

Creative Prizes and Social Media

A valuable marketing channel or a time-consuming puzzle?

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Abstract

The use of social media as an extension of the private life has increased tremendously over the last years. However, social media as a professional marketing channel is still relatively unexplored. This thesis aims to start filling the knowledge gap of what factors one has to consider in social media marketing. It also aims to investigate how creative prizes currently use social media and what factors are important for their specific context. Finally, this thesis aims to see how these factors can be applied in an individual case, when investigating what is specifically important for the Polar Music Prize during their social media marketing start-up.

The result of this research is a model containing four key factors, which are important to understand and use when marketing through social media in general. An underlying base model of social media, which focuses on the continuous advancement of the activities, is also extracted from the empirical findings. These models are then applied to the creative prize context and the first four key model is modified in order to adapt the specific and unique situation of creative prizes. The final result is the factor that is the most important for Polar Music Prize, which will help them to start up their professionally social media marketing.

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AND,

our parents;

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His Majesty the King was there, one of the best rock groups in history was there and some of the most important people in Sweden were there, when the Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt enters the stage and starts to sing:

*“We don’t need no education.
We don’t need no thought control!”*

Of course the audience loved it. This was during a prize ceremony in the Concert Hall of Stockholm when Pink Floyd and Renée Fleming were awarded with one of the most prestigious prizes in the music industry; the Polar Music Prize. The video clip was later spread on YouTube and Facebook and widely debated over the social web.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Consumers have never had such a significant influence on the attitudes towards a brand or a company as they have today (Weber, 2009). The tools that enable this development are the social media channels. This phenomenon is widely debated in 2010 (Unkuri, 2010). These channels contain numerous actors; those who use it for personal reasons and those who are trying to use it for a commercial purpose (ibid). The social media phenomenon brings both opportunities and challenges to marketers of today (The Nielsen Company, 2009). Social media changes the way consumers behave; hence advertisers and companies need to adjust to be able to take advantage of this change (The Nielsen Company, 2009). There has also been a dramatic change in people's usage of social media during a relatively short time, which brings consequences for the entire society (Unkuri, 2010). The borders between the worlds of consumers and enterprises are vaguer than ever before as more and more businesses enter the social media web (Shih, 2009). Though, many companies have made attempts to use social media without having a calculated strategy to lean back on, which in some cases have lead to creating negative brand associations (Unkuri, 2010). Companies need to open their minds to new possibilities and rethink past procedures to be able to learn how to communicate with an audience on the social web. The old marketing business should not be completely replaced, but it needs to be further developed (Weber, 2009).

The starting point of this study is in a time where the uncertainty of how to use social media professionally is significant. However, this is an opportunity for organizations that want to reach their target segment in a cost-efficient way. Prizes and awards are examples of such organizations. Since prizes are not aiming to sell anything, there is a crucial difference from classical ways of marketing. The marketing goals are totally different and therefore one has to think, plan and act differently. This makes prizes a truly interesting topic to study. The main study object in this research is the Polar Music Prize, but in order to understand their situation a qualitative study of four other creative prizes will be conducted.

1.2 Problem Area

As insinuated above there is a current problem with the professional use of social media; a lot of actors do not know how to act on the social media marketing arena and use it in their favor (Unkuri, 2010). This is a problem since there could be many benefits gained from a successful usage of social media. It is of great importance for creative prizes to truly understand this cost efficient marketing channel in order to start using it in an effective way.

1.3 Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe and develop knowledge about the social media phenomenon, examine how creative prizes use social media marketing and based on this knowledge investigate what the Polar Music

Prize should focus on in terms of social media marketing. The study is conducted using a qualitative method in order to answer the following research questions:

1. *What are the most important factors to consider when marketing through social media in a professional way?*
2. *Are these factors applicable to the social media marketing of creative prizes and do the studied prizes currently consider them?*
3. *Which of the identified factors are the most important for the Polar Music Prize to consider when developing their social media marketing?*

1.4 Previous Research and Expected Contribution

Social media is a new phenomenon and there has been relatively little research made on the topic. Weber (2009) identifies a set of traditional marketing components that need to be adjusted to suit social media marketing. He emphasizes the dialogue, the interaction with the customers, and paying attention to customer behavior rather than demographics (Weber, 2009). Shih (2009) has focused her book *The Facebook Era* on how to use Facebook for business and discusses relevant steps to follow when using Facebook as a marketing channel (Shih, 2009). A report on social networking from the Nielsen Company (2009) concludes that there is still no successful model for how to advertise in social media (The Nielsen Company, 2009). An article about the blogging business by Miller (2003) stated that a continuous form of communication, such as a blog, has become more important to businesses. Though, another article about the business blog from 2007 found that businesses often fail to adopt the authentic culture of the blogosphere and hence harm their credibility, when trying to use the channel (Sprague, 2007). The master's thesis by Kocken and Skoghagen (2009) conclude that marketing a brand on Twitter can lead to strengthened brand associations.

Hence, the above mentioned literature has shown that at least some research has been made on the topic. However, the area is still relatively unexplored regarding concrete examples of factors that are necessary to consider in social media marketing. Moreover, when it comes to social media and creative prizes, no previous research have been made. This study aims to start filling this gap by contributing to the knowledge about how creative prizes use social media marketing today and investigate if the factors the study identifies could be found useful. Furthermore, the study will hopefully lead to further discussions about social media as a marketing channel, and provide a foundation for additional research on the topic.

1.5 Definitions

Social Media

Social media is an online arena for private and professional conversation and information sharing. Some websites are more interactive while some are focusing more on broadcasting, but all have some common

features; one can share information, interact and have social relations. Since the concept of social media is relatively new, there is no distinct framework for how to define it. Social media is “...ultimately about friendships, where members add value to each other’s lives through interaction” (The Nielsen Company, 2009, p. 6). This paper will use the following definition: *Social media consists of online interactive communication systems where individuals and organizations can share different kind of information with each other.*

Creative Prizes

Since this thesis studies the marketing of prizes in a social media context with focus on creative prizes. The definition of creative prizes used is: *A prize or an award that is given to a person or an organization for achievements in a creative field, like music, literature, illustration or other creative arts.*

1.6 Delimitations

In order to fulfill the purpose and respond to the research questions, the study has a set of delimitations. Following the purpose of the study, the research is concentrated on creative prizes’ social media usage in order to apply the findings on the situation of the Polar Music Prize. The reason why the study is limited to creative prizes was that the authors found it necessary to pick sample objects that have enough similarities to the Polar Music Prize for the results to be applicable to the Polar Music Prize. However, the Nobel Prize as a whole cannot be considered a creative prize. An exception was made since it does have a creative part, the Nobel Prize in literature, which is not separate from the other Nobel Prizes regarding the social media activities. Since the Polar Music Prize is an international award and the social web is a clearly global phenomenon, the main study sample includes not only Swedish founded prizes but also one founded in United States. Moreover, all prizes have international Laureates.

1.7 Disposition

After the introduction the methodology will be described, where the choice of subject, scientific approach and research design are discussed and motivated. Then follows a description of the theoretical framework used to address the research questions. Next, the research material is presented, which is divided into three parts, corresponding to the three research questions. Firstly, the results of the pre-study and the empirical findings



Fig. 1

are declared and analyzed using the theoretical framework in order to answer the first research question.

This answer leads the study further and the empirical findings of the four cases in the main study are presented. This data is analyzed to define the important factors to be able to answer the second research question. These factors are then applied on the empirical findings of the Polar Music Prize, which are followed by a discussion in order to answer the third research question.

In this way, the results from the first research question are considered when answering the second one, in the same way the second is taken into account when answering the third one. The conclusions are then presented in order to clarify the answers to the research questions. Finally, the main contributions and implications for further research on the topic are discussed.

2. Methodology

In this section the choice of the study design and the scientific approach are motivated. Moreover, the sample selection is motivated and the analysis and interpretation explained and finally the study's validity and reliability is discussed.

2.1 Choice of Subject

Since there is insufficient knowledge of the social media phenomenon in many aspects, this is an interesting research topic. After having contacted André Persson, PR consultant at InformationsCompagniet and responsible for the marketing activities of Polar Music Prize, it was revealed that they were interested in expanding the Polar Music Prize's marketing activities through social media. Through a continuous dialogue with the tutor, Per Andersson, the purpose and research questions were developed and adjusted during the process.

2.2 Scientific Approach

In this study empirical findings and the existing theories are supporting each other in the analysis, which leads to the conclusions. This is an abductive approach, which means that a combination of an inductive approach and a deductive approach is used (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1994). The reason for this choice is the lack of fully developed theories on the topic, which forces the analysis to use both theories and empirical findings in order to gain new knowledge.

2.3 Case Study as Research Technique

Since the purpose of this study is to investigate what is important for the Polar Music Prize to consider when using social media marketing, a qualitative research design is considered the most appropriate. Moreover, the case study is seen as the most suitable qualitative method when the purpose with the study is to create a better understanding and find insights in a certain subject, which is the aim of this study (Merriam, 1994). Qualitative case study research often begins with a problem the researcher has noticed after gaining some knowledge about the topic (Merriam, 1994). This is the reason why a pre-study is conducted.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

According to the abductive scientific approach the theoretical framework is formed based on both existing theory and the empirical findings. In this case, the empirical findings consist of a pre-study of creative prizes, interviews with social media marketers and statistic reports from different marketing research organizations. The theory is based on acknowledged marketing concepts and the limited recent research on social media. Using the empirical findings and the theoretical framework, a model of key factors is extracted, which shows the significant factors one has to consider when working with social media marketing. Then this model will be applied to the situation of creative prizes, and modified accordingly.

2.5 Pre-study Research Design

The pre-study was performed in February and in March 2010. The first aim was to see whether creative prizes use social media marketing and if so, in what way they use it. After the meeting with André Persson, it was decided which prizes to include in the pre-study. An e-mail survey was made and sent out to a selection of prizes (see Appendix A).

2.5.1 Collection of Pre-study Data

A short survey, together with a brief presentation where the purpose of the study was explained was sent out to the Prizes of the pre-study in order to get in touch with the right persons to answer the questions. Three interviews were conducted via e-mail and one was conducted over phone, though with the same interview questions.

Table 1 – Pre-study

Prize	Founded	Prize Description	Interviewee	Date and Interview Type
Hasselblad Award	1979	An international award in photography	Jenny Blixt	2010-02-22, e-mail survey
P3 Gold Awards	2004	Sveriges Radio's music prize to the year's Swedish music highlights	Caroline Meyer Lagersparre	2010-02-15, telephone interview
Right Livelihood Award	1980	An international award for personal courage and social transformation	Kajsa Overgaard	2010-02-23, e-mail survey
Big Blog Prize	2008	An award to promote Swedish blogging	Göran Fröjd	2010-02-15, e-mail survey

2.5.2 Analysis of Pre-study Data

When examining the results of the pre-study, it was found that the research topic was interesting and possible to further investigate. The purpose of the thesis and the research questions of the main study began to take form. The results from the pre-study were then further used in a discussion that lead to the creation of a social media marketing model (See section 2.4).

2.6 Main Study Research Design

2.6.1 Sample Selection

Using a qualitative research design, the chosen sample of this thesis is heterogeneous within a given frame, as suggested by Trost (1997). The sample of the Prizes investigated is partly a *convenience sample*, where the chosen prizes are those that had time to participate. It is also partly a *strategic sample*, since it is desirable to have a somewhat diversified sample (Trost, 1997). This was done by choosing a number of variables, which were relevant to the study, and then selecting sample objects that showed variation on these variables. This can be described as a *goal-oriented sample selection* as suggested by Merriam (1994), since the sample objects were chosen from which one can learn as much as possible and gain the most valuable insights.

Table 2 – Main Study

Prize	Founded	Prize Description	Interviewee	Date and Interview Type
The Polar Music Prize	1989	An international music award for great achievements within classical or popular music	André Persson, Marie Ledin	2010-03-02, interview, 2010-04-19, interview
The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award	2002	An international award for children's and young adult literature	Agnes Lidbeck	2010-04-21, e-mail interview
The Birgit Nilsson Prize	2009	An international award for outstanding achievements within opera or classical music	Hannes Hulterantz	2010-03-29, interview
The Nobel Prize	1901	An international award in physics, medicine, chemistry, literature, for peace and The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in memory of Alfred Nobel (1968)	Merci Ohlsson	2010-03-19, interview
The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame	1983	A foundation that induct those who have had great impact on the development of rock and roll	Todd Mesek	2010-04-22, e-mail interview

The chosen variables of variation that were used are the age of the Prize, the Prize category and nationality. When defining the frame of the Prize categories it was decided to use not only music prizes, but also other creative prizes. The reason why the study is limited to creative prizes is for the sample objects to have enough similarities to Polar Music Prize for the results to be applicable to Polar Music Prize. The four chosen cases have similarities to the Polar Music Prize or relevant experience, which will contribute to the analysis. Since the Nobel Prize in Literature is creative, but marketed along with the other Nobel Prizes, the empirical findings of this prize is based on them as a whole.

Following the guidelines recommended by Trost (1997) the study includes four cases in addition to the Polar Music Prize. Those are The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, The Birgit Nilsson Prize, The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and The Nobel Prize. The respondents from the Prizes are responsible for marketing activities regarding the specific prize.

Moreover, an interview with a researcher on consumer behavior in social media, Jan Unkuri at Augur Marknadsanalys was performed, to get the business-to-consumer perspective. Another interview with Ola Jonsson at Inspectum AB, who works professionally with digital marketing, was conducted in order to gain the business-to-business perspective.

2.6.2 Creation of Interview Questions

The research questions and the purpose of the study were guiding the creation the interview questions. The questions were formulated with respect to general guidelines suggested by Trost (1997). This included for example carefully avoiding statements and negations but also making sure not to have two questions in the same sentence, in order to receive more exact answers. According to Trost (1997), qualitative interviews should not have ready formulated questions, but instead a list over broad topics to treat during the interview.

Despite this, it was decided to let the interview questions be somewhat detailed to make sure that all interviewees answered the same specific questions regarding social media. This was considered important in order to make sure to include specific details that were found essential to conduct the study. This is a so called *semi-structured interview*, which, according to Merriam (1994), is suitable when it is desired to collect certain facts from all respondents. The interview questions were tested on two persons and reformulated to avoid misunderstandings. One set of questions were created for the Prizes while another set of questions were used to Jan Unkuri and Ola Jonsson, which were modified depending on their specific area of competence.

2.6.3 Collection of Main Study Data and Secondary Sources

The study is mainly based on data from the above mentioned interviews but other sources have also been used to increase the reliability. The Prizes' digital marketing channels have also been studied in detail to be able to comprehend how they work. Relevant literature has been used as secondary sources in order to further increase the understanding of social media. The interview questions and the purpose of the study were sent to all respondents in advance, in order to let them prepare themselves and understand what the aim for the interview was. During the interviews, the order of the questions as well as the formulation could differ from the written questions, depending on how the conversation developed. Follow-up questions were used when necessary, to clarify the answers. The contact with the interviewees was maintained after the interviews when necessary for further clarifications.

After the first interviews it was revealed that it might be an advantage to start recording the interviews to be able to reproduce in detail what was said, which gives the best ground for analysis according to Merriam (1994). During the main part of the interviews both authors were present. Afterwards, the interview results were discussed thoroughly in order to share the interpretations to make sure that both authors understood and shared the same conclusions on the empirical findings. Then the interviews were reproduced in detail in text, with help

from the recordings when possible. The aim was to include all important facts that could prove useful later on, but still keep the material reviewable, to simplify the later analysis (Trost, 1997).

2.6.4 Analysis and Interpretation of Main Study Data

In a qualitative study the analysis is a continuously ongoing process that goes hand-in-hand with the collection of data, since the researcher's insights and ideas will affect the next steps in the work (Merriam, 1994). Hence, the analysis began already during the pre-study, which affected the way the main study was conducted. After having compiled the material gained from the interviews in the main study, it was read through thoroughly to find tendencies and similarities that could be interesting for the analysis.

To obtain a reviewable analysis material the information was categorized after prize and topic, as suggested by Merriam (1994). The theoretical framework was further developed with respect to the empirical data from the main study. The empirical findings showed a biased importance towards some factors of the models, which were used when modifying the models to the unique situation of creative prizes. The reconstructed models were then applied to the empirical findings of the Polar Music Prize. Through a discussion of the models and the specific situation of the Polar Music Prize, the third research question was answered.

2.7 Research Quality

2.7.1 Validity and Reliability

In order to be able to rely on the conclusions of this study, some important aspects have been accounted for, as stressed by Merriam (1994). To ensure the study's *internal validity*, the authors have carefully reproduced the information assembled in the study. Follow-up questions were asked when the answer needed to be clarified and the majority of the interviews were recorded. The interviewees were allowed to read through the results from their specific interview to eliminate misunderstandings. Secondary sources were used as supplements to reinforce the results from the interviews. Moreover, both authors were engaged in the analysis of the results to ensure that the right conclusions were drawn. The internal validity was also reinforced by the fact that several results from the different interviews corresponded. Moreover, *horizontal criticism* as described by Merriam (1994) was applied when thesis colleagues read through the results and came up with ideas and inputs.

External validity reflects how well the results from the study can be applicable in other situations (Merriam, 1994). Though, this study is focusing on a specific case, it is not investigating if the results could be generalized to other situations. In this study the sample of cases is not random; hence, it is hard to say if the results are valid in other situations. For a study to at all be able to have external validity, the internal validity must be assured (ibid). Through strengthening this study's internal validity, the learning from this unique setting might also be useful in other situations (ibid). Since this study is dealing with an unstable and constantly changing phenomenon, the *reliability* is problematic to assure, but can be reinforced by increasing the inner validity (Merriam, 1994).

To deal with the reliability issue of the interviews, for example accidentally influencing the answers, the empirical findings are supported by collected data from numerous sources, which also helped increasing the inner validity of the study (Trost, 1997). Furthermore, the empirical material has been thoroughly processed to get the most out of it and to minimize errors when interpreting the data. The same interview questions have been used for all prizes to ensure that no important information was missed out. The authors have also aimed to describe in detail the thesis procedure for other researchers to be able to use it as a manual if replicating the study since it is of great importance that the reader can follow the whole process to be able to judge the validity of the conclusions (Merriam, 1994).

2.7.2 Critique of Methodology Used

Clearly, it would have been better to record all interviews to increase the accuracy of the empirical material and preferably both authors should have been present at all interviews. It would also have been desirable to have more than one interviewee from each prize, but since there is only one or very few persons working with the marketing activities at each prize it was hard to find more appropriate interviewees. It would also have been better to have face-to-face interviews with all respondents, but a couple of prizes did not have time for this. The Prize's lack of time is another aspect why there was no more than one interview person per prize.

Moreover, inputs from more people who work professionally with social media would have been preferred. Though, since secondary sources have been used to complement the empirical material collected from the interviews, the data can still be considered trustworthy. Another possible weakness could be the limited number of cases; adding more cases could lead to gaining further knowledge. However, as put forward by Trost (1997), this could cause a shallower comprehension of the Prizes. That is why the authors chose to limit the research to four cases.

3. Empirical Findings of Social Media

In order to gain knowledge and get an overview of how creative prizes work with social media a pre-study was conducted. The empirical findings of this study will be presented below, prize by prize, as well as the relevant key points from the interviews and literature on social media and the statistics from various reports on the subject.

3.1 Pre-study

The Prize-by-prize presentation below will start with background information on the pre-study cases and then a description of how they work with social media. In the background information it will be explained how the Prize is relevant to compare to the Polar Music Prize, or how it could contribute with new knowledge of the area.

3.1.1 The Big Blog Prize

The Big Blog Prize was founded 2008 and is one of the most social media oriented prizes in Sweden, since it awards social media actions. It was founded by the newspaper Aftonbladet and Bloggportalen, which is a

website only containing blogs. The purpose of the Prize is to encourage good achievements and blog performances within the Swedish blogosphere (The Big Blog Prize, 2010). Since they are working within the social media arena, their experiences might be valuable for this study. Göran Fröjdth works as editor and is responsible for the communication of the Twitter and Facebook accounts. They do not invest more than the work hours needed to maintain the blog and the other two accounts. They work with their big fan base and Fröjdth believes that he is able to reach most of the people he wants to reach, thanks to this network. The marketing division at Aftonbladet has helped creating the website, profile and advertizing campaigns. They do not have any evident goals or tries to control the outcome of the discussions, but they have guidelines to follow when interacting on the social media arena.

3.1.2 The Hasselblad Award

The Hasselblad Foundation was founded 1979 and has many purposes; it was founded to stimulate research and education within both the science and the photography field. In order to achieve their goal they give scholarships, grants and a prize in photography (The Hasselblad Foundation, 2010). This is, like the Polar Music Prize, an international creative award, founded in Sweden. They do not use social media in any way at the moment but finds Facebook and Twitter attracting. They would though like to start using them in a close future, says Jenny Blixt, the chief of information and marketing at the foundation. However, they have a very informative and creative website.

3.1.3 The Right Livelihood Award

The Right Livelihood Award was founded in 1980 and is an international award with the purpose of promoting personal courage and social transformation to contribute to peace, justice and a global ecological balance in the world (The Right Livelihood Award, 2010). Since the Prize is founded in Sweden a few years before the Polar Music Prize, it is considered an interesting study object. Apart from their website, Facebook is the only social media channel used. The aim is to reach out with information about their Laureates and their work. Kajsa Overgaard is the manager of the foundation and says that they currently do not have any resources to invest in a more extended marketing plan. That is why Övergaard is very grateful when the Prize, its Laureates and their work are mentioned on independent blogs or other forums.

3.1.4 The P3 Gold Awards

The P3 Gold Awards was founded in 2004 and is the Swedish radio station, P3's music Prize. P3 is a part of Sveriges Radio, SR, which is a non-commercial, independent public service radio broadcaster. The Prize focuses on the past year of Swedish music and the Laureates are elected partly by different jury groups, and partly by the Swedish people (Sveriges Radio, 2010). This Prize was considered interesting since it has a young target group and hence might have come far in their social media work. The target segment for the P3 Gold Awards' marketing activities is P3's listeners. The Prize uses P3's website to keep a dialogue with listeners. They also have Facebook groups and use the nominated artists' own web pages as marketing channels.

Moreover, they try to benefit from P3's well-known radio profiles when marketing the awards. YouTube is used for publishing video clips. They always make sure to have the P3 logo in the corner when broadcasting the award ceremony in SVT, since they know that people will spread the material on YouTube. Caroline Meyer Lagersparre, who is project manager at Sveriges Radio, thinks it is hard to say how much is invested in marketing through social media. They have not yet tried to estimate the return from their work with social media.

3.2 Background and Statistics of Social Media

According to the purpose of this paper a description of social media will now be done in order to develop knowledge and better understand the phenomenon and its impact on the marketing business. Social networking has evolved a lot over the past years. New websites have appeared and people have started to use the Internet more often all over the world (The Nielsen Company, 2009). The different social communities on the Internet have become a natural part of the everyday life for many people.

"The staggering increase in the amount of time people are spending on these sites is changing the way people spend their time online and has ramifications for how people behave, share and interact within their normal daily lives." (The Nielsen Company, 2009 p.1)

Next follows a presentation of the social media channels treated in this study to get a better understanding and insight in these interactive sites. Moreover, individuals' everyday usage of social media and the marketing business will be explored.

Facebook is one of the most famous sites of the social media channels. The main usage is to keep in contact with friends, which makes everyone's Facebook account unique. One has an own profile where pictures and videos can be uploaded as well as a forum for sending messages, called the wall. Since starting in 2004 it has been upgraded many times, now there are many applications, such as groups, fan clubs and events, but one can also send e-mails and chat on the website (Phillips, 2007). It started out as a community for university students but now its most common user is between 35 and 49 years old and almost one quarter is over 50 years old (The Nielsen Company, 2009). *"Based on a simple design, broad demographic appeal and a focus on connecting, Facebook has become the most popular social network..."* (ibid, p. 9)

According to Jan Unkuri, social media is used to broadcast, network and communicate. All those three possibilities are offered by Facebook, which he explains are the reasons why Facebook is dominating the social media arena; it is the richest channel. Unkuri also believes that the strength of Facebook is its wide focus; it does not have a niche or a target segment. The Facebook users are a mix of people using it for private reasons and people who use it more professionally, which can be a problem (Jonsson, 2010).

One of Unkuri's researches on consumer behavior in social media showed that the written language varies between different channels. He saw that the tone on Facebook is very similar to a group of friends sitting together; it is ironic and full of jokes (Unkuri, 2010). Though, this is likely to change over time as the medium is

evolving. The Facebook conversations are kept on a normal, not so extreme level, which might be a result of the fact that all friends can see what one writes (ibid). This opinion is supported by Jonsson, who states that the users are personally responsible for their behavior since everyone can see their name and picture. 35 percent of the global consumers use communities like Facebook *every day* and 19 percent do it *several times a day* (E-barometern, Q2 2009).

The **blog** started as an online diary. There are personal blogs, where the author only writes about her/his personal life and then there are theme blogs, which discuss a specific topic. They mainly consist of text but some blogs are only photos and videos. The blog has now become a medium for people with a special interest, an arena where one can confide thoughts around one specific subject (Unkuri, 2010). It is also more analytical; the writer uploads the text and then waits for comments on his/her thoughts. The comments on a blog are generally more extreme than those on Facebook, since one can be anonymous (Jonsson, 2010). 21 percent of the global consumers read blogs *several times a day* (E-barometern, Q2 2009).

Twitter is currently the biggest micro blog. One can write short status updates, using only 140 letters. This forces the writer to be more creative; cutting phrases is very usual (Unkuri, 2010). Twitter has many different features, which help the user to interact with a lot of different people and discuss specific topics (Twitter, 2010). According to Unkuri, Twitter is only useful for those who already have a fan base to address. For example, a lot of celebrities and politicians use Twitter successfully. Micro blogs like Twitter are an example of other social media channels that are widely discussed. Despite this, only seven percent of consumers use micro blogs once a week and 70 percent never use it (E-barometern, Q2 2009).

YouTube, which was founded in February 2005, is owned by Google and is open for everyone who wants to share videos (YouTube, 2010). Just like Facebook it has different functions; one can create a personal account and make comments, but it in a more anonymous way (Unkuri, 2010). 57 percent visit video sites like YouTube at least *once a week* and 13 percent do it *every day* (E-barometern, Q2 2009). **MySpace** is also a Google-owned website, which has many similarities to Facebook as well, such as the friend's application, but the focus is music. The user can share their own music, listen to others and have discussions about them (MySpace, 2010).

Flickr is also similar to Facebook, but simpler and with a greater focus on photos. There one can start groups, have friends and edit photos. They also offer the possibility to use ones photos to make different things, such as a canvas or a calendar (Flickr, 2010).

3.2.1 The Social Media in Consumers' Everyday Life

According to measurements by *AB Handelns Utredningsinstitut* a large amount of Swedish consumers use social media forums several times a week (E-barometern, Q2 2009). The amount of the global Internet population who are active in social communities has increased by five percent from 2008 to 2009, which is a growth rate three

times as big as the overall Internet usage growth rate (ibid). Ten percent of the time the average global consumer spends on Internet is spent in different social media channels. The total time an average global consumer spends online increased by 18 percent from 2007 to 2008. However, during the same period the increase in time spent in social communities, like Facebook, increased by 63 percent, and these communities are gaining a higher share of the global Internet time as well (ibid). The time spent on Facebook increased by 566 percent. Facebook has the highest average time per person, which makes Facebook the ninth most popular brand online. It has a successful concept, which attracts a broad group of users (The Nielsen Company, 2009). According to Unkuri, most people use social media to interact and socialize but there are also those who use it only to broadcast themselves. For example on YouTube, MySpace and Facebook people may have as their primary goal to market themselves instead of interacting with other people (ibid).

3.2.2 The Rise of Professional Social Media Marketing

For companies, social media channels like blogs, micro blogs, communities and video sites have become important for the communication with customers. 31 percent of companies have a strategy for how to use social media when providing customer contact and support (E-barometer, Q2 2009). The most common way of offering customer support is still through e-mail or telephone (ibid). Of companies that do not yet have a strategy for their usage of social media, most of them plan to develop one (E-barometer, Q2 2009). This is a crucial step before engaging in any social channels; one has to be clear what one wants to achieve (Jonsson, 2010). Furthermore, advertisers need to consider the fact that consumers are more sensitive to advertising in social media. The personal content found on the social media web can though be seen as a valuable resource for advertisers. Though, it is of great importance to have in mind that as the level of advertising increase at a site, it will get less attractive to consumers. (The Nielsen Company, 2009). Customers feel that highly targeted ads are interfering with their privacy. A Nielsen Online survey has shown that customers seem to be getting more intolerant to advertising that interrupts their social media experience (ibid). However, to advertise without disturbing the user is a difficult task; *“...a significant shift in advertising revenue from ‘traditional’ online media towards social media could be realized – if the successful ad model can be found.”* (ibid p. 3)

3.2.3 Challenges in Professional Social Media Marketing

The new personalized social media environment demands special approaches and to start with, one might need to use trial and error. *“It will take time to work out the magic formula for successfully advertising in social networks.”* (The Nielsen Company, 2009 p. 6) It is a challenge to figure out a successful way of doing it.

Continuous Dialogue and a Genuine Message

Social media advertising should be about taking part in relevant discussions without interrupting the social network experience. Furthermore, the advertising in social media must have an authentic and honest tone but as well adding value to the consumer in some way, just like a relationship between friends; *“Advertising must be a conversation rather than a push model.”* (The Nielsen Company, 2009 p. 6) Users tend to go where people are

talking about something that interests them (Weber, 2009). One of the challenges while starting to use a new social media channel is to understand the way its users behave, interact and talk. Unkuri believes that if one does not genuinely master the jargon of the channel, one will be better off not entering at all. This argument is also supported by Sprague (2007), who found that a lot of businesses failed in their attempts to work accordingly to the culture of the channel, which damaged their credibility. Unkuri states that people tend to think that it is embarrassing when companies try to use a social media channel in an inappropriate way.

This needs to be taken into consideration, as recovering from a social media mistake can take a long time (Unkuri, 2010). Since people today are more aware of the commercial messages around them, it is more difficult for marketers to make advertising successful; the general public already knows the tricks in the book, as Unkuri puts it. Both Unkuri and The Nielsen Company (2009) found that people react negatively on commercials, especially in the social media environment. The Nielsen Company (2009) found that the word *fake* was the most associated with the word *advertising*. Jonsson also argues that the users will be very negative if the actions of the organization are not appropriate. User-driven clubs and groups in social media are often more successful than groups founded by organizations; the user-driven ones are considered to be more genuine and honest. “*Social media is really the private everyday life moved to an online arena; you don’t a chief of marketing sitting beside you at the dinner table.*” (Jan Unkuri, 2010).

Creating Interest and Maintaining Activity

Some successful examples of advertising in social media are fan sites and sponsored groups that constantly work with interaction and different ways of adding value, such as special offers, give-aways and so on (The Nielsen Company, 2009). The aim for marketing towards the general public should be to attract customers to one’s own website, entertain them and make them give away information about themselves, in order to understand them better (Jonsson, 2010).

However, it is important to understand that for social media marketing to be valuable for consumers and advertisers, frequent work and investment in terms of time and effort is needed (The Nielsen Company, 2009). If one is to engage in social media, one has to be prepared to use the resources it takes to maintain the channel vivid. Creativity is an essential factor, since the user is there to be entertained, according to Unkuri. Jonsson shares this thought; his main concern when using social media is what he calls *lead nurturing*. This is maintaining, entertaining and feeding the consumer constantly. Before one can start working with *lead nurturing*, Jonsson stresses the importance of knowing the target segment. This should be identified in terms of psychographical characteristics rather than demographical. By monitoring what other interests the fan base has, one can find more people who might be interested in one’s message (Jonsson, 2010).

There are many benefits with social media usage; one of them is the instant access to people’s opinions (Unkuri, 2010). By listening, understanding and giving feedback one can manage the negative comments and make them

useful. In this way, Unkuri encourages marketers to divert from traditional one-way communication marketing. Moreover, the linking function between various social media channels is crucial to save time and resources, due to the possibility of updating information on several websites at once, instead of updating each site manually.

Effects on the Brand in Social Media

Weber (2009) states that social media is not only a channel for marketing messages, but in fact very similar to physical life. Marketers want to be able to control what is said about them on the social web, but this is very hard to do. Social media is not controllable in the same way traditional media is and the risk of critique is higher (Unkuri, 2010). Unkuri believes that a bad advertizing campaign in traditional media quickly will be forgotten, but within the interactive process of social media it can develop to a long-lasting disaster. Though, negative feedback can be seen as a valuable source of information of how one can improve their work. The opportunity of changing a bad opinion to a favorable one is offered through interaction. Therefore it is of great importance to monitor what is said and done with one's own brands online.

Weber (2009) thinks that a company can live and prosper on the social web as long as they are open and allow the customers to discuss and share their thoughts, both positive and negative. When joining a social network, one needs to be prepared to let go of some control (Unkuri, 2010). Though, knowing the medium and the target segment will help to keep certain control over the brand image (Jonsson, 2010).

Future of Social Media Marketing

Unkuri believes that marketers today feel like they need to start using social media, since everyone else is currently doing it. They might not even know how or for what reason they are using it. Regarding the future, companies will probably take over the social media arena more and more (Jonsson, 2010). Though, it is hard to say if this will lead to people escaping from the medium or not. The aversion people have for advertisement on social media can be a problem, but companies seem to learn more and get smarter; and so they may learn how to cope with this in the long run (ibid). Social media is here to stay and its role will be clearer and more defined in the future. It will become a natural part of the marketing mix, since it is the most natural channel of information for the new generation; the “*digital natives*” (Unkuri, 2010). That is why it is so important to start understanding it now (Jonsson, 2010).

4. Theories on Social Media

To answer the first research question, factors will be extracted from a substantial and multifaceted base of knowledge. This section presents and discusses the theories and how they can be applied on social media; that is, if they are supported by the empirical findings of the study.

Social media is a new phenomenon that primarily belongs to the promotion part of the marketing mix (Jonsson, 2010). Due to the great possibility of getting to know the customers, the theories of customer relationship management (CRM) and database marketing (DM) might be interesting. The focus of these two is the customer, which is also the case of social media. DM uses technology programs in order to gather information. Though, programs adapted for social media has not yet been developed. The concepts of CRM, on the other hand, might still be useful for this new phenomenon. The CRM activities are presented in figure 2a as it is by Jobber

(2007, p. 602). Since the CRM Activity Model was developed before the introduction of social media one may wonder if it is applicable to social media. The empirical findings show that some of the steps are actually crucial.

CRM Activity Model



Fig. 2a

CRM Activities in Social Media



Fig. 2a

Firstly, the *targeting* and *knowing the customer*, which one might say are the core concepts of CRM, are applicable to social media. To adopt the appropriate language, use the channel in the same way the users do and to understand how to add value for the target group are factors which are extremely important in order to succeed in social media marketing, according to the empirical findings. The *enquiry management* and *welcoming* is not supported by the empirical findings and might not be necessary, since the user was on the arena first. Another key factor, according to the empirical findings is the managing of critique in order to avoid negative brand associations.

The traditional CRM model presents the steps *managing problems* and *win-back*, which are closely linked to each other. When adapting the CRM model to social media, *problems* and *critique* can be seen as equivalent. When using social media, the biggest problem according to the empirical findings is criticism and not being able to handle it and win back the customer's trust. Therefore, these two steps in the CRM model can be seen as applicable on social media. The *customer development* step in the traditional CRM model stands for advancement over time when it comes to finding customers to target. This is relevant for social media marketing, although the focus in this context lies more on the relationship itself than the actual customer base, which is why the factor should be named *relationship development*.

The above described model will constitute the fundamental theoretical framework of this study, but in order to adapt the theories on the specific social media marketing situation more recent concepts will also be used. The recent developed concepts, theories and arguments are gathered from four different books. The first one is *The*

Social Network Business Plan, which was written in 2009 by the American investor David Silver. He stresses the fact that everyone in the social media context is a producer of content and that it is hard to be in charge of one's brand in this environment. The only thing one can do is to be authentic and trustworthy. Companies have handled critique in this medium differently and there can be a lot to gain or lose (Silver, 2009).

To listen and appreciate feedback is essential if one wants to stay on the social media web (ibid).

Marketing to the Social Web is the second social media book the analysis will be based on. It is written by Larry Weber, professional on marketing and public relations. Weber presents seven steps to follow when creating a social community. The first one, *Observe*, is essential in order to understand the behavior on the social web.

When one knows this, it is time to *Recruit* the right people. *Engage*, is one of the main concepts in social media, and it is also applicable to the issues this study aims to investigate.

"*Engagement is all about content.*" (Weber, 2009, p. 67) The content of the site needs to stimulate, engage and add value to the customer. The *Evaluation* and *Measuring* steps are all about learning to do it well, figuring out what works and what people like. The *Promotion* part is due to the fact that a new community probably needs to be promoted. The *Improvement* step is very important if one wants to continue existing in the long run. Other key points, which are significant, are to *understand* that the user is not controllable and to realize that a business' response to their actions is essential (Weber, 2009).

Seven steps to build a community

1. Observe
2. Recruit
3. Evaluate
4. Engage
5. Measure
6. Promote
7. Improve

Fig. 3

As one can understand, using a community is not the same thing as creating one, but an account in a social media channel, fan club or group could be seen as a small community within the social media website. Some of the eight steps are actually supported by the empirical findings and the other theories. The importance of *observing* is supported both by the pre-study and the interviews. Moreover, it corresponds to the step *knowing the customer* from the model of CRM Activities in Social Media. The *recruit* and *promote* steps are more relevant when creating a completely new social community but could be applicable also when attracting consumers to a fan group within an existing community. Though, these steps are not distinct in the empirical findings. *Evaluate* is of course important to be able to *Improve*, which is of great importance in a rapidly developing environment and one of the factors behind the success of Facebook. How to *Measure* the effects of one's activities in social media is still a dilemma; the empirical findings show that there is still no good way of doing this.

The third book used on social media is *The Facebook Era*, written by Clara Shih, creator of Faceconnector, which is a business application on Facebook. She argues that one should always think from the customer's perspective, which means asking the question "*What are their incentives, motivations, expectations and thought process?*" (Shih, 2009, p. 147) (Fig. 4) One needs to give them a reason to engage. She stresses the significance of knowing these

What are their incentives, motivations, expectations and thought process?

Fig. 4

things about the consumer and valuing their feedback, in order to improve the communication in a way they appreciate. This strongly supports the *engagement* factor (Fig. 3) and the fact that one has to give them some incentives to stay. This is referred to as *lead nurturing* in the empirical findings. The challenge is to do this frequently, to maintain the communication and continuously give the visitors new reasons of why they should interact and stay engaged.

The question of time, and *frequently* adding new creative content to keep stimulating the user are also key points in the book *Putting the Public Back in Public Relations*, by Brian Solis, who is globally recognized as one of the most prominent thought leaders and published authors in new media, and Deirdre Breakeyridge, who is a veteran in the PR industry working with brand awareness, creative and strategic PR campaigns (Amazon, 2010a). They present an equation, which combines the mentioned factors with two new ones:

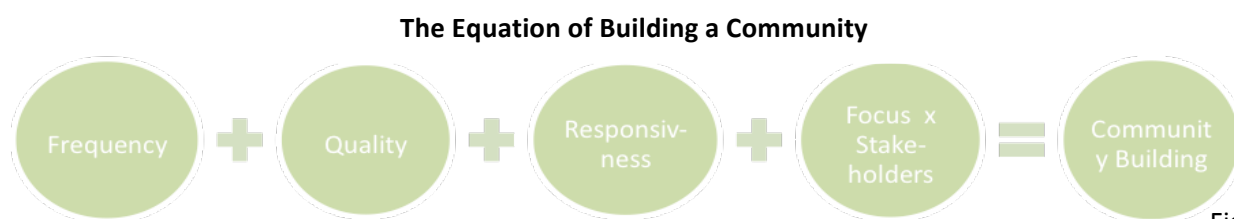


Fig. 5

Responsiveness is interaction; answering posts and commenting on blogs/accounts/tweets. This is important in order to “*extend the value and expertise*” (Solis & Breakeyridge, 2009, p. 147) *Focus* times *stakeholders* is important since it is beneficial to satisfy all interest groups and their expectations. The consumer has become increasingly skeptical over the years and “*PR was – and is still – viewed as a necessary evil...*” (Solis & Breakeyridge, 2009, p. 25) PR has also been a one-way communication, but with this new media, information will also go from the customer to the marketer. Not only has the direction of the information developed, the way advertisers need to communicate has also changed; they will need to interact and have a conversation instead of simply broadcasting messages. “*Think of passengers on your ship who got a boat of their own.*” This is a quotation by Jay Rosen when trying to describe the role of the users in social media. It clearly illustrates that the general public is in charge (Solis & Breakeyridge, 2009, p. 85).

A further development of the well-known model of communication by Harold Lasswell is shown in figure 6a as it is presented by Solis and Breakeyridge (2009). It states that there is an origin, who is distributing a message through a medium, which someone then hears and then there are certain effects of this message.

This model is modified by Solis and Breakeyridge, who added another cycle of the process to adapt the model to what they refer to as *new media* (Fig. 6b). The new *who*

Who
Says what
In which channel
To whom
To what effect

Fig. 6a

Who
Says what
In which channel
To whom
To what effect
Then who
Hears what
Who shares what
With what intent
To what effect

refers to the community as the origin from where the users consume information and share it with each other in different ways, which then is interpreted and processed.

Solis and Breakenridge also emphasizes advertisers in social media to *respond* with *quality*, which is in line with the interactive engagement factor presented above (Fig. 3), except now the focus is on the quality of the content, which is in line with the empirical findings. Furthermore, Solis and Breakenridge present an extension to the communication model, which is adapted to fit social media and therefore focuses on the sharing of information from user to user.

5. Analysis of Social Media

The abductive approach, which this discussion is based on, is very interesting due to the new discoveries combining theories and empirical findings might generate. There are many arguments and concepts stated in the empirical findings, which will now be analyzed and structured in order to see if there are any main factors one should pay attention to when working with social media marketing. In this section the analysis aims to treat the first research question:

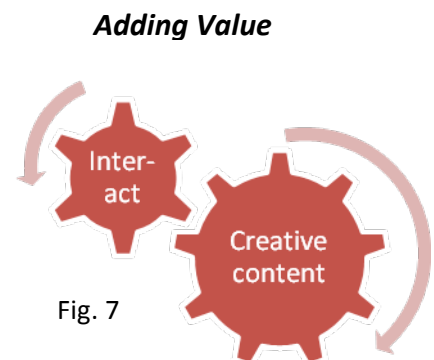
1. *What are the most important factors to consider when marketing through social media in a professional way?*

5.1 Factor one – Adding Value

In the pre-study it was shown that the P3 Gold Awards used their website to maintain discussion and entertain their listeners through various activities. The report from the Nielsen company (2009) puts forward different ways of *adding value*, *conversation* and *interaction* as key factors and Unkuri talks about *interesting* and *engaging* the users through *creativity*. Jonsson argues that *lead nurturing*; where one needs to *maintain*, *entertain* and *feed* the user, is highly significant and that social media is a *two-way* communication system. Unkuri sums up the crucial actions on the social arena as *take*, *give* and *listen*. These empirical findings might now be supported by the theories.

Engage is the fourth out of the seven steps in the model of how to build a community and the key concepts from figure 3 are *incentives*, *motivation* and *expectations*. The *quality* factor in figure 5 supports this, but focuses on the quality. The extension of the communication models, figure 6b, goes further than Jonsson, and includes three or more actors.

The empirical findings and the theories are essentially saying the same thing, which is summarized in figure 7; one needs to have *creative content*, *interact* and *add value*. However, the organization is not the only producer of content, as shown in the empirical findings and the extension of the communication model (Fig. 6b). Users do produce content as well and share information.



5.2 Factor two – Consumer Power

The Right Livelihood Award relies on users sharing information on blogs to spread their message throughout the web. The P3 Gold Awards puts their logo in the corner in the videos they produce, because they know it will be spread further on the social web. Facebook has evolved a lot due to the users; they are the ones creating content, which makes it highly personalized. The quizzes, clubs, events and the users' activity, help Facebook constantly develop. The same is accurate for the other social media websites; without the users there would be no or little content. Imagine YouTube, Facebook or Twitter containing only the modest amount of information, videos and links the founders produce. That would not be very interesting. Since the users have more important roles than only to *use* the content and the channel, they will no longer be referred to as users; they will now be referred to as *account owners*.

It has been empirically proved that the account owners are just as important as they are independent. The CRM model only sees the general public as people the marketer needs to know in order to predict their needs, but the account owner has a bigger role than that in social media. The Equation of Building a Community (Fig. 5)

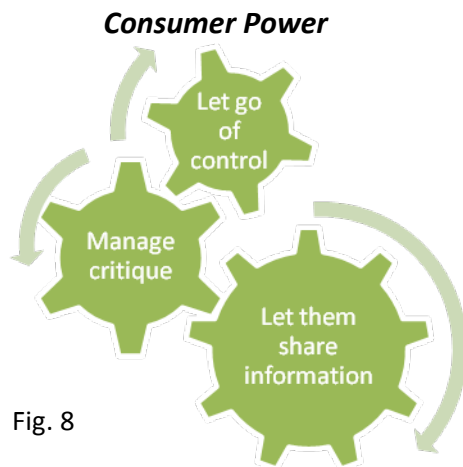


Fig. 8

acknowledges the importance of the account owners better; it puts forward that one needs to focus on the stakeholders in order to succeed. The extension of the communication model (Fig. 6b) goes even further and acknowledges the *active role* of the account owners; they *share* information in different ways.

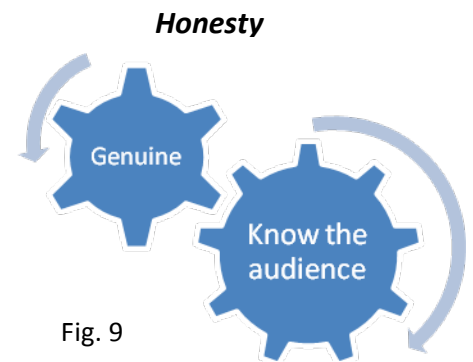
Unkuri and Jonsson do as well realize the significance of the account owners but also the importance of managing critique in order to please them. Unkuri even states that not managing the critique well could lead to a disaster, which would take a long time to recover from. This is an example of the power the account

owners have. The model of CRM Activities for Social Media (Fig. 2b) also contains the element of managing critique. The *responsiveness* step of the Equation of Building a Community (Fig. 5) also indicates that one has to interact and manage critique; being responsive.

The known business – to – business (B2B) and business-to consumer (B2C) concepts will have to be expanded in order to capture this new phenomenon. Consumer-to-business (C2B) and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) perspectives exist in the social arena. The account owners are *creating*, *sharing* and *evaluating* information all the time, which adds value to their friends and to themselves. In this study, the empirical findings and the theories coincide in this matter. Hence, one can conclude that the account owners have a crucial impact; how to manage them is a key point when using social media marketing. This is summarized in figure 8. The account owners expect to get treated the right way since social media is essentially an online level of friendship.

5.3 Factor three - *Honesty*

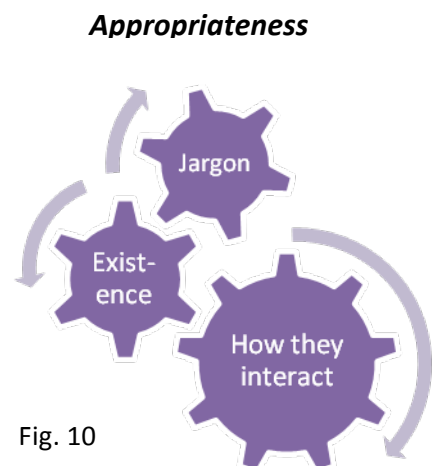
Friendship is for many a relationship based on trust. This is the opposite of the associations advertizing brings, which is *fake*. To have an authentic and honest tone in social media marketing is something the Nielsen Report (2010) stresses. Weber (2009) focuses on the openness; to allow everyone to discuss and share their thoughts without restrictions. Avoiding this could be contra-productive and the discussion might even get more negative and continue into other channels. One has to understand that being on the social web is having online friends with whom the relationship is in many ways is the same as offline friendship; one has to be honest, genuine and authentic. Though, the theories do not value this point as much as the empirical findings do. There is no explicit step or concept that shows the actual significance of this factor. On the other hand, it is easier to be honest and genuine when knowing the audience. This is something both the theories and the empirical findings value. Three of the five steps on the CRM Activities of Social Media are focusing on the account owner; *targeting*, *knowing the customer* and *developing the relationship*. The *observe* step of figure 3 also indicates a focus on getting to know the audience. The question in figure 4 is all about understanding the account owner and his/hers attitudes and motivations. This is also one of the key points stressed by Unkuri; *segment knowledge*.



5.4 Factor four - *Appropriateness*

Since the social media arena can be seen as an extension of the private living room, the marketing campaigns are in fact intruding on the personal space. One of the many things the account owners dislike is being interrupted by someone who does not belong on their social arena. Advertizing interrupts their conversation and disturbs the whole social media experience. This is very important for businesses to understand, since they are aiming to sell products, but is it equally important for awards? Since awards aim to build a favorable reputation and create awareness, the attitudes their campaigns bring can be seen as highly important.

The P3 Gold Awards does most of their online marketing at their own website, which obviously is a natural setting for them. Acting in a natural setting is crucial, since negative associations may arise when the account owners feel that a brand does not belong in a certain environment, according to Jonsson. If a marketing campaign feels fake and forced, it can bring negative associations. The importance of knowing the context, being perceived in a natural setting and using the right language; mastering the jargon, is significant in order to succeed.



The difference between the languages used on the various websites is pointed out by Unkuri. He also states that if one does not master the way the account owners interact, their jargon and humor, it is better not to enter the channel. This aspect is not yet accounted for in the theories, but the empirical findings stressed the importance.

Therefore, the fourth and last key factor for social media marketing is *appropriateness*; the account owners have to feel that one's existence on the arena is appropriate. In order to accomplish this, one needs to know the manner of how people interact in the channel and the jargon used. This is summed up in figure 10.

5.5 Summary of the Four Factors

These four factors have been extracted from empirical findings and a set of theories; old and known marketing concepts but also new attempts to theorize social media. The key factors found for successful social media marketing are summarized in figure 11.

These belong to the primary important findings from this study, but there is more to come. One of the main reasons for the success of for example Facebook is that it is constantly evolving; new clubs and features are created every day. This is due to the account owners' role as producers, which helps the channel to constantly develop and improve. The advertiser needs to understand the four identified key factors for social media marketing, but also the great importance of continuous improvement.

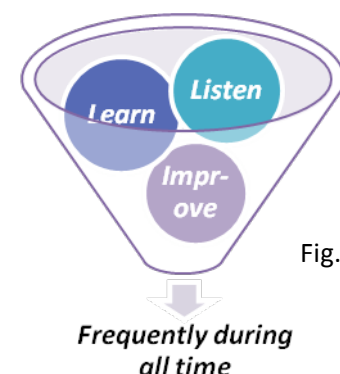


5.6 Further Advancement

Unkuri and Jonsson find the almost endless knowledge of the account owners and their opinions to be highly valuable source of customer information. In this way, social media provides a unique opportunity of getting to know the customer on a personal level. Too *actively listen*, by observing discussions and comments is essential in order to *learn* and then *improve*. Moreover, The Nielsen Company (2010) emphasizes that frequent work and *improvement* is important and that one needs to invest time and effort. This is also highlighted by other sources in the empirical findings; according to the lead nurturing concept, the frequent work of feeding and entertaining the account owners is crucial in order to maintain the relationship.

The CRM Activities of Social Media contains the elements of *managing critique* and *win back* the account owners' liking, which might include a process of listening to a problem, solving it, learning from the process

Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing



and *improve*, so that the problem can be avoided in the future. The last step in figure 3 is actually *improvement*, which further stresses the importance of this process. This further supports the significance of these variables, which are put forward by the theories. When using the four key factors (Fig. 11) one has to bear in mind at all times the importance of *listening*, *learning* and *improving*. These are the underlying phases of social media marketing (Fig. 12).

5.7 Additional Results

The varying languages on the different websites have already been discussed but they are also correlated to different conditions. When using Twitter, it was found that one needs fan base first in order for it to be a successful marketing channel, whereas a Facebook account could be started to obtain a fan base. It is also important to keep in mind the reason why it is so important to find a way to use marketing in social media; both advertisers and networks could benefit from finding a sustainable way of working together. Networks need advertisers to be able to make money, since the account owners are used to getting it for free, and advertisers need networks in order to reach their target segment in a cost efficient way.

6. The Empirical Findings of the Four Cases

6.1 The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award

The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award was chosen as a study object because it is a young prize, has international Laureates and is founded in Sweden, which are factors that could bring relevant insights to the research.

6.1.1 Background

The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) is an international prize, founded by the Swedish government in 2002. The purpose of the Prize is to honor the memory of Astrid Lindgren and to promote interest in children's literature. The award ceremony occurs every year and is the biggest international children's literature prize in the world, with an award total of 700.000 USD (ALMA, 2010a). The award is given to one or several recipients, regardless of nationality. It awards authors, illustrators or people and organizations that are important for the promotion of reading (ALMA, 2010b).

6.1.2 The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award and Social Media

The interview was done with Agnes Lidbeck, who is Information Officer at ALMA. The target group for the marketing activities is opinion leaders and the children's literature business. The goal is to increase the interest of children's and young adult literature in the world and to strengthen children's rights on a global level. The award started using social media this year. *"It was a natural step in our overall work of developing the communication of the Prize"* (Agnes Lidbeck, 2010). The initial social media channels discussed were Facebook, Twitter and blogs, and they finally decided on using a blog. They based this decision on an analysis of how effective each social media channel would be for reaching their target group. They found that for Facebook and Twitter to be efficient these mediums demand a high level of activity and engagement.

Moreover, they believe these are channels that can lose their effectiveness in the long run. Since neither Facebook nor Twitter are new channels, there is already a lot of noise and these mediums would not be optimal for reaching the target group. Instead they chose to start working with a blog, which is less resource demanding and they believe is less threatened by upcoming versions of Facebook or Twitter. They had a strategy before they started with the blog, and they use it to update information about the Laureates and other interesting news about children's literature. The blog also helps them participating in discussions about literature for young people and to stay connected to the network of nominating institutions around the world. Since the work with the blog is relatively new, they do not know how active they will be yet.

As Lidbeck sees it, the biggest advantage with social media marketing for ALMA is that they easily can reach their international network with updated information. The response on their social media work is given by this network, which also is the main target group for the blog. They will use the response later on, in an evaluation of the social media effort. ALMA does not filter out comments on the blog, only spam messages are deleted. They follow independent bloggers who write about the Prize, but they never comment on what is said in these channels.

6.1.3 Return on Investment in Social Media Marketing

ALMA will start evaluating their social media efforts after half a year. Since social media is only one of the marketing channels used, ALMA sees it simply as a resource, and has not faced any problems yet. The resources invested in this kind of marketing are simply working hours and they have not tried to estimate the return of this investment.

6.1.4 Future Usage of Social Media

ALMA considers social media to be a generally accepted marketing tool for prizes and believes it is common to put resources into this kind of marketing. Lidbeck thinks that the phenomena around social media will continue to expand and that we will see new channels and technological tools developing. It will be decided after evaluating the blog if ALMA will extend their usage. They are open for new social media channels but they do not have any definite plans yet.

6.2 The Birgit Nilsson Prize

The Birgit Nilsson Prize was included in this research because of the Prize category; classic music, which is similar to one of the categories of the Polar Music Prize. Moreover, the Birgit Nilsson Prize is a very recent founded prize, which also might contribute with valuable information.

6.2.1 Background

The Birgit Nilsson Prize is an international prize for classical music founded by Birgit Nilsson, the world-renowned Swedish dramatic soprano (The Birgit Nilsson Prize, 2010). In December 2008, three years after Birgit Nilsson's death, it was revealed that she had decided to establish a foundation for a prize to be awarded to

a singer, conductor or a specific production that has reached great success. The Prize is one million USD, which makes it the greatest prize within classical music. A laureate is awarded the Prize every second or third year, in 2009 the Prize went to Spanish singer and conductor Plácido Domingo, chosen by Birgit Nilsson herself (The Birgit Nilsson Prize, 2010). Before the press conference in 2008, it was kept a secret who was the founder of the Prize, but the large prize purse had been revealed and also the Prize category to create a great interest from the world press. No advertising space was bought; the new prize brought great attention in itself (Hulcrantz, 2010).

The interviewee representing the Birgit Nilsson Prize was Hannes Hulcrantz, PR consultant at PratPR, who are engaged in the marketing activities for the Prize. The objective when marketing the Prize is to make it the world's most famous music prize. Already from the start, the aim was to get worldwide coverage. The target groups for marketing actions of the Birgit Nilsson Music Prize are in first place music journalists and the general public interested in opera. Hulcrantz hopes that they also will be able to widen the target audience by communicating that classical music has something for everyone.

6.2.2 The Birgit Nilsson Prize and Social Media

There was a large time pressure during the introduction of the Birgit Nilsson Prize so they tried to focus their marketing activities to best reach music journalists and through them get public attention. They did not prioritize social media since they did not believe that this would be an efficient channel for reaching music journalists. Still, they decided to launch a YouTube channel in 2008. The benefit of YouTube is that content can reach the whole world. On the YouTube profile there is a link to the Birgit Nilsson Prize homepage. The YouTube channel is used to publish the Prize's own productions as well as linking to other YouTube videos of Birgit Nilsson. (Hulcrantz, 2010)

There was no calculated strategy behind the launching of the YouTube channel of the Birgit Nilsson Prize. Their goal was to reach out with as much material as possible. The work with the YouTube channel is continuous, but it is more intense around the months of the announcements. So far, there have been no efforts made to evaluate the efficiency of the YouTube channel but the aim is to start doing this eventually. Moreover, PratPR is monitoring what is said about the Prize in blogs and in comments on web based newspaper articles, but they do not look at the response they get on YouTube. They use this information to find out what the readers think about the news. When they evaluate the marketing campaign around the launching of the Prize in 2009, they will also look at this information.

As Hulcrantz sees it, one of the main advantages with social media is the large spread one can obtain if one uses the media right. However, this spread can only be obtained when using evident platforms, like blogs that people can link to, which helps increasing the distribution. It is also easier to reach out to those who already are interested. An additional advantage with social media marketing is the fact that it is easier to communicate with

an evident target group, for example the fans of a Facebook group. It also helps increasing the company's visibility.

In Hultcrantz' opinion one of the biggest disadvantages with social media marketing is that it is very time consuming. It is necessary to have people only working with social media to actively following up comments and responding to critique. It is important to try to keep control of one's brand in social media channels. Hultcrantz thinks that if one takes the step out into social media one has to accept that one can get criticized. It is hard to entirely manage to avoid negative response, but by making sure to respond to negative comments, one can at least minimize the damage. According to Hultcrantz, they never erase negative comments on their YouTube video clips. *"It would be a mistake to try to censor. What people think would come out anyway."* (Hannes Hultcrantz, 2010) PratPR follow blogs that write about the Prize, but they have never commented on what is said. They have never detected faults and think it would be strange to comment on positive critique. *"It would be like brand stalking"*, says Hultcrantz.

6.2.3 Return on Investment in Social Media Marketing

Presently, the Birgit Nilsson Prize invests hardly anything into marketing through social media. It is a part of the daily the press and communication work. They have not tried to measure how big their return from this investment is. Since they did not have an evident goal with the part of their marketing strategy containing social media, it has been hard to measure what they have attained so far. Since it was the first time there was no benchmark to use for comparisons, but until next it will be easier, says Hultcrantz. Up till now, the results from social media marketing have mostly worked consultatively. Though, they do know that social media has helped to boost the interest in Birgit Nilsson as artist and soprano.

6.2.4 Future Usage of Social Media

There are plans to extend the usage of social media when marketing the Birgit Nilsson Prize in the future. Since people in Sweden have come far in developing their usage of social media, Hultcrantz believe this marketing channel might prove useful. The next step in extending the usage of social media will be to create a Facebook account. Moreover, PratPR have plans for creating a blog where they can publish the preparation work before the next Laureates is announced and around the ceremony. One will be able to follow the process up to the Prize ceremony and also take part in what is happening the weeks afterwards. Regarding Twitter, Hultcrantz believes the account owners are still limited to the elite within social media and hence this is not the right channel to reach the target group. Hultcrantz sees social media as an accepted tool when marketing music prizes, and he thinks it will stay important since it helps to increase accessibility. It is accepted to spend time and resources on this type of marketing and people begin to realize it is necessary. Hultcrantz thinks that the music prizes that use social media the most today are the ones with a relatively young target group.

6.3 The Nobel Prize

The Nobel Prize was considered an interesting study object, since it is an old and well-known prize; its position and reputation is the future goal of the Polar Music Prize within the music world.

6.3.1 Background

The Nobel Prize is recognized as one of the most prestigious prizes in the world, across all its categories. It was founded by Alfred Nobel in 1901 (The Nobel Prize, 2010a). The Prize yearly awards outstanding performances within five different categories: Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature and Peace. The Prize is financed by the Nobel Foundation, which is a private institution based on the will of Alfred Nobel (ibid). The Nobel Web was started in 2004 and is a part of the Nobel Foundation Rights Association. The mission of the Nobel Web organization is to spread information through the Internet about the Nobel Prize and the Nobel Laureates but also to maintain the position and status of the Nobel Prize (The Nobel Prize, 2010b).

6.3.2 The Nobel Prize and Social Media

The interviewee from the Prize was Merci Ohlsson, Marketing and Communications Manager at Nobel Web. Ohlsson states that the aim of the marketing activities of the Nobel Prize is to be recognized as a valuable spring of knowledge and inspiration. They want to translate science to understandable language. In order to accomplish this they use many different channels, but the most important one is their website. There one can find information about the different Laureates but also games and teaching material for schools which seek to involve this in their lectures. The website started as early as 1995 and is constantly improved with more functions and information. Merci Olsson was the first to be hired only to work with marketing and she started in 2008. The way they currently work, with the easy understandable information, is very different to how they worked before. Before, when they only had the website, they relied on Google to help people find their way to the website. Therefore they worked a lot with optimizing the hits on the search engines. The website has become their most important marketing channel and the other Internet-based channels are also becoming increasingly important. They have for example video on demand, showing the ceremony live on the web and having forums of discussion. The Nobel Prize was the first one in Europe to have a YouTube account with live broadcasting. Google contacted the Nobel Prize in 2007 and asked if they were interested in doing this. They also started a Twitter account in 2009, and shortly after that they started their Facebook account. Olsson likes Twitter better since it has many more useful applications. They also got a lot of positive feedback since they were the first one to go out with the news from the announcements of the Laureates; their Twitter account was faster than the web papers. Their web page contains various activities during the whole year, for example they have the “Nobel Laureate of the Week”, when there is more focus on her/him. Another example is that they focus on female Laureates during the week of the International Women’s Day and highlight events and news from the other channels like Twitter, YouTube and Facebook. On the YouTube page visitors currently has the possibility to ask

questions to a Nobel Laureate. Then they gather all questions and select the most interesting ones, which they then let the laureate answer in a video, which they then broadcast on their YouTube account.

Before they started with social media they worked a lot with their marketing and communication strategy. A plan with different phases and corresponding guidelines was formed, but they also thought a lot about what the possible consequences were of entering this new medium. A part from the different guidelines of the different phases and channels, they also have a plan over how these channels will interact with each other. It is important, according Ohlsson, to have a plan of action and constantly monitoring the development of the medium to use the new applications and take part in the advancements. Ohlsson thinks the benefits of social media are many. They can now, for a fairly low cost, reach out to new segments, go even broader and have the opportunity of targeting specific groups such as students and teachers. They can have a better focused marketing without having to exclude anyone since the different channels can focus on different segments. They have a direct link, which they can manage and control themselves and quickly interact and get responses, which is part of the uniqueness of social media marketing. Another benefit is that they get a lot of feedback on their work; comments they incorporate in their improvement plans.

According to Ohlsson, the problem with working with social media is that once one gets started it has to be maintained continuously. To read all the comments and to answer some of them takes a lot of time. Even though the only cost for social media marketing is the cost of man-hours, it can get very expensive since it takes a lot of time to be creative and maintain these channels. Ohlsson takes time once a week to comment on other blogs and does this with her full name and title. The result from this is mostly positive reactions. Another problem is the copyright issue when it comes to photos and videos of the Laureates. They are trying to link to their own website most of the times but this is easier on YouTube than on Facebook, where the account owner does not own their own photos. They also watermark all the pictures and videos and have two lawyers working with these issues constantly. In order to monitor all the comments and opinions put forward by people within the social media field, they outsource this to a company who sends reports on all the social media activity associated with the Nobel Prize. These reports, along with the information they get from the different channels is essential information which they use in order to maintain control and develop their social media activities.

6.3.3 Return on Investment in Social Media Marketing

When trying to evaluate the different channels they use the information obtained from the websites. YouTube provides them with statistics such as views characterized by sex and age but also number of comments. Since Facebook is more personal, with profiles, photos and so on, the comments are less critical on Facebook than on other pages, Ohlsson argues. The comments on YouTube are more negative; hence they are working more on monitoring them. They use the comments to gain information about peoples' opinion and to start discussions with the critics. The only comments they delete are the ones that are demeaning or containing inappropriate

language. Normally, they respond to critique with facts or by linking to the press release where they announce the laureate. Twitter is good in this way, argues Merci Ohlsson, since one can decide whether to respond to the whole group or only to one individual.

6.3.4 Future Usage of Social Media

The Prize has some plans on starting to use Flickr or have a blog, but since starting an account in a new medium corresponds to a lot of mandatory work hours Ohlsson is a little bit careful: “If one has an account on one of the social media sites one has to be able to answer fast on comments and constantly interact with more new information and value for the readers. It is very important to think of the brand image.” (Merci Ohlsson, 2010) The next step they are considering is Iphone applications, which they are thinking of evolving. The way Ohlsson sees it, the work through social media is included in a plan to get a stronger and deeper relationship with their fans and followers.

6.4 The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is the Prize in this study that has the most similarities to the popular music prize category of the Polar Music Prize. They have the approximately the same age and awards Laureates for similar reasons. Hence, it is interesting to investigate their social media activities.

6.4.1 Background

1986 the leaders of the music industry came together and created the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation, as a tribute to the music and musicians that changed the world. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is a nonprofit organization with the purpose of promoting rock and roll music. To be elected into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is for many the greatest honor within the music industry. Among the inductees of the first induction ceremony in 1986 were Elvis Presley, James Brown and Ray Charles. This year, 2010, ABBA was elected as the first Swedish group ever to join the prestigious group of 605 members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, 2010).

6.4.2 The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Social Media

The website of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame has many creative features. The “Today in Rock” shows news about the inductees and they also have a blog where people involved in the Hall of Fame publish texts. These can be shared by the reader on among others Facebook and Twitter. There is also necessary information about the inductees, their music and the museum as well as videos, a web shop and information about how to donate money. Furthermore they have educational materials for people in all ages.

The interviewee from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame was Todd Mesek, the Vice President of Marketing and Communications of the award. The main goals with their marketing activities are to strengthen the brand and attract visitors to the museum. They do not have a specific target segment; they want everyone to know about the award. Though, potential visitors, donors, members of the museum club, legislators, media and the music

industry are prioritized. They started with social media because they found it necessary. It offered an efficient platform from where they could reach a broad demographic and geographic audience. It also provided them of the opportunity to deliver their content, the stories of rock and roll, and engage account owners for a low cost. They first started experimenting with e-mail and MySpace but now they work primarily with Facebook and Twitter.

Before, during and after the announcements of the inductees and the Prize ceremony, they make sure to upload information in their social media channels in order to stimulate a discussion and increase the interest. Three main factors are used when evaluating the different channels: number of friends, level of activity and success of specific promotions. Their aim is to convert account owners of social media into members of the museum, who get discounts in the shop and always free entrance. By this they are different from the other prizes, which do not seek paying members or donors. However, they have the same goal for the fans; they want them to be active in discussions and positive towards the brand, when they use social media privately. They also encourage people to sign up for the news updates in order to get their names and email. This way they can continue attracting them and hopefully convert them to members or visitors of the museum. If they had more resources Mesek would like to profile the visitors and members in order to understand them better. Mesek finds Facebook to be a very engaging community, easy to use and a very good inexpensive way of advertising, with no real disadvantages. Flickr is a good technical platform where they can engage their fans and account owners and get them to upload photos. The benefits of MySpace is the music focus, but it is becoming passé. Furthermore, Mesek believes YouTube to be an excellent technical platform. The disadvantage of the channel, however, is legal rights and control issues. Twitter is good because of the opportunity to create a profile, but the character limit of the posts is a disadvantage.

All in all, the biggest advantage of social media, according to Mesek, is that it is “a simple, easy and cheap way to connect with a large number of people on a seemingly one-to-one level.” The biggest disadvantage, however, is that the environment is sometimes hard to control and the biggest challenge is harvesting content. Another problem is trying to prevent employees from posting off-topic or inappropriate posts in the channel. This problem is solved within the organization through policies. The problem of controlling consumer perceptions of the brand is solved by making sure to only participate in decent activities. These brands get a lot of feedback on their activities in social media in the form of comments, likes and posts, which they use to measure the consumer sentiment. Negative comments cannot be avoided, according to Mesek, but one can listen to them and decide whether or not to respond. It can be seen as feedback which provides the brands with means to measure consumers opinions. When they feel it is appropriate they respond to both positive and negative comments, but not in the independent channels that they monitor. These brands also have guidelines for when to remove comments, for example they remove posts including inappropriate language or racist comments.

6.4.3 Return on Investment in Social Media Marketing

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's investment in social media is very small as compared to other media channels; the main cost is the personnel who creates content for publishing. Todd Mesek feels that it is hard to measure if the investment is active in its payback but he suggests that if more people are talking about the brand now than before then more people are aware of its existence.

6.4.4 Future Usage of Social Media

Mesek feels that social media has become progressively more prominent and the acceptance of investing money in this type of marketing has also increased. He believes that social media is the way of the future but it will not replace the traditional media anytime soon. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is still figuring out how to proceed with this phenomenon.

7. Analysis of the Four Cases

This analysis aims to investigate how the studied creative prizes work with the four factors from the previous analysis, extracted from the empirical findings and the early theoretical concepts on social media. By going through the factors one by one this analysis will be able to clarify how the four prizes use these factors in their marketing process using social media, and hereby respond to the second research question.

- 2. Are these factors applicable to the social media marketing of creative prizes and do the studied prizes currently consider them?*

7.1 Factor one - Adding Value

The essence of this factor is the content; one needs to have creative content, which adds value to accounts owners. This research has shown that it is usual to follow what is said on blogs and other forums but not as common to interact with and comment on those opinions. This could be a good thing, because then the official activities of the brand are only divulged and posted in a setting where they have control: their own blog or account. On the other hand, awareness is one of the main goals for prizes and it might be favorable to comment and expose the brand in many different settings so that more people will be aware of it. According to this study this low level of interaction is not beneficial for the Prizes, however, it may be the result of a lack of knowledge and/or resources.

Adding value has been a difficult task for many of the Prizes. The future plans of the Birgit Nilsson Prize of sharing behind-the-scenes information on a blog is a step in the right direction, however, the Nobel Prize has gone further when it comes to adding value. For example, education material and games are entertaining for the visitors. They also add value through interaction when they offer visitors the opportunity to ask a question to a Nobel Laureate via YouTube. Similarly, the Birgit Nilsson Prize uses the link function in order to enrich their YouTube account, which is a smart way of producing content without having to use more resources.

The Nobel Prize is also innovative, as exemplified by their live broadcasts on YouTube. Uploading new, novel, and comprehensible content has proved important for the Nobel Prize. The innovation factor is critical when it comes to being creative. Therefore, based on the new empirical studies of the Prizes, the model of how to add value (Fig. 7) is revisited and the concept of being *Innovative* is added to its core variables (Fig. 13).

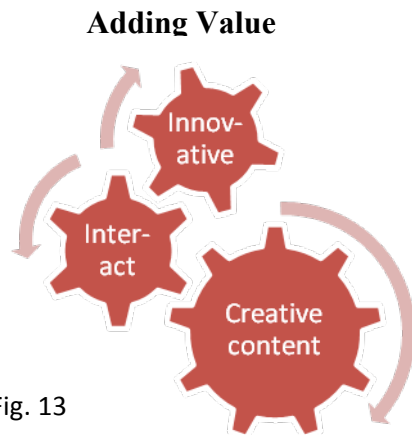


Fig. 13

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame has exceptionally creative social media content. Apart from education material, they have interesting and engaging information and also provide links to numerous social media sites, with tools that allow account owners to easily spread the information the Prize produces. The many sharing possibilities and diversified content makes the website vivid and also brings life into their accounts on various social media channels.

From this study one can conclude that *adding value* through creative and innovative interaction is very important for the marketing business of prizes. This is something the Prizes have begun to realize, but only the Nobel Prize and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame are pursuing it continuously and successfully.

7.2 Factor two - *Consumer Power*

It is important to realize that the account owners have the power. This research shows that the studied prizes sometimes fail to actively acknowledge this. The Nobel Prize has understood that they need to make their content comprehensible for the general public, but apart from that there is not a lot of consumer focus from the other prizes. This might be due to the very core of creative prizes: they do not have any specific customers like companies have and they simply want to just create awareness and interest.

Conversely, the Prizes are good at managing critique by allowing negative comments, answering with facts and not engaging in destructive arguments. This is crucial, since those prizes' aim is for people to approve their work and be interested in them. Other organizations differ on this point, since they might not care what the general public thinks as long as they can sell their products. The Nobel Prize manages constructive criticism well and uses it to build stronger relationships with their fan base, which is an excellent way of harnessing the opportunities that social web provides.

Letting go of control demands a great deal of trust in the account owners and the channel itself. This is something the Prizes need to work with instead of investing resources in an attempt to control the situation. They

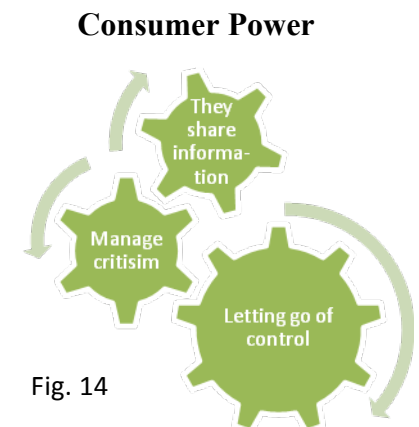


Fig. 14

need to realize that when letting go of control, the account owners will do part of the marketing for them. Furthermore, when a prize succeeds to manage critique in the right way, the account owners share positive information, which can evolve to beneficial and cost efficient marketing for the Prizes. This, however, requires confidence in the account owners.

7.3 Factor three - *Honesty*

To be able to create trust and build an authentic relationship with the target group, the factor *Honesty* is of great importance. Both the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Nobel Prize are using the information they gain from their fan base in order to understand their fans better and develop their social media content. This research shows that the Prizes understand that knowing their target segments is useful in order to interact with them appropriately. Despite this knowledge, the Prizes are not putting in extra effort to work with the honesty issue since they do not face the same ethical concerns inherent in organizations that aim to sell products. Hence, the Prizes' marketing programs might not be as easily associated with the word "fake". Due to this, the factor *Honesty* is concluded to not be as relevant as the other factors when it comes to marketing a prize in social media. However, *knowing the audience* is still important but this aspect is also included in the Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing (Fig. 12), in which listening and learning are two of the core variables.

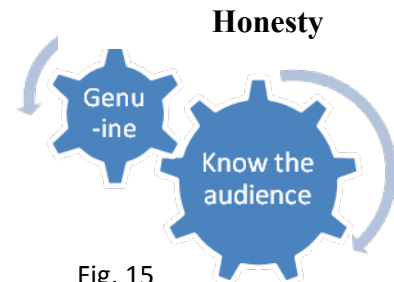


Fig. 15

7.4 Factor four – *Appropriateness*

Knowing the audience is also a part of appropriateness; one has to act according to the informal social rules that exist in online friendships. Using the right language when interacting will help the Prizes exist in the social media channel in a more appropriate way. ALMA uses their own blog, which is a natural setting for them since they are in charge, therefore, it is easy to act appropriately. Moreover, the visitors can themselves choose how much time they want to spend; they are not forced to take part in the discussion. The Birgit Nilsson Prize states that they avoid commenting on discussions about the Prize in independent forums since they feel it is inappropriate. The same holds true for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which believes that it is only appropriate to respond to comments in their own social media forums. The factor of *appropriateness* is found vital for organizations selling products, since they risk being perceived as interrupting and annoying. Although, for a creative prize that only wants to build awareness, this risk is not as evident.

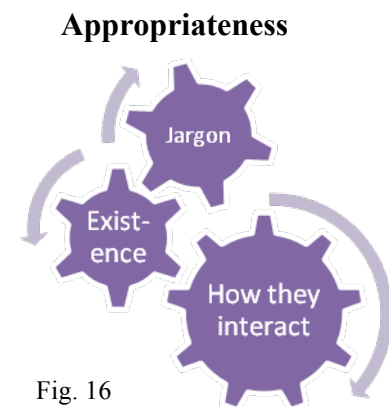


Fig. 16

7.5 Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing

To *listen*, *learn* and *improve* have proved to be elementary phases in social media marketing. These have been extracted from the empirical findings and the applied theories. Continuous interaction and development is crucial for a relationship in social media and for creative prizes as well. This research shows that listening to feedback, learning from it and improving is something that all studied prizes realize as significant but still, only two of them actually spend resources on this activity.

The Nobel Prize and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame have recognized the importance of this, which can be seen in their continuous updating of new and creative content. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame use the feedback they get on their activities in social media to measure the followers' attitudes and can then use this information when they plan new social media marketing activities. The Nobel Prize see the possibility to get immediate response through social media as one of the main advantages of this marketing channel. They incorporate the response in their improvement plans, such as developing and updating their website continuously. Working with the Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing can be seen as a crucial investment; it might even be the difference between keeping the brand vivid within the social media arena and letting it fade away and lose awareness.

7.6 Summary of the Key Factors and the Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing

This research has shown that factor one, *adding value*, and factor two, *consumer power*, are the most important variables that a creative prize needs to consider when using social media as a professional marketing channel. The third and fourth factors, *honesty* and *appropriateness*, were proved to not be equally relevant in the context of a prize. Therefore, the Key Factors in Social Media Marketing are revised in order to adapt to the unique context of a creative prize (Fig. 18).

The Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing are still applicable to the situation of the studied creative prizes but still, not all prizes spend resources on these activities. Developing the relationship with the fan base through observing, drawing conclusions and then adapting the social media marketing activities continuously is essential if one wants to maintain the vivid relationship.

Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing

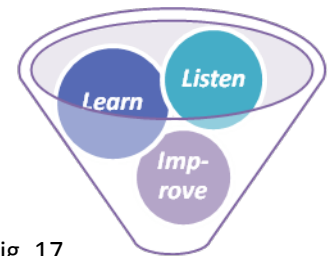


Fig. 17

**Frequently during
all time**

The Key Factors in Social Media Marketing for Creative Prizes

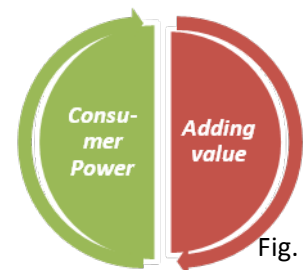


Fig. 18

8. The Empirical Findings on the Polar Music Prize

Stig “Stikkan” Anderson was the founder of the Polar Music Prize. As the manager, publisher and lyricist of the world-famous group ABBA, he is recognized as one of the true greats in the history of popular music. He founded the Prize in 1989 through a donation of 42 million SEK to the Swedish Music Academy, who managed the Prize until 2008 together with the CEO of the Prize. Now it is managed by Marie Ledin, the daughter of Stikkan Andersson (Ledin, 2010).

The two categories are popular music and classical music, which makes the Prize unique since it goes beyond musical boundaries. During a live broadcasted ceremony at the Stockholm Concert Hall they receive one million SEK from the hands of His Majesty King Carl XVI. The regulations state that the Prize should be international, awarding a person or a group who has made a significant footprint in music history and it should be given during a festive celebration. They never revealed how the discussion went before selecting the Laureates; they do not even have written minutes of the meetings. No one within the organization works full time and almost no one gets paid, which is why most of the people associated with the Prize are friends of Marie Ledin. The guests of the ceremony and the Royal Banquet are invited by the organization; one cannot simply buy tickets. The Laureates are announced in May and the Prize ceremony is in August. The prestige of the Prize is reinforced by the previous Laureates, which are presented in appendix C. The Prize also benefits from having the Prime Minister and the Swedish King as annual guests. (Ledin, 2010)

8.1 Sponsorship

The ceremony costs around three million SEK, but is normally sponsored. There are also a lot of material sponsors, such as the Grand Hotel and others who contribute with the Royal Banquet, cars, printing the necessary schedules, invitations and brochures. The Concert Hall, for example, does not charge rent for the use of the location or the orchestra. According to Marie Ledin, the sponsors are very important and the in last two years they have not had any financial sponsors at all, which have forced them to take money from the Fund.

8.2 Marketing History

André Persson is a PR consultant at InformationsCompagniet and is now working with the marketing of the Polar Music Prize as a pro bono project. His initial task was to “sort out the whole marketing situation”, as Marie Ledin stated (Person, 2010). The aim of the marketing plan is to make the Prize well-known internationally in order to gain more sponsors and interest, according to Persson. Marie Ledin agrees but emphasizes the financial sponsorship goal of the three million SEK. The marketing of the Prize is not geared towards any specific segments, since they want a broad audience. Ledin believes that they are vague when it comes to communicating what they stand for and the importance of the Prize. She stresses the fact that they need to be more open and clear with their message and core values. Another problem is that the Prize has only two events during the year: the announcements and the ceremony (Ledin 2010).

8.3 The Polar Music Prize and Social Media

A key benefit of social media is the resource effectiveness; for a little money the dissemination can be vast and instantaneous (Persson, 2010). Persson started thinking about using social media in 2009 with a goal of gaining 5000 members to their Facebook group - they currently have 758 fans. Since then they have continued down this road and are now using both YouTube and Twitter but have not been very successful. Their best-ranked YouTube video has only 716 views and the Twitter account has a mere 26 followers. André Persson believes Twitter has better potential than Facebook. The Prize had no outspoken strategy for the usage of social media, but they had clear goals: to make the Polar Music Prize know internationally in order to gain sponsorship and awareness. The plan was to start with the biggest international newspapers and to find people and magazines that wrote about Swedish music. Today, they have around 200 journalists and bloggers to whom they send updates and information about the Prize. Through credible music lovers they hope to gain international recognition and support.

Another benefit with social media, as Persson suggests, is the possibility of knowing in real-time varying opinions about the Prize and its Laureates. He finds this really helpful when deciding what to communicate back. Swedish media has a negative perception of the Polar Music Prize, as seen by the comments from normal people on articles written by critical journalists, according to Person. This is as very interesting since the articles are mostly positive. This opinion of the general public would have been hard to discover without social media. Marie Ledin believes social media to be a great tool to create awareness.

A negative aspect of social media, according to Persson, is that incorrect facts can be spread quickly. Negative comments do not bother him, but if someone is stating incorrect facts about Prize he makes a comment and corrects them. The risk of being criticized is something he believes comes with the game; one cannot do anything about it. Though, he finds it very unlikely to see, for example, hatred groups towards a music Prize. Persson believes that the worst-case scenario for Polar Music Prize would be that no one cares and that there would be no discussion around the Laureates at all.

When engaging in social media one must have enough resources to be able to find the harmful comments and to accept or react to them. This is a big problem, since Persson is currently the only person working with the marketing of the Polar Music Prize. Being on Facebook or Twitter without maintenance or supervision could be a detriment to the brand, says Persson. He also believes his limited technical skills could be a barrier for a social media expansion. He is constantly trying to gain further knowledge of all the different functions of the various channels. He is learning by doing, but also by watching how others do. Ledin thinks it is important to know how to use social media in order to avoid embarrassing oneself. "It needs to be used in a trendy and smart way in order to avoid a fiasco." (Ledin, 2010) The fact that some companies lose control over their brand in social media forums could also be seen as a risk, according to Persson. Due to the Polar Music Prize being a music

award, he does not believe that they are in the risk zone when it comes to moral dilemmas. Persson thinks that negative comments are more useful than the positive ones, since it is the negative ones he wants to change through smart marketing. To have instant access to people's opinions through their web prints is very valuable. Most of this information is gathered from people's Facebook accounts and comments on articles and blogs. Apart from this the Prize also follows the four biggest Swedish newspapers and some music magazines.

8.4 Future Usage of Social Media

The Polar Music Prize has plans on getting started with numerous social media channels and feed them with news and value. This is a part of the new business plan that also will include a proposal for the website, which is currently subpar. Ledin believes that the website needs to change in order to be able to attract sponsors. Persson is planning on finding opinion leaders on the social web and providing them with inside information about the Prize. They will enjoy getting the news first, and the Polar Music Prize will benefit from their opinions and discussions. Persson believes that the future usage of the social media channels might include, for example, Flickr.

Ledin thinks that the social media arena is a great opportunity to use all the video and photo material they have gathered during the years. She is also interested in the idea of adding more value to the account owners, such as a competition for tickets to the ceremony. The aim in the future marketing is to open up the Prize and clarify why it is a necessary and important part of the global music industry and the collection of prizes around the world. Another aim is to gain international sponsors, which is necessary for the survival of the Prize.

9. Analysis of the Polar Music Prize

The factors of *Consumer Power* and *Adding Value* have proved to be the key factors for creative prizes to take into account when using social media as a marketing channel. The study has now investigated how creative prizes are using social media in order to figure out what the Polar Music Prize should focus on and hereby answer the third research question.

3. Which of the identified factors are the most important for the Polar Music Prize to consider when developing their social media marketing?

The Polar Music Prize is now in the planning phase for using social media seriously. They have recently started some accounts on different websites but none of them has yet had any real impact on the awareness of the Prize. Using the analysis of social media and the other studied creative prizes, this paper will now investigate what the main focus should be for the Polar Music Prize.

Both Persson and Ledin's thoughts are well structured and, in many ways, in line with the identified crucial factors for creative prizes. They acknowledge the power of the account owner and they know that they cannot do anything except *listening* and *learning* from the negative comments. Though, the third phase of the four underlying phases, *improving*, is not yet carried out as it should. First of all, Twitter was found to have a

precondition if it is going to be used successfully: an already-existing online fan base. This is something the Polar Music Prize does not currently have and therefore using Twitter might be a waste of time. However, it could be a good medium later in the marketing strategy when they have gathered a substantial fan base. Twitter is fast and simple and could prove useful in promoting the two main events of the year.

The Polar Music Prize faces the problem of not being able to communicate their core values clearly. Social media could be used as an efficient tool to solve this problem since there are no middlemen like in regular media; the words they write will be the exact words the general public reads. It seems like the Polar Music Prize have understood the phenomenon in a correct way but lack the resources to really use it beneficially. Since they already understand that social media originate from the principal that the account owners' have free reign to do and post anything, this variable should not be the main focus to consider when further developing their social media marketing.

Using social media beneficially is adding value through creative interaction *cost effectively*. This is the weakness that the Polar Music Prize needs to focus on. They have people working with marketing, they have accounts and they understand the rules of the game, but they have no creative content and do not interact as much as they should. To do this in a cost efficient way is crucial, since they have a small marketing budget and this is suggested as their primary objective. The other prizes also have two main information peaks a year, but two of them, the Nobel Prize and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, continue to provide the account owners with innovative and creative content frequently throughout the entire year.

When having a more developed social media platform, one can focus on the account owners as producers and let them engage, produce and share information. When they start to be creative and use the existing technology the Polar Music Prize has a great opportunity to market itself successfully at a low cost through social media. The Prize has a long list of globally respected Laureates, who help draw attention to the Prize.

Having activities and competitions related to knowledge of the Prize, the Laureates and their music and awarding contestants with prizes such as tickets to the ceremony could be one way of creating value for the account owners. Furthermore, sharing inside information, photos or videos are other ways to bring value to the readers. There are numerous options, but the Polar Music Prize needs to focus on the innovative but also creative content and interaction.

Another learning point that the Polar Music Prize can take home from this research is the great opportunity of *improving*. Adapting the future interactions to current feedback is a good way of improving and in social media the feedback is for free and easily accessible. The Polar Music prize has to focus on the creative interaction and continue to learn and improve in order to successfully market themselves through social media. If they succeed,

their awareness will escalate tremendously around the world, which is one of their goals. It might also help them appear more attractive to sponsors since they will have exposure during the whole year.

10. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to describe and develop knowledge about social media, examine how creative prizes use it and then investigate what the Polar Music Prize could focus on in order to reach their marketing goals. In order to do so, the first step of the research was to conduct a pre-study of creative prizes, research and analyze materials on social media and then find applicable theories and models. With this base of information a model of the most important factors, when using social media as a marketing channel in a professional way, was extracted. The four factors were *Adding Value*, *Consumer Power*, *Honesty* and *Appropriateness*, which answer the first research question.

1. *What are the most important factors to consider when marketing through social media in a professional way?*

These factors were then applied to the empirical findings of the four creative prizes in order to answer the second research question.

2. *Are these factors applicable to the social media marketing of creative prizes and do the studied prizes currently consider them?*

When adapting the social media model on the Prize context, the model was modified. It was found that the two first factors, *Adding Value* and *Consumer Power* were more significant than the others for marketing of creative prizes. Though, it was found that all prizes are not yet working with these factors. Then the new social media model for creative prizes was applied to the Polar Music Prize in order to respond to the third research question.

3. *Which of the identified factors are the most important for the Polar Music Prize to consider when developing their social media marketing?*

It was found that since the Polar Music Prize understood the medium quite well and they already were working with the second factor, their focus should be on developing the use of the first one; *Adding Value*. During this research another model was also extracted; the *Underlying Phases of Social Media Marketing* (Fig. 12). It was constructed of the same empirical findings as the other model but did not need to be modified in order to be applicable on creative prizes or the Polar Music Prize. The last step *Improving*, was found to be the most important step of this model for the Polar Music Prize.

10.1 Main Contributions and Implications

This research has contributed with more knowledge and understanding of the social media phenomenon. It also contributes with more knowledge in an unexplored research field; social media marketing for creative prizes. The extraordinary context of creative prizes has a significant impact on how the marketing is best conducted,

which is why the general model for marketing in social media (Fig. 11) was modified (Fig.18). The paper sheds light on the professional use of social media marketing, and how to conduct such actions successfully. It also provides further guidance for social media marketing of creative prizes. The research also brings guidance in the situation of the Polar Music Prize and their marketing activities in social media.

10.2 Critique

This thesis has focused on the elements that are important when using social media in order to interact with the general public. In this study, the interaction has simply been considered a positive marketing activity. However, too much interaction could bring negative associations and the credibility of the Prize could be negatively affected. This aspect is not considered in this thesis due to the delimitations.

The choice of research objects could also be criticized. Since social media is a global phenomenon it would have been more interesting to have a group of prizes from different parts of the world. Three of the four cases in the main study are Swedish, which is a consequence of the difficulties of getting access to foreign organizations. Moreover, one of the weaknesses with this thesis is the wide concept of social media. It can be hard to actually understand what is included and what is not. The reason for this is the fact that the new phenomenon has not yet been stabilized and its role and definition have not yet been formed.

10.3 Future Research

An interesting object for further research is the return on investment from social media marketing. This is something the studied organizations expressed that they wanted to know more about. This thesis focuses on social media as a part of *promotion* in the marketing mix. It would be interesting to see if it actually could be included in the *place* or in the *product* parts. People are already using social media as a distribution channel, but is this successful? Another interesting topic for further research is to follow up on the Polar Music Prize. What should be their main focus when they have come further and are using social media marketing on a regular basis? It would also be interesting to expand this research by investigating additional international creative prizes to gain further knowledge. Continuing this study with a quantitative approach could also be interesting. Having the account owners as research objects might lead to understanding of how they perceive marketing actions conducted by prizes and getting more knowledge of their thoughts, motivations and attitudes.

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11.4 Interviews

11.4.1 Pre-study

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Göran Fröjdh, Editor, The Big Blog Award, E-mail Interview, Stockholm 2010-02-17

Jenny Blixt, Chief of Information and Marketing, The Hasselblad Award, E-mail Interview, Stockholm 2010-02-23

Kajsa Overgaard, Manager, The Right Livelihood Award, E-mail Interview, Stockholm 2010-02-20

11.4.2 Main Study

Agnes Lidbeck, Information Officer, The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, E-mail Interview, 2010-04-19

André Persson, PR Consultant, InformationsCompagniet, Interview, Stockholm 2010-03-02

Hannes Hultcrantz, PR Consultant, PratPR for The Birgit Nilsson Prize, Interview, Stockholm 2010-03-29

Jan Unkuri, Marketing Researcher, Augur Marknadsanalys, Interview, Stockholm 2010-03-24

Marie Ledin, Manager, The Polar Music Prize, Interview, Stockholm 2010-04-19

Merci Ohlsson, Marketing and Communications Manager , Nobel Web Interview, Stockholm 2010-03-19

Ola Jonsson, Consultant at Digital Marketing, Inspectum AB, Telephone Interview, 2010-04-16

Todd Mesek, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, E-mail Interview 2010-04-22

12. Appendix

A. Interview Manual for Prizes in the Pre-study

1. Do you use social media as a marketing channel?
2. Why/ why not?
3. If yes, what kind of social media do you use?
4. How much do you invest in social media marketing?
5. How do you measure the return on that investment?
6. If no, what kind of social media would you like to use?

B. Interview Manual for Prizes in the Main Study

i. Overall Marketing Objectives of the Prize

1. What are your goals when marketing the Prize?
2. Which are your target groups when marketing the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?

ii. The Prize and Social Media

1. How did you come up with the idea of using social media as a marketing channel?
2. What kind of social media channels were discussed initially and which channels are used today?
3. Did you have a pronounced strategy when you began using social media?
4. What does your work look like with the different social media channels you use?
5. How active are you in your social media channels? Does the activity vary depending on the time of the year?
6. Does the Prize have people employed only for the purpose of working with the social media channels?
7. How is your work and activities in social media marketing evaluated?
8. Do you have plans of extending your work and start using new social media channels?
What channels?
9. As you see it, what are the advantages and disadvantages with marketing through the following social media channels?

- a. Facebook
- b. Flickr
- c. Myspace
- d. YouTube
- e. Twitter

10. All in all, what are the biggest advantages with marketing through social media?
11. What are the biggest disadvantages with marketing through social media?
12. What problems have you been facing during your work with social media?
13. How did you solve these problems?
14. How should one act to be able to keep control over one's brand in social media marketing?
15. Where do you get response on your activities in social media? (Comments on YouTube, "Likes" on Facebook etc.)
16. How do you use this response?
17. What can be done to be able to avoid negative response?
18. How do you handling negative critique within social media?
19. Do you "clean up" amongst the critique? (For example remove inappropriate comments, etc.)
20. Do you follow blogs and other independent social media channels that write about the Prize?
21. Do you make comments on independent social media channels?

iii. Outcome of Marketing through Social Media

1. How large pile of your marketing budget do you invest in social media marketing?
2. How much of this investment is repaying itself?
3. What could you do to calculate the return on investment of your activities in social media marketing?
4. How would you like to measure the effect of your marketing activities using social media?
5. In what ways are you using the information you receive from people interacting with the Prize through social media?
6. In what ways *would you like* to use the information?

iv. The Future of Social Media Marketing

1. Is social media marketing a commonly accepted marketing tool for creative prizes?
2. Is it commonly accepted to spend time and money on this type of marketing?
3. Do you know anything about what are other prizes opinions on social media marketing?
4. What do you think about the future development of social media?
5. How do you think the usage of social media for the Prize will develop in the future?

C. The Laureates of Polar Music Prize

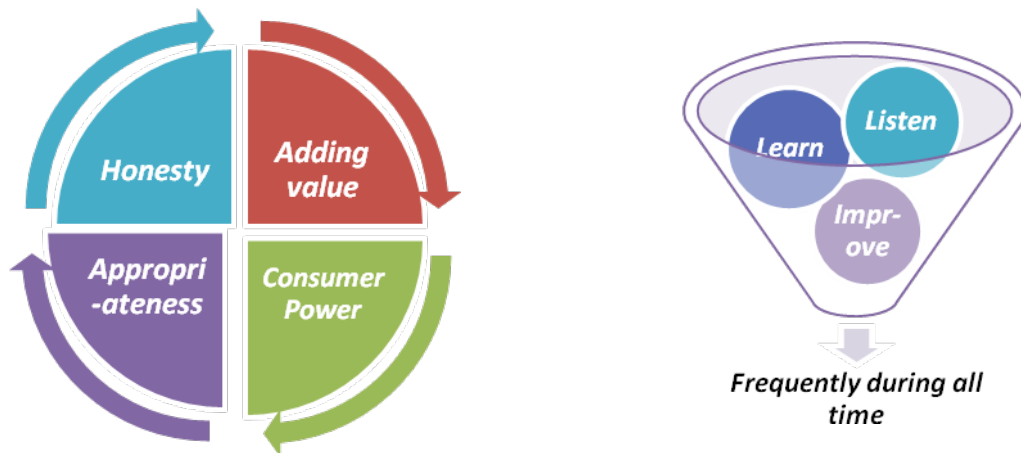
The Laureates of the Polar Music Prize	
2009	José Antonio Abreu and El Sistema & Peter Gabriel
2008	Renée Fleming and Pink Floyd
2007	Steve Reich and Sonny Rollins
2006	Valery Gergiev and Led Zeppelin
2005	Gilberto Gil and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau
2004	B. B. King and György Ligeti
2003	Keith Jarrett
2002	Sofia Gubaidulina and Miriam Makeba
2001	Burt Bacharach, Robert Moog and Karlheinz Stockhausen
2000	Bob Dylan and Isaac Stern
1999	Stevie Wonder and Iannis Xenakis
1998	Ray Charles and Ravi Shankar
1997	Eric Ericson and Bruce Springsteen
1996	Pierre Boulez and Joni Mitchell
1995	Sir Elton John and Mstislav Rostropovitch
1994	Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Quincy Jones
1993	Dizzy Gillespie and Witold Lutoslawski
1992	Sir Paul McCartney and The Baltic States

D. The Laureates of both Polar Music Prize and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

	Rock and Roll Hall of Fame	Polar Music Prize
BB. King	1987	2004
Bob Dylan	1988	2000
Bruce Springsteen	1999	1997
Elton John	1988 and 1994	1995
Joni Mitchell	1997	1996
Led Zeppelin	1995	2006
Paul McCartney	1988 and 1999	1992
Pink Floyd	1996	2008
Ray Charles	1986	1998
Stevie Wonder	1989	1999

E. Models Presented in the Study

i. Social Media Marketing in General



ii. Model One Adapted on Creative Prizes

