding**

The level of understanding of how social media can be used for marketing and the technology behind the tools are often potential barriers for small businesses to implement a social online presence (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012; Hallengren, 2012). According to the respondents, many small businesses may not have enough knowledge to understand what is needed in order to effectively use social media to promote the business. This includes an understanding of what channels that are possible to use as well as how these channels can be utilized (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012; Colliander, 2012). The respondents agree that the level of understanding of a social online presence within a small business has an effect on the decision to adopt. Small businesses tend to believe that a social online presence

demands more knowledge than it actually does and as such they chose not to implement a social strategy (Östberg, 2012). When the level of understanding is adequate the barriers to adopt a social strategy are quite low (Hallberg, 2012).

### Background and private use

The adoption of a social online presence was noted to be dependent on the backgrounds and personal interests of individuals in the business. If there is a high interest in social media within the business, adoption is more likely as social media will be part of their consideration set. This is related to the personal use of social media, which has also been observed to be a driver for adoption. By using social media, individuals are more likely to understand the potential of a social online presence for their business. As such private use of social media may influence the likelihood of small businesses to adopt a social online presence (Klemming, 2012; Folkesson, 2012).

#### 6.1.5 Summary of social adoption

<b>Summary Study of Experts results: subcategories of social adoption</b>			
<b>External drivers</b>	<b>Strategic reasons</b>	<b>Technology characteristics</b>	<b>Individuals' characteristics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Mass media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be where the customers are</li> <li>- Enables a two-way communication</li> <li>- Cost-effective marketing tool</li> <li>- Customers as promoters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time demanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>

*Table 5: Summary of subcategories for social adoption*

All subcategories identified in the Study of Experts to influence the adoption of a social online presence are presented in table 5.

## 6.2 Mobile

### 6.2.1 External drivers

#### Customer expectations

The respondents point to the increased spread of mobile devices and technological advances as drivers for the adoption of mobile Internet among users (Klemming, 2012; Östberg 2012). This leads to a behavior change that is suggested to lead to customers' mobile online presence and their behavior pressuring even small businesses to adopt a mobile strategy (Folkesson, 2012; Hallberg, 2012). Because

of this, a mobile online presence is suggested to have become important in order to increase sales and grow a business (Östberg, 2012).

### **Competitive pressure**

As more competitors adopt mobile online strategies respondents indicate that it is likely that small businesses also feel pressured to adopt a mobile presence (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012). However, the nature of the technology does not make it evident what competitors are doing and as such pressure may not be strong enough for adoption (Folkesson, 2012; Hallengren, 2012).

### **Mass media**

The respondents discussed the influence of mass media on adoption of a mobile online presence. Media is increasingly discussing mobile online strategies following the emergence of mobile Internet, applications and smartphones. This is suggested to increase the sense of urgency for small businesses to adopt a mobile online strategy for their own business (Folkesson, 2012; Östberg, 2012).

## **6.2.2 Strategic reasons**

### **Visibility**

Alongside the explosive increase of smartphones and other mobile devices consumers are observed to increasingly be present online on their mobile devices. The respondents suggest that a mobile online strategy can allow businesses to make themselves accessible for their customers at the point of search (Hallengren, 2012; Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012). A mobile online presence is becoming part of the basic online presence for businesses, and small businesses included, in order to maximize the touch points with customers (Östberg, 2012).

### **Transactional opportunities**

The respondents indicate that customers are becoming increasingly comfortable with making purchase decisions via their mobile devices, where the average spread of consumers who are willing to make a purchase through their phone is doubling each year. This behavior is suggested to imply direct commercial benefits, for businesses that incorporate a mobile strategy, in terms of new potential customers and driving sales (Klemming, 2012; Äng, 2012). The lack of a mobile online presence is associated with a loss of sales and even compared, by one of the respondents, to having a shop closed two days a week (Klemming, 2012).

### **6.2.3 Technology characteristics**

#### **Technical requirements**

A mobile strategy is often observed by the respondents to often include relatively technologically complicated tools. Therefore, a mobile adoption is assumed to require a certain level of technical skills and knowledge for implementation, which many smaller firms often lack and is something that often appears to be a barrier for adoption (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012).

#### **Cost**

Creating mobile websites or applications and similar is identified to often be too difficult for small businesses and therefore results in a cost for implement (Östberg, 2012). Often a mobile strategy is observed to not be possible to develop in-house for small businesses due to the technical requirements and therefore demands a greater cost for the business either to educate employees or to outsource the implementation (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012; Folkesson, 2012). Furthermore, many small businesses do not know what they can do within mobile Internet and need help from external sources (Klemming, 2012; Folkesson, 2012; Hallengren, 2012).

### **6.2.4 Individual characteristics**

#### **Level of understanding**

The rapid growth of mobile Internet has been observed to have left many small businesses behind and respondents suggest that many small businesses have not yet realized how important it has become (Klemming, 2012; Hallengren, 2012). Small businesses do not understand the benefits of a mobile online strategy, which is observed by the respondents as a reason to refrain from adoption (Äng, 2012). As such, the level of understanding is suggested to be a determinant factor in adoption of a mobile online presence.

#### **Background and private use**

Adoption of a mobile online presence by small businesses has been observed to be driven by individuals with a particular interest in mobile strategy. It is according to the respondents often the case that someone within the business has particular knowledge or experience of mobile Internet and will communicate the potential benefits of a mobile strategy to the rest of the business (Hallengren, 2012; Äng, 2012).

### 6.2.5 Summary of mobile adoption

Summary Study of Experts results: subcategories of mobile adoption			
External drivers	Strategic reasons	Technology characteristics	Individuals' characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Customer expectations</li><li>- Competitive pressure</li><li>- Mass media</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Visibility</li><li>- Transactional opportunities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Technical requirements</li><li>- Cost</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Level of understanding</li><li>- Background and private use</li></ul>

Table 6: Summary of subcategories for mobile adoption

All subcategories identified in the Study of Experts to influence the adoption of a mobile online presence are presented in table 6.

## 6.3 Local

### 6.3.1 External drivers

#### Customer expectations

The change in Internet usage and user behavior that technological advances has been observed to have caused a change in the market where more consumers are counting on finding businesses on a local level (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012). Mobile devices have made it possible for users to always be online, which is observed to have shifted the point of search and increased the trend for location-based searches. Respondents point out that customers that do not find a business at their point of search are likely to select another firm and that businesses are aware of and pressured by this trend (Östberg, 2012).

#### Competitive pressure

Increasingly small businesses are adopting a local online strategy, and with them the respondents suggest that their competitors are influenced to consider adoption (Äng, 2012; Östberg, 2012). Seeing competitors in search results or on maps when searching for your local product or business is suggested to be a driver for adoption of local solutions and strategies (Hallengren, 2012).

### 6.3.2 Strategic reasons

#### Targeted marketing

Respondents point to the fact that most smartphones support GPS and that this allows for new opportunities to target customers who are close to the physical location of your business. (Folkesson, 2012; Hallengren, 2012; Klemming, 2012). A large amount of searches that are made from smartphones

include a physical location in the search query (Klemming, 2012). A local strategy would allow small businesses to target customers both in the moment they are searching for the location of a particular business or if they are searching for a particular business near their location. By addressing this, respondents suggest that small businesses have the opportunity to increase the probability of conversion and sales (Hallengren, 2012; Klemming, 2012; Äng, 2012). Especially for small businesses with a physical store it is important that customers who search for their type of business within the area they are located in can find information about that specific business (Folkesson, 2012; Hallengren, 2012; Äng, 2012; Östberg, 2012).

### **Engagement**

A local strategy can offer an opportunity to engage the customer with tools such as check-in functions and mobile apps (Hallengren, 2012; Äng, 2012). The respondents suggest that small businesses can use the increased local search trend to their advantage by for example offering customers special deals when they are close to, or even inside the store (e.g. like-buttons) (Hallengren, 2012; Klemming, 2012; Äng, 2012).

### **6.3.3 Technology characteristics**

#### **Technical requirements**

The different tools for local strategies are observed to vary in the level of technical requirements, much dependent on if the implementation of the local online presence is based on mobile devices or through social media. Respondents suggest that, therefore, the first is often considered more technologically complicated while the latter is perceived to have a lower technical requirement (Folkesson, 2012; Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012).

#### **Cost**

The cost for adopting and implementing a local strategy is suggested to be dependent on the technology and tool selected by the business. For more complex tools, the cost for adoption is observed to often be higher because of a need to outsource the implementation (Folkesson, 2012).

### 6.3.4 Individuals' characteristics

#### Level of understanding

The respondents suggest that small businesses have yet to understand the meaning of a local online strategy and the business opportunities of such a strategy (Hallengren, 2012; Östberg, 2012). Knowledge is also observed to be needed with regard to the methods available to create a local online strategy, and is suggested to be an influence for adoption decisions (Hallengren, 2012; Äng, 2012; Östberg, 2012).

#### Background and private use

A background of interest in the tools available for local strategies is observed by the respondents to often be necessary within small businesses in order to facilitate and initiate adoption. An employee who has understood how consumer behavior has developed in terms of the search for local information is observed to often be the catalyst of adoption of a local online strategy (Klemming, 2012; Östberg, 2012)

### 6.3.5 Summary of local adoption

Summary Study of Experts results: subcategories of local adoption			
External drivers	Strategic reasons	Technology characteristics	Individuals' characteristics
- Customer expectations - Competitive pressure	- Targeted marketing - Engagement	- Technical requirements - Cost	- Level of understanding - Background and private use

*Table 7: Summary of subcategories for local adoption*

All subcategories identified in the Study of Experts to influence the adoption of a local online presence are presented in table 7.

### 6.4 Subcategories

The Study of Experts results in the identification of a list of subcategories for each of the category areas identified in the literature review, and that are specific to social, mobile and local respectively.



<b>Summary Study of Experts results: subcategories of adoption</b>				
<b>Factor for Adoption / Areas of Adoption</b>	<b>External drivers</b>	<b>Strategic reasons</b>	<b>Technology characteristics</b>	<b>Individuals' characteristics</b>
<b>Social online presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Mass media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be where the customers are</li> <li>- Enables a two-way communication</li> <li>- Cost-effective marketing tool</li> <li>- Customers as promoters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time demanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>
<b>Mobile online presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Mass media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visibility</li> <li>- Transactional opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical requirements</li> <li>- Cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>
<b>Local online presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Targeted marketing</li> <li>- Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical requirements</li> <li>- Cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>

*Table 8: Summary of subcategories for adoption*

The results are summarized in table 8, which is defined to be the detailed proposal for a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence by small businesses.

## **7. Case Study Results**

*In the following section, the results from the Case Study will be presented. The result consists of the subcategories identified in the case-business interviews conducted based on the proposed subcategories identified in the Study of Experts. Each of the three forces; social, mobile and local, will be presented one at a time and subcategories will be structured under the four category areas found in the literature review.*

### **7.1 Social**

#### **7.1.1 External drivers**

##### **Customer expectations**

The customers proved to be a contributing driver for adoption of a social online presence in terms of three factors; first, in those cases where customers were taken into consideration it was in order to *accommodate* customer behavior and offer multiple channels of communication between the business and the customers (Case 1, 2012). Second, customers *explicitly asked* for a social presence from the business (Case 5, 2012). And lastly, observations of customer purchasing behavior and that social media contribute to conversion drove adoption (Case 2, 2012). Even though these factors were observed by some of the subjects, several concluded that they had not considered customer expectations, per se, as a reason for their adoption (Case 2, 2012; Case 3, 2012).

##### **Competitive pressure**

Competitors' roles as drivers for adoption were mainly considered as a source of validation that social media is a potentially good marketing channel and as inspiration for what is possible to do (Case 1, 2012, Case 3, 2012, Case 4, 2012, Case 5, 2012). Most of the businesses interviewed stated that they had looked to competitors to see what appears to be working and what seems not to work (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012). However, it was also observed that the perception of competitors among some of the cases was limited as they did not believe they had any direct competitors, often because they considered themselves to be too niched (Case 1, 2012; Case 3, 2012). Furthermore, inspiration for adoption came from previous private encounters with businesses, not necessarily competitors, on social platforms and in social media. This has led to decisions for adoption for their own business (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012).

## **Mass media**

The effect of mass media on adoption among small businesses has been as an indicator of what channels are actually available for small businesses. Most of the interviewed businesses said they noticed more and more companies were using social media and establishing a social online presence and that media's attention to this pointed to and revealed the benefits of such a strategy (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012). The attention from media also served as a confirmation that the decision to adopt was good (Case 1, 2012). The media channels that are highlighted by mass media are often those that businesses end up adopting (Case 2, 2012).

### **7.1.2 Strategic reasons**

#### **Be where the customers are**

Among the most prominent reasons for adoption of a social online presence proved to be the perception that everyone has a presence on the dominant social media platforms already (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012). The adoption of a social online presence was considered to provide the businesses with a channel for communications on a platform where they perceive that their customers are already present. The businesses valued the opportunity to provide customers with a channel for communication that customers already know how to use (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012). As such, it was assumed by the businesses interviewed that the chance to reach their target audience is higher (Case 4, 2012). This because the chance that customers view a page or message on a social network is assumed to be higher than for a business website (Case 6, 2012).

#### **Enables a two-way communication**

The businesses interviewed concluded that there is a difference between a website and a social online presence in that the strategic aim of a social communication is two-way, i.e. the social media is adopted as a forum for dialogue, while a website is more of an information channel (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012). Social media tools were viewed as offering a more dynamic way of communication, often in comparison to the webpage, where the webpage displays static information such as opening hours and address and the social presence allows for updates, new product pushes etc. (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012). It is also a very responsive in that new communication can be done instantaneously (Case 6, 2012). The social strategy is to encourage and create dialogue through frequent

updates (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012) and involving the customers in the communication (Case 6, 2012). Social media allows small businesses that often have a more niched product to engage with their customers in a common interest, which is a way to attract existing and potential customers (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012). It is also considered to enable the customer to engage with the business development and can aid businesses in the development of their brand (Case 6, 2012) and many businesses encourage customers to pose questions (Case 4, 2012). Social strategies were revealed to often be implemented to allow customers to provide feedback, be it for the development of the brand or the development of product characteristics (Case 1, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

Though the aspect of communication appeared to be the main benefit among small businesses for the implementation of a social online presence, two of the businesses only implemented a social online presence to achieve a one-way communication and as a pure marketing and information channel (Case 2, 2012; Case 3, 2012).

### **Cost effective marketing tool**

Respondents identified the fact that most social media channels are free to use as a driver for their adoption and implementation of a social online presence (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, Case 3, 2012; 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012). For small businesses the alternative cost for marketing is high in relation to the budget available for such activities, and as such, a social online presence allows for a cheaper way to market the business (Case 2, 2012; Case 3, 2012).

Social media was also perceived by the businesses interviewed to require a low effort for adoption, both for the business itself and for customers, yet it still provides a large reach (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012). The benefit of being able to communicate news on social networks that reach the whole customer base connected to that network, as opposed to communicating to each individual separately, for example thorough email, was a strong driver for adoption (Case 1, 2012; Case 3, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012). The large reach allows small businesses to build awareness and an interested customer database on a large scale, not perceived as possible thorough many other channels (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

### **Customers as promoters**

The reach of a social online presence and the network effect of most social media was perceived by the businesses interviewed to enable their customers to recommend the businesses or brands that they like. A social online presence therefore allows small businesses to encourage their customers to tell their friends about the business. The businesses interviewed believed that those customers that were made aware of their business through recommendation are more valuable, than those reached through other conventional channels, such as ads. The respondents believe that there is a higher relevance and legitimacy in recommendations (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012). Because small businesses are often more dependent on loyal customers this becomes a strategic reason to adopt a social online presence (Case 1, 2012).

#### **7.1.3 Technology characteristics**

##### **Time demanding**

The interviews revealed that an adoption of a social online presence demands continuous maintenance beyond implementation. Social media platforms allow updates and communication how often or seldom the business chooses, but a successful implementation is according to the businesses interviewed associated with frequent and regular communication (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012). By adopting a social online media presence the business is committed to a wider variety of channels that need constant monitoring, which is revealed to imply increased administration demands and commitment from the business (Case 1, 2012). The fact that a social online presence often is associated with continuous maintenance, results in a need to allocate personnel to manage the communication. For small businesses, up to a part-time position is sometimes necessary for adequate support of the adopted channel (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

#### **7.1.4 Individuals' characteristics**

##### **Level of understanding**

The level of understanding, both of the potential of a social online presence and the process for implementation was observed to be determinant for adoption readiness for the business interviewed (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012). In the small business context, the adoption of a social online presence was revealed to be driven by an initiator in most of the cases because it is often one person who has the adequate level of understanding and knowledge to enable adoption of a social strategy (Case 1, 2012; Case 3, 2012; Case 4, 2012).

## Background and private use

With social media the level of knowledge and understanding was observed to be associated with the private use of the employees. The businesses interviewed all had employees with a private presence on social network platforms. As such, the benefits of a social online presence were revealed to be deduced from the personal usage and experience (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012). The personal encounter with other businesses on social networks and in social media drove adoption among the interviewed businesses (Case 1, 2012; Case 3, 2012; Case 4, 2012). Personal awareness was found to lower the threshold for adoption (Case 3, 2012; Case 5, 2012). Furthermore, the private use contributed to an increased knowledge of the technological implementation of the tools as well as their possible uses (Case 1, 2012).

### 7.1.5 Summary of social adoption

Summary Case Study results: subcategories of social adoption			
External drivers	Strategic reasons	Technology characteristics	Individuals' characteristics
- Customer expectations - Mass media	- Be where the customers are - Enables a two-way communication - Cost-effective marketing tool - Customers as promoters	- Time demanding	- Level of understanding - Background and private use

Table 9: Summary of subcategories for social adoption

All subcategories identified in the Case Study to influence the adoption of a social online presence are presented in table 9.

## 7.2 Mobile

### 7.2.1 External drivers

#### Customer expectations

In the discussions regarding if the interviewed businesses felt pressured into adoption due to customers expectations of their presence on mobile devices and mobile internet, none of the businesses indicated that this was the case (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). Rather, adoption of a mobile online presence was an additional channel to reach new potential customers and work on retaining existing customers, which businesses adopted for strategic reasons rather than due to external pressure (Case 2, 2012).

### **Competitive pressure**

Personal experiences of competitors' strategies on mobile devices were found to be a driver for the business' adoption of a mobile online presence (Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012) and an indicator of potential possibilities and strategies (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012; Case 6, 2012). Competitors were observed to be a source of inspiration rather than creating a pressure to match their strategies (Case 2, 2012; Case 5, 2012). A difference was also indicated in terms of the size of the competitors, where large businesses were a source for inspiration while smaller businesses were perceived to create competitive pressure (Case 2, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

### **Industry characteristics**

The relative advancement of the industry within mobile in which the business operates was observed to have an effect on the adoption decisions to implement a mobile online presence. Often the intention for the businesses interviewed was either to be an early adopter or to follow the general trend of the industry. The general attitude of the industry and the discussions regarding mobile strategies were found to affect the interest for implementation for small businesses (Case 2, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

### **Sales Agents**

All of the businesses interviewed had been contacted by sales agents, who offered to implement a mobile online presence for the business. The market set-up with agencies working proactively to target small businesses was found to affect the adoption of mobile strategies among most of the cases. Sales agents contributed to raising the question of mobile strategies and adoption among the small businesses interviewed and contributed to revealing the potential benefits of a mobile strategy (Case 2, 2012; Case 3, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

## **7.2.2 Strategic reasons**

### **Visibility**

The perception of an increase in search for small business on mobile devices was a driver for adoption of a mobile strategy for the small businesses interviewed. The businesses identified an opportunity to be visible in channels which customers are observed to increasingly adopt (Case 1, 2012). Furthermore, a

mobile online presence was suggested to enable the businesses to reach customers with a more targeted strategy (Case 1, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

### **Transactional opportunities**

A mobile presence was perceived to provide an opportunity to redirect customers that search for the business on mobile devices to the businesses' website or to offer contact information to the physical location of the business. This was considered to increase the transactional opportunities by targeting already interested customers (Case 2, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012). On the other hand, there was no evidence among the businesses interviewed that their customers are interested in making purchases directly via mobile devices, but rather that it is a way to direct the customer to the point for transaction (e.g. website or shop) (Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

### **7.2.3 Technology characteristics**

#### **Technological requirements**

The adoption of a mobile online presence was perceived to demand technical skills for, for example, mobile adoption of the business website or for the development of apps. This kind of competence was in most cases not available in the small business organizations, and became a barrier for adoption (Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012). Even if there is an intention of adoption, the implementation was observed to be postponed or down prioritized by the businesses due to the technological difficulties of implementation (Case 5, 2012).

#### **Cost**

Much due to the perceived complexity of implementation of a mobile online presence, such a strategy was observed to demand administration, which is a cost for small businesses (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012; Case 6, 2012). The relative cost of an online mobile presence compared to the financial resources of the small businesses was found to create a barrier for adoption. Even if the businesses had realized the potential of a mobile strategy the cost caused the adoption and implementation to be down prioritized (Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012). The technological requirements often resulted in the need to outsource the implementation of a mobile strategy (e.g. adaptation of website for mobile), which is a source for large costs associated with an implementation for small businesses (Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

#### **Limited by existing technology**



A potential problem for adoption brought up during the interviews was the compatibility or adaptability of the existing technological solutions already implemented by the business, which for small businesses often are external technology solutions. Some online applications, such as web shops or websites, were revealed to have been implemented systems that were not adaptable for mobile use. The dependence on third parties or existing technological solutions could therefore result in limited implementation possibilities (Case 5, 2012).

#### 7.2.4 Individuals' characteristics

##### Level of understanding

The tools for administration of a mobile online presence, e.g. mobile advertising or apps, were perceived to be complex and therefore it was believed that a certain level of prior technical knowledge is necessary for adoption and implementation of a mobile online presence (Case 1, 2012; Case 3, 2012; Case 5, 2012). It was found that many of the businesses were aware of mobile strategies, but failed to observe any benefits with adoption of a mobile online presence, in particular regarding adaptation to mobile devices (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012). For those cases that adoption has occurred it was often observed to have been driven by an individual within the business with particular interest and a high level of understanding of mobile devices and tools and their benefits (Case 2, 2012).

#### 7.2.5 Summary of mobile adoption

<b>Summary Case Study results: subcategories of mobile adoption</b>			
<b>External drivers</b>	<b>Strategic reasons</b>	<b>Technology characteristics</b>	<b>Individuals' characteristics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Industry characteristics</li> <li>- Sales agents &amp; consultants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visibility</li> <li>- Transactional opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical requirements</li> <li>- Cost</li> <li>- Limited by existing technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> </ul>

*Table 10: Summary of subcategories for mobile adoption*

All subcategories identified in the Case Study to influence the adoption of a social online presence are presented in table 10.

## **7.3 Local**

### **7.3.1 External drivers**

#### **Customer expectations**

Adoption of local strategies were found to often be driven by customers' direct requests (Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). The interviews revealed that the Swedish market is particular in that it is dominated by two business search engines; eniro.se and hitta.se, originally the yellow pages. A general perception among the businesses interviewed was that a large portion of the customer base is using these tools, which was a reason for the businesses to choose to include these tools as part of their local online strategy (Case 2, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). The lack of a presence in the instances when customers are searching for business was perceived to lead to a loss of business and as such many of the businesses took into account customers expectations regarding where their business is visible online (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

#### **Competitive pressure**

The small businesses' perception and adoption of a local online strategy was found to be affected by the businesses in their proximity, in particular the smaller businesses in their neighborhood (Case 3, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). It was observed that competitors within the same industry were sources of inspiration for marketing strategies and the businesses interviewed were influenced to adopted local strategies if industry competitors already had a local online presence (Case 1, 2012; Case 3, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

#### **Sales agents and consultants**

The interviews revealed that the businesses were often made aware of local strategies through sales agents who contacted the businesses regarding local online tools. In particular, the local business search companies (eniro.se and hitta.se) were observed to have an aggressive proactive sales force towards small businesses and were, because of that, strong drivers for awareness and adoption of both their own tools and other tools for a local online presence (Case 2, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

### **7.3.2 Strategic reasons**

#### **Targeted marketing**

The businesses interviewed perceived that local online strategies could successfully be used for target marketing and increased visibility, either when the customer is searching for the businesses' location or for a particular business based on his/her location. A local online presence was perceived as necessary in the instances when customers are searching for the businesses' location because it enabled the business to market its physical location to those assumed to already be interested in the business (Case 4, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). Another opportunity that was brought up was the possibility to discriminate between customers based on the source of their search (Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). A local online presence was perceived to enable the businesses to target new potential customers by targeting those that are searching for businesses near the location of the business. Such a presence can contribute to increased flow into the physical store (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012).

#### **Engagement**

A local online presence was suggested to enable businesses to drive engagement with the physical store through location-based offerings or location based strategies (Case 3, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012). This could both be a source for new potential customers and enable the business to build loyalty with existing customers (Case 3, 2012).

### **7.3.3 Technology characteristics**

#### **Technical requirements**

There is a great variety of tools available for a local online presence and each of these were found to vary in how technically complex they were to implement and manage. This was found to result in businesses choosing to limit the tools they implemented, which limited adoption of local online strategies (Case 1, 2012; Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

#### **Cost**

The dominance of the two local business search companies (eniro.se and hitta.se) was observed to create a special situation on the Swedish market. These service companies charge high prices for visibility on their search platforms, which were found to be potential barriers for the implementation of their services (Case 2, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012). The difference in complexity of the tools available was

found to often result in the need to outsource implementation, which incurred high costs for adoption (Case 5, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

### 7.3.4 Individuals' characteristics

#### Level of understanding

It was observed during the interviews that the businesses generally had a low level of understanding of the tools and opportunities that a local online presence can offer. There appeared to be a threshold for understanding how the online can provide local marketing (Case 3, 2012; Case 4, 2012). Regarding the understanding of the technological implementation of local tools the level of knowledge required for adoption was observed to vary as the technical requirements vary. It was found to generally be a low requirement of knowledge for simple tools such as map functions and tools implemented by third parties, including the local Swedish search services (eniro.se or hitta.se), while tools such as local targeted advertising were observed to have a higher threshold for adoption (Case 1, 2012; Case 2, 2012; Case 4, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

#### Background and private use

The private experiences of the tools available for local online strategies were found to affect the implementation of a basic local online presence (Case 1, 2012; Case 4, 2012). The level of prior knowledge was observed to be dependent on the complexity of the tools intended for adoption where tools such as advertising or apps, which were perceived as more complex, required a higher level of prior knowledge for adoption to take place. In these cases adoption was often initiated by someone with particular knowledge and interest in the tools (Case 1, 2012; Case 6, 2012).

### 7.3.5 Summary of local adoption

<b>Summary Case Study results: subcategories of local adoption</b>			
<b>External drivers</b>	<b>Strategic reasons</b>	<b>Technology characteristics</b>	<b>Individuals' characteristics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Sales agents &amp; consultants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Targeted marketing</li> <li>- Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical requirements</li> <li>- Cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>

*Table 11: Summary of subcategories for local adoption*

All subcategories identified in the Case Study to influence the adoption of a social online presence are presented in table 11.

## **8. Analysis**

*In the following section the results from the Case Study are compared to the suggested subcategories identified in the Study of Experts results. Based on this analysis a final proposal for framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence, respectively, is presented.*

### **8.1 Social**

#### **8.1.1 External drivers**

The results of the Study of Experts identified three subcategories as influential for adoption of a social online presence under the subject of external drivers (i.e. consumer expectations, competitive pressure and mass media). Both customer expectations and mass media were supported as factors of influence also by the results of the Case Study. In terms of customers' expectations the results suggest that the pressure is indirect. Small businesses adopt a social strategy to accommodate customer behavior and expectations rather than because of direct demand from customers. This finding could be compared to what Mehrkens et al. (2001) found in their research of Internet adoption, where businesses felt expectations from Internet user, rather than a pressure from trading partners as proposed by other theories (e.g. Iacovou et al, 1995; Kuan & Chau, 2001). Customer behavior is suggested to be a strong driver for small businesses due to their often closer relation and higher dependence on existing customers.

Furthermore, mass media as an external driver for adoption of a social online presence was revealed as significant in both studies and is a factor not previously observed in research of adoption of new technologies. This factor was observed in the Case Study results to be an indirect driver. For small businesses, mass media is observed to act as an indicator of what channels are available and affects the general interest in social media by revealing the benefits of such a strategy. It could be suggested, based on the discussions with the small businesses, that mass media becomes an external driver of adoption of social media strategies due to the increased integration of social media in mass media. It could also be assumed that the increased integration and reach of mass media results in mass media becoming a strong influencer both for individuals and business. The increased media effect could be accredited the emergence of technologies such as social and mobile.

The third factor identified by the Study of Experts results as driver for adoption was competitive pressure. This factor was also prominent in the literature review, where several studies found evidence for competitive pressure as a influencer of adoption decision by small firms (e.g. Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Thong, 1999) However, the Case Study revealed that small businesses did not adopt a social strategy due to pressures from competitors. Rather, the strategies of competitors were consulted as inspiration for how to manage the strategy after a decision for adoption had been made. A reason for this could be suggested to be the fact that several of the cases in the Case Study did not perceive that their business actually had any direct competitors. Furthermore, the results showed that the small businesses often did not necessarily consult competitors' strategies, but rather based their strategies on inspiration from personal interactions with businesses through their private social online presence.

#### **8.1.2 Strategic reasons**

The strategic reasons for adoption defined by the Study of Experts (i.e. be where the customers are, enables a two way communication, cost effective marketing tool and customers as promoters) were all supported in the Case Study results as benefits that small business saw from adopting a social online presence. This reveals the importance of strategic reasons that were put forward in previous studies within technology adoption. Specifically, the benefit of being where customers are already present was described to be the lower barrier for customers to visit a social page than a web page. Due to budget and time constraints small businesses are often more inclined to adopt strategies that have a low threshold for adoption both for the own organization and for their customers.

Furthermore, the social online tools enable small businesses to engage with customers that are already interested in the business (i.e. enables a two way communication). This can be argued to be particularly interesting for small businesses that often work with niched products and rely on a limited, but loyal customer base. As such, there is a greater need to use channels that enable small businesses to find those potential customers that share their interest.

Notably, the small businesses observed in this study all considered the strategic reasons for adoption of a social online presence in relation to the strategic benefits of having a website. Some considered social

strategies to be a compliment and others a separate tool. Furthermore, the strategic aim of the social online presence was observed for most of the cases to be to drive traffic to their websites.

### **8.1.3 Technology characteristics**

The technology characteristics of a social online presence were defined to be limited to the time-factor in the Study of Experts where the maintenance requirements are time demanding. The Case Study also revealed another characteristic of social media determinant for adoption of a presence, which was the perceived ease of use. The technology associated with a social online presence is defined as very responsive and flexible with the benefit of the possibility of instantaneous updates. Administration of social media is perceived as easier than administration of websites or other online tools. This also supports previous research within technology adoption theory where all of the reviewed studies found evidence for the importance of perceived ease of use as an influencer of new technology adoption (Davis, 1989; Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Igbaria et al., 1997). It also supports the innovation adoption theory, where the complexity of the product was found as an influencing factor of new technology adoption (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Thong, 1999).

### **8.1.4 Individuals' characteristics**

The characteristics of the individuals' within the organization were supported to be a determinant factor for adoption by both levels of studies (i.e. level of understanding and background and private use). The relative level of the two characteristics determines whether or not the business understands the benefits of adoption and/or the technology required for adoption. In previous research, only the first factor has been found to influence adoption, especially within the system adoption theory (Kuan & Chau, 2001; Mehrtens et al. 2001) and the innovation adoption theory (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Thong, 1999). The results however suggest that private use as a driver for adoption could be accredited to the increased development of the online tools that merge private and business online use.

Furthermore, the results indicate that a single individual who acts as an initiator for adoption is often a prerequisite within small businesses for adoption to take place. This can be compared to previous findings from Mehrtens et al. (2001) where an innovation champion was found as a contributor for adoption. It can be assumed that this varies depending on the size of the business, where managerial influences become important for larger businesses, but where the results suggest that in smaller businesses the role of initiator is not limited to the manager. For example, Thong (1999), found that the

characteristics of the decision maker was a strong influencer of adoption and several previous studies found evidence for the importance of management support/commitment (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Igbaria et al., 1997). This could be due to the lack of hierarchy in very small business organizations.

## **8.2 Mobile**

### **8.2.1 External drivers**

The only subcategory that observed in both the Study of Experts and the Case Study as an external driver for adoption of a mobile online presence was competitive pressure. Again, this finding supports several of the previous research studies within adoption of new technology (Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Thong, 1999) who also found evidence for the importance of competitors as influencers of adoption. The results of the Case Study also suggest that the extent of competitive pressure as a driver for adoption is related to the size of the competitor. More specifically, larger businesses in the same industry act as inspiration and can be argued to have indirect effect on adoption while smaller businesses are viewed as direct competitors and as such have direct effect on the decision of adoption.

The other two subcategories defined by the Study of Experts were not observed to be supported by the Case Study. The customers' expectations as drivers for adoption were dismissed by the Case Study results. It was rather the strategic benefits that were reasons for adoption than direct or indirect pressure from the customers of the businesses. It could be argued to be due to the generally limited observability of customers' use of mobile devices and mobile Internet.

Mass media as an external driver for adoption was also not supported by the Case Study results, mainly because the businesses interviewed did not perceive mobile as a subject frequently discussed in media. Rather, the Case Study suggested industry characteristics and sales agents and consultants as two additional drivers for adoption. The general attitude of the industry is suggested to raise awareness of the channels available for small businesses, a factor that previously was observed by Grandon and Pearson (2004) as a driver for adoption. Sales agents and consultants, however, were observed as a completely new external driver for adoption of a mobile online presence not suggested in previous research of small business adoption of new technologies. This driver could be accredited to the emergence of agencies that



work specifically with mobile online strategy. It could be assumed that web agencies have developed to include mobile strategies in their portfolio as the mobile Internet and mobile devices grow in adoption and use.

### **8.2.2 Strategic reasons**

Again, strategic reasons were found to be an important influencer of adoption supporting previous findings within the adoption literature. Visibility as a strategic reason for adoption of a mobile online presence was identified both in the Study of Experts and the Case Study. The Study of Experts also indicated transactional opportunities as a strategic reason to adopt a mobile strategy. However, the results of the Case Study show that it is not the transactional opportunities offered directly on mobile devices, for example in terms of purchase possibilities directly on mobile devices, that are perceived to be the strategic possibilities of a mobile online presence. Rather, a mobile online presence is implemented to drive customers to the existing point of transaction, e.g. the website or the physical shop. The reason for this could be that small businesses have yet to adapt to changed behavior of customers, which include increased willingness to carry out transactions on mobile devices.

### **8.2.3 Technology characteristics**

Both the technical requirements and the cost observed as characteristics of mobile devices and a mobile online presence are suggested by both the Study of Experts and the Case Study to affect adoption. Both factors contribute to a higher threshold for adoption for small businesses that often lack both technical skills and an adequate budget. Cost as an influencing factor for adoption was previously found both by Kuan and Chau (2001) and Kwon and Zmud (1987) while technical requirements have been discussed in the system adoption theory in terms of technological readiness (Iacovou et al. 1995; Mehrtens et al. 2001). For small businesses these factors often result in the need to outsource.

An additional result revealed by the Case Study regarding technology characteristics of a mobile online strategy refers to the existing technology implemented by the business, i.e. websites or web shops or similar. These technological solutions are often provided by third parties and sometimes they are not compatible with- or adaptable to mobile devices. A similar phenomenon was proven as an important factor for adoption in the innovation adoption theory where researchers refer to the compatibility of the new technology (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Thong, 1999). This constraint could also be assumed to be of

higher occurrence within small businesses in particular, as they are more likely to more often be dependent on third parties for technological solutions than larger businesses.

#### **8.2.4 Individuals' characteristics**

The level of understanding is suggested by the Study of Experts to be dependent on the level of complexity of the technology to be adopted. Given that mobile is perceived as complex the level of understanding of the technology is determinant for adoption. The Case Study results indicate that the threshold for adoption increases when the level of understanding necessary for adoption increases. This could be due to the lack of specific technical skills, which is often the case in smaller businesses as discussed in previous research (Kuan & Chau, 2001; Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Mehrtens et al. 2001; Thong, 1999). It could also be due to the fact that adoption often is driven by an initiator in the organization who has adequate knowledge and skills, similar to the findings by Mehrtens et al. (2001).

### **8.3 Local**

#### **8.3.1 External drivers**

The external drivers described by the Study of Experts (i.e. customer expectations and competitive pressure) were supported by the results of the Case Study to be drivers for adoption of a local online strategy. Again, both these factors have been found to influence adoption of new technologies in previous research (Mehrtens et al., 2001; Grandon & Pearson, 2004, Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999; Thong, 1999). Additionally, small businesses have a general perception that the majority of customers use local search tools, such as hitta.se and enrio.se, which is the reason for adoption of these tools. This could be discussed to be due to either the large market share of these tools on the Swedish market, or the reminiscence of their offline counterparts. In terms of competitive pressure, the businesses in the proximity were suggested to affect adoption, possibly due to the fact that their strategies are more easily observed, as they are physically located close to the business.

In addition to customer expectations and competitive pressure, the Case Study once again revealed sales agents and consultants as external drivers for adoption, a factor not found in the previous research. It could be suggested that the local search companies (hitta.se and eniro.se) with aggressive sales tactics are specific to the Swedish market. However, sales agents and consultants from other agencies were also observed to contact small businesses regarding their local online presence. Sales agents could be

discussed to be a unique driver of adoption for small businesses in particular, often due to the need to outsource implementation strategies for local online presence.

### **8.3.2 Strategic reasons**

Once again, strategic reasons were found to be important for the adoption by small businesses in line with previous research. The strategic reasons for adoption were observed to be the same in both the Study of Experts and the Case Study. Both the possibility of a more targeted marketing strategy based on the location of the customer and the opportunity to be more visible in local online searches are revealed to be benefits that drive adoption.

### **8.3.3 Technology characteristics**

The variance in technical requirements for the different tools available for a local online presence were determined to affect adoption by both study results. The studies reveal that as the level of technology complexity increases the barrier for adoption increases, all in line with previous research of perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989; Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Igbaria et al., 1997) and complexity (Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Thong, 1999). In accordance with findings by Iacovou et al. (1995) and Mehrtens et al. (2001), this could be assumed to be due to limited technical skills available in-house in small businesses. As such, the cost characteristic provided in previous research (Kuan & Chau, 2001; Kwon & Zmud, 1987) is also supported and suggested to be correlated with the technological complexity of a local online strategy adoption. The cost is also influenced by the price models of the larger actors on the Swedish market (hitta.se and enrio.se) in those cases that the business chooses to adopt their services as part of their local online strategies.

### **8.3.4 Individuals' characteristics**

Both the level of understanding and the background and private use of the individuals in a small business are identified to influence adoption of a local online presence by both the Study of Experts and the Case Study. Again, only the first of these have been found as an influencer of adoption in previous research (Kuan & Chau, 2001; Kwon & Zmud, 1987; Mehrtens et al. 2001; Thong, 1999). The results suggest that the level of understanding of the potential benefits of a local online presence is influenced by the private experience of such tools by the employees of the organization. This also suggests that initiators contribute in the decisions of adoption of a local online presence. Furthermore, the level of understanding is revealed by the studies to be determined by the level of complexity of the tools selected for adoption, where tools with higher technical requirements often require skills that not available within

small organizations. This often results either in the need to outsource, which is a limited possibility for small businesses, or a decision not to adopt tools of higher complexity in the local online strategy.

#### 8.4 A final framework for adoption

Based on the analysis of the Study of Experts and Case Study results a final proposal for a framework for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses is presented.

<b>Detailed proposal for a final framework for adoption</b>				
<b>Factor for Adoption / Areas of Adoption</b>	<b>External drivers</b>	<b>Strategic reasons</b>	<b>Technology characteristics</b>	<b>Individuals' characteristics</b>
<b>Social online presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Mass media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be where the customers are</li> <li>- Enables a two-way communication</li> <li>- Cost-effective marketing tool</li> <li>- Customers as promoters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time demanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>
<b>Mobile online presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Industry characteristics</li> <li>- Sales agents &amp; consultants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visibility</li> <li>- Transactional opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical requirements</li> <li>- Cost</li> <li>- Limited by existing technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> </ul>
<b>Local online presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer expectations</li> <li>- Competitive pressure</li> <li>- Sales agents &amp; consultants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Targeted marketing</li> <li>- Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical requirements</li> <li>- Cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of understanding</li> <li>- Background and private use</li> </ul>

*Table 12: Summary of a subcategories influencing adoption*

The subcategories identified to be influential for adoption of each of the three fields (i.e. social, mobile and local) under each of the four category areas defined by the literature review (i.e. external drivers, strategic reasons, technology characteristics, and individuals' characteristics) are summarized in table 12.

## 9. Discussion

*The following section discusses the relationship between the subcategories identified for each of the areas of social, mobile and local collectively under each of the category areas selected as research areas for this thesis and attempts to offer insights and generalizations.*

### 9.1 External Drivers

The category area of external drivers as influencers for adoption of new technologies is found to be a valid area of influence for the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence as suggested from the literature review. The external drivers of adoption of the tools offered in the three fields of social, mobile and local are summarized to be customer expectations, competitive pressure, industry characteristics, sales agents and mass media. The level of perceived adoption among users of the technology can be observed to have an effect on whether or not customer expectations drive adoption. For example for social, where adoption among users and customers is obviously extensive, customers' expectations appear as a driver for adoption. For local, on the other hand the unique situation of the Swedish market (i.e. hitta.se and enrio.se) contributed to the perception of high adoption of some local online tools among users and as such appeared as a driver for adoption of these tools. In contrast, the level of adoption and the customer expectations are not directly obvious for mobile and in line with the reasoning above the customers' expectations were not considered a driving factor for adoption.

In terms of competitive pressure the studies reveal that small businesses tend to look to other businesses' strategies when considering adoption of a new technology as a form of inspiration, but do not always experience pressures from competitors activities. However, the level of complexity of the technology intended for adoption appears to affect if competitive pressure is considered an external pressures taken into account for decision-making. For example, the competitive pressures as drivers for adoption become apparent for more complex technologies. The reasons for this could be further studied, but could be considered to be related to the fact that a lower level of understanding of the tools leads to increased consideration as to what competitors are doing and how. Results of the studies suggest that the drivers for less complex local online tools are customers' expectations (e.g. belief that customers expect a presence on eniro.se and hitta.se) while more complex tools (e.g. local online advertising) are driven by competitive pressures.

The level of complexity and the subsequent attention to competitors' activities could also be argued to be a reason for industry characteristics becoming a driver for adoption. This is suggested by the fact that industry characteristics appear as driver for adoption of mobile online tools and the more complex versions of local online tools as opposed to the simpler local online tools and social media. For small businesses, the level of complexity also often results in the need to outsource adoption and implementation, e.g. social online presence vs. mobile and local online presence. This could be assumed to be the reason for sales agents appearing as a driver for adoption with mobile and local strategies as opposed to the adoption of social online strategies, which are possible to implement in-house.

Regarding mass media, it could be argued that the combination of perceived user adoption and level of complexity could be the reason for mass media not qualifying as a driver of adoption for mobile and local strategies as the benefits of the tools are not as easily conveyed.

## **9.2 Strategic Reasons**

Strategic reasons as a category area were revealed by the results of the studies in this thesis to be of significance in the decision-making process of small businesses to adopt a new technology in general and a social, mobile and local online presence in particular, as is suggested by previous literature on influences for new technology adoption by small businesses. However, the strategic reasons for adoption vary between the technologies, much due to the difference between both the purpose and the functionality of the technologies intended for adoption. The studies revealed that the purpose of a social online presence is focused on communication to a greater extent while mobile and local have a stronger focus on transactional benefits. The difference could be related to the fact that a social online presence often implies creating a platform for communication, whereas the mobile and local online tools are intended to drive traffic to another end-destination, such as the website. In other words, the strategic reasons for adoption will vary between tools that are implemented as separate communication channels versus tools that are implemented as marketing for an existing tool (e.g. website). The former includes benefits concerned with brand-building (e.g. dialogue and feedback) while the latter include strategies for conversion (e.g. driving customers to the store).

### **9.3 Technology Characteristics**

The specific characteristics of the technology considered for adoption appear as an overall influence for adoption in this thesis and in line with suggested factors in previous research. The technology characteristics identified in this thesis are summarized to be technical requirements, costs and time. Again, the level of complexity influences the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence. For small businesses the complexity of a technology often results in both technical requirements, as the technical skills are often not available in-house, and costs, as often becomes necessary to outsource the implementation of the new technology. This holds true for the adoption of a mobile and local online presence. For a social online presence, on the other hand, the technological requirements are low, in which other requirements become apparent, such as the time demanded for maintenance. It could be argued that the time characteristic is not apparent for tools with higher technical requirements because the factor is overshadowed by the technical requirements and/or because the time demand is limited when the implementation of the new technology is outsourced to a third party.

### **9.4 Individuals' Characteristics**

The adoption of new technologies and tools in all of the areas of social, mobile and local are dependent on initiators when considered for adoption by small businesses. Of course it is dependent on the industry considered, but often the competences of employees in small businesses are limited to the products and services offered by the business. As such, new technologies and tools for communication and marketing that require other skills than those available in the organization lead to the requirement of an initiator. In other words, an employee needs to take particular interest in the tools considered for adoption and develop necessary skills and understanding of that tool. These interests and skills were observed to often be correlated with the background of the initiator and the level of private use of the technology. Again, it could be argued that the complexity of the technology will have an impact on, which individual characteristics that are needed. For a mobile and local online presence, the need for technological skills will increase in line with the reasoning above.

## 10. Conclusion

As new technologies emerge the models for adoption need to be revised to fit the new characteristics and requirements of that technology. Literature concerned with the adoption of new technologies propose new models as new technologies emerge and the relative importance of factors included in those model vary over the technological innovations considered for implementation. With the emergence of three new areas of online; social, mobile and local, there is a need to revisit the models proposed for the adoption of previous technologies and revise these frameworks for adoption to fit the new characteristics of the new technologies.

By reviewing existing models for technology adoption this thesis have suggested four main areas that would appear influence the adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses; *external drivers, the strategic reasons for adoption, the characteristics of the technology considered for adoption and the characteristics of the individuals in the organization*. The results indicate that these four areas indeed affect the decision of adoption. By comparing the results from the Study of Experts with the results from the Case Study, subcategories were identified as specific drivers for adoption under each of the main areas. In these subcategories, results were found that deviate from previous research results. These factors include; the contributing effect of media, industry characteristics and sales agents as external drivers for adoption. The results showed to include both similarities and differences between the three technologies that were studied. By analyzing these differences it was found that the factors included in each area are affected by the complexity of the tools intended for adoption and the perceived level of adoption among users. Furthermore, the limited technical resources and skills available in small organizations and the limited financial resources will affect adoption.

In conclusion, the study has both found a proposed model for the major reasons why small firms decides to adopt a social, mobile and local online presence. The findings also indicate that there is a need to revise models as new technologies develop, as proved by the revised model resulting from the research of this thesis. What is delivered here is a general framework and specific models for adoption of a social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses. The next steps include testing the validity of the specifications of these models on larger scale and continuously studying the development of the online technologies and revising models for adoption accordingly.



## **11. Further Research**

### **Testing the validity of the framework and subcategories**

The results of this thesis suggests models for adoption of social, mobile and local online strategies. It is however necessary to conduct quantitative research on a larger scale among small businesses to determine the validity of each of the subcategories presented in this thesis. It could, furthermore, be valuable to compare the relative importance of the four areas that influence adoption that are presented in the framework in this thesis, as they may vary.

### **Cross analyzing the subcategories**

The analysis of the results of the subcategories of each of the three areas considered for adoption in this study suggest there could be correlation of adoption strategies and complexity of the technology. As such it could be assumed that the subcategories vary according to the stage of technical requirements, i.e. when technical skills are in place for mobile online tools to the same level of understanding of the technology as social online tools, will technology characteristics such as time for maintenance emerge as a characteristic for mobile online tools?

### **Analyzing the differences of industry and/or business model**

It could be valuable to conduct research regarding whether or not there is a difference in adoption frameworks and subcategories for different industries. It could be hypothesized that the relative importance of the four areas that influence adoption vary between industry as well as the subcategories affecting adoption of social, mobile and local online presence for small businesses.

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## **13. Appendix**

### **13.1 Interview questionnaire Study of Experts**

#### **Social**

##### **External Pressure**

Vilka externa faktorer tror du driver på att småföretag anammar denna media?

##### **Strategic Reasons**

Vad ser du som anledningar till att småföretagare anammar en social strategi?

Vilka potentiella fördelar kan småföretagare få genom att anamma en social närvaro?  
Inom vilka områden? i.e. mot konsumenter, affärsverksamheten/försäljning

Vad kan en social närvaro ge för fördelar i jämförelse med andra online-verktyg?

##### **Technology Characteristics**

Vad anser / upplever du är barriärerna för småföretagare idag att anamma detta media?

##### **Individual's Characteristics**

Vem upplever du driver implementeringen av sociala medier i småföretagen?

Hur går småföretag tillväga för att implementera sociala medier?

#### **Mobile**

##### **External Pressure**

Vilka externa faktorer tror du driver på att småföretag anammar denna media?

##### **Strategic Reasons**

Vad ser du som anledningar till att småföretagare anammar en mobil strategi?

Vilka potentiella fördelar kan småföretagare få genom att anamma en mobil närvaro?  
Inom vilka områden? i.e. mot konsumenter, affärsverksamheten/försäljning

Vad kan en mobil närvaro ge för fördelar i jämförelse med andra online-verktyg?

##### **Technology Characteristics**

Vad anser / upplever du är barriärerna för småföretagare idag att anamma detta media?

##### **Individual's Characteristics**

Vem upplever du driver implementeringen av mobila strategier i småföretagen?

Hur går småföretag tillväga för att implementera mobila strategier?

#### **Local**

##### **External Pressure**

Vilka externa faktorer tror du driver på att småföretag anammar denna media?

### **Strategic Reasons**

Vad ser du som anledningar till att småföretagare anammar en lokal strategi?

Vilka potentiella fördelar kan småföretagare få genom att anamma en lokal online närvaro?  
Inom vilka områden? i.e. mot konsumenter, affärsverksamheten/försäljning

Vad kan en lokal online närvaro ge för fördelar i jämförelse med andra online-verktyg?

### **Technology Characteristics**

Vad anser / upplever du är barriärerna för småföretagare idag att anamma detta media?

### **Individual's Characteristics**

Vem upplever du driver implementeringen av lokala online strategier i småföretagen?

Hur går småföretag tillväga för att implementera lokala online strategier?

## **13.2 Interview questionnaire Case Study**

### **Social**

#### **External Pressure**

Var den några externa faktorer som påverkade ert beslut att anamma en social online närvaro?

- > *customer behavior vs. expectations*
- > *competitors*
- > *mass media*

#### **Strategic Reasons**

Varför valde ni att anamma en social online närvaro?

Vad såg ni för potentiella fördelar med en social online närvaro? inom vilka områden?

- > *kommunikation (två-vägs)*
- > *kostnad*
- > *rekommendationer*
- > *andra*

Hur skiljer sig en social online närvaro från annan marknadsföring / online närvaro?

- > *kommunikation*
- > *kostnad*
- > *rekommendationer*
- > *annat*

### **Technology Characteristics**

Trodde ni att det skulle ta mycket tid? implementation vs. hantering?

Upplevde ni att det var tekniskt komplicerat att implementera er sociala närvaro online?

Krävdes det (stora) finansiella resurser att implementera? barriär?

### **Individual's Characteristics**

Hur väl kände ni till sociala medier innan ni anammade en närvaro?

Visste ni, innan ni anammande, hur man kunde använda sociala medier som kommunikations / marknadsföringskanal för företaget?

Vem inom företaget drev implementering av er sociala online närvaro? varför den personen?

> *private usage*

> *knowledge*

Vem skötte implementeringen?

### **Mobile**

#### **External Pressure**

Var den några externa faktorer som påverkade ert beslut att anamma en mobil online närvaro?

> *customer behaviour vs. expectations*

> *competitors*

> *mass media*

#### **Strategic Reasons**

Varför valde ni att anamma en mobil online närvaro?

Vad såg ni för potentiella fördelar med en mobil online närvaro? inom vilka områden?

> *synlighet*

> *transaktionsmöjligheter*

> *andra*

Hur skiljer sig en mobil online närvaro från annan marknadsföring / online närvaro?

> *synlighet*

> *transaktionsmöjligheter*

> *annat*

### **Technology Characteristics**

Trodde ni att det skulle ta mycket tid? implementation vs. hantering?

Upplevde ni att det var tekniskt komplicerat att implementera er mobila online närvaro?

Krävdes det (stora) finansiella resurser att implementera? barriär?

### **Individual's Characteristics**

Hur väl kände ni till mobila medier innan ni anammade en närvaro?

Visste ni, innan ni anammande, hur man kunde använda mobila medier som kommunikations / marknadsföringskanal för företaget?

Vem inom företaget drev implementering av er mobila online närvaro? varför den personen?  
> *knowledge*

Vem skötte implementeringen?

### **Local**

#### **External Pressure**

Var den några externa faktorer som påverkade ert beslut att anamma en lokal online närvaro?

- > *customer behaviour vs. expectations*
- > *competitors*
- > *mass media*

#### **Strategic Reasons**

Varför valde ni att anamma en lokal online närvaro?

Vad såg ni för potentiella fördelar med en lokal online närvaro? inom vilka områden?

- > *targeted marketing*
- > *location based offerings*
- > *andra*

Hur skiljer sig en lokal online närvaro från annan marknadsföring / online närvaro?

- > *targeted marketing*
- > *location based offerings*
- > *andra*

#### **Technology Characteristics**

Trodde ni att det skulle ta mycket tid? implementation vs. hantering?

Upplevde ni att det var tekniskt komplicerat att implementera er lokala online närvaro?

Krävdes det (stora) finansiella resurser att implementera? barriär?

#### **Individual's Characteristics**

Hur väl kände ni till lokala medier innan ni anammade en närvaro?

Visste ni, innan ni anammande, hur man kunde använda lokala medier som kommunikations / marknadsföringskanal för företaget?

Vem inom företaget drev implementering av er lokala online närvaro? varför den personen?  
> *knowledge*

Vem skötte implementeringen?