

Executive summary

With the continuing focus on online media, in terms of marketing and the need for developing interactions and relations with consumers has proven more important than ever. Thus, many brands and companies desire to know how to utilize online- and social media in order to achieve additional value to the company. Furthermore the need for a how to measure the value of social media interactions is of high relevance for marketers in order to provide the rest of the organization with arguments for being present on social media. These issues were the main motivation for this thesis and research question and sub-questions:

Through a deeper understanding of branding, brand equity and its measurements this thesis strives to examine what impact interaction between consumer and brand on social media has in terms of brand equity.

- How can the impact of social media be measured in terms of brand equity?
- What impact does social media marketing have on brand equity?
- How can Toyota (better) utilize and implement Facebook activities locally in order to improve brand equity in the Danish market?

In order to answer the research questions in a proper manner it proved to be necessary to develop a new framework, called Facebook brand equity framework. The framework was inspired by the brand equity frameworks developed by Aaker (1996) and Christodoulides (2006). The framework is used to investigate and analyze how to measure and utilize brand equity through being present on Facebook. Other theories concerning omnipresence and U-space have also been integrated in the thesis as the concepts have significant impact on developing interaction and personalization through Facebook. Additionally, it has been proved that brand-consumer interaction on Facebook is a way for consumers to extend their sense of self and identity externally.

To further validate the arguments and conclusions of the thesis, primary data from a web-based survey and a focus group interview is presented and analyzed, in order to provide the foundation for the recommendation for a successful Facebook strategy. The key conclusions from the analysis include tendencies of consumers' desire for additional value in form of personalized and unique content. From the analysis and data the recommendations for a future Facebook strategy, best suited for Toyota, showed to be a four step strategy including, staying local, utilize memories and dreams, newsletter and implementing values and visions. If executed right Toyota has the opportunity of improving brand equity and converting it to additional value for the company.

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Introduction

With the increased interest in having a presence in the online world and the ability to connect to other people unhindered by distance and time, significant improvements in the overall efficiency in the exchange of information has occurred. As the internet technology that enables us to *stay connected* everywhere and anytime continues to evolve, the presence in social media has become more and more important for businesses.

While it is difficult to predict exactly which business methods will prove to be superior in the future, the trends point toward communication that is characterized by dialogue, not monologue, and also by its much more complex communication mix (Louro & Cunha, 2001). This concept and consequent marketing implications provide a variety of challenges for businesses, when trying to connect with the consumers. If utilized and integrated properly, it can provide companies with a significant competitive advantage. The communication between an organization and its stakeholders is changing from a rather simplistic and unidirectional method to a somewhat much more complex and multidirectional (Watson,

2002). This multidirectional communication pattern has paved the way for successful social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

It is clear that a multidirectional communication approach and the interactive nature of social networking sites such as Facebook are becoming a necessity for most companies, if they wish to maintain their competitive advantage. Some of the problems marketers face are; how to measure their social media efforts, where and how much is necessary to be successful. Currently there is no adequate way for a company to measure precisely what their social media presence is worth in terms of brand equity. This has caused a lot of companies to start their social media adventure before having a strategy for how they want to utilize and optimize their online presence. Instead of setting objectives and focus on a strategy for engaging in social, some companies simply make a presence on social media just for the sake of having an online profile. If companies really want their social media presence to be more than just a fan-page on Facebook, a group on LinkedIn or some indifferent tweets on twitter, further research needs to be done so that facts can support the strategy process when brands want to interact and build relationships with consumers in social media. Furthermore recent studies have shown that it is not enough to have facts to support a global strategy on social media, but a more regional or even local strategy is needed as cultural differences not only affects traditional marketing but also online marketing as cultural differences is almost impacting our use of the internet and social media as much. Thus, the goal of this thesis is to provide insight into, how and why the different interactive Facebook activities impact a company's brand equity, and if local/regional Facebook presence increases the impact.

Problem formulation

As people spend more and more time visiting social media sites, such as Facebook, it has become clear that "*electronic social networking is the norm,*" (Venkatraman 2010) businesses need to engage in online communities and networks for them to stay current and try to gain competitive advantages. Companies that create a strategic presence, online, are gaining access to low-cost advertising and brand-building platforms that can prove to have great impact when building relationships with consumers (Dutta 2010; Barwise 2010).

According to a recent study performed by marketing land about 70% of the fortune 500 companies have now implemented social media in an attempt to strengthen their company's value (Marketing land, 2013). However, exactly how companies utilize their social media presence is different from company to company, and there is no generic solution for how to create a useful and successful social media presence. It is seen that the strategies companies use to optimize their Facebook profiles vary drastically (Zeisser 2010). However, even though many companies use Facebook as an integral element in their

social media strategy, if they have a strategy at all, it is hard to say what they are actually getting out of it (Zeisser, 2010).

This thesis makes the assumption that creating a meaningful and giving brand-consumer relationship (especially regional or local) through the use of Facebook brands can improve the strength and value of the brand.

So far it has been difficult for companies to completely measure the exact value of using social media in their marketing strategy. This can be explained by the fact that social media tools generally are used simultaneously with traditional media such as television, radio and print (Grønholdt 2006) as well as the fact that the specific interactions in social media do not have a known value. Because of that, it has been nearly impossible or in best very difficult to link the efforts made on social media platforms, such as Facebook, with the increase/decrease of brand equity. Thus, derived from the above, the research question is as follows:

Through a deeper understanding of branding, brand equity and its measurements the thesis examines what impact interaction between consumer and brand on social media has in terms of brand equity.

Sub-questions:

- How can the impact of social media be measured in terms of brand equity?
- What impact does social media marketing have on brand equity?
- How can Toyota (better) utilize and implement Facebook activities locally in order to improve brand equity in the Danish market?

Definitions

New Media: In this thesis the concept of new media should be understood as a way of combining technologies in such ways that create new communication platforms, and not as a completely new technology.

Social Media: Social media, generally, refers to sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc. In this thesis social media focuses on Facebook and by that excludes all other social networking sites, such as the ones mentioned above.

Facebook: Facebook in the context of this thesis focuses on how brands can use Facebook to interact with consumers, rather than just as a social forum, which most people arguably think of Facebook.

Brand Equity: This thesis treats the definition of brand equity from a consumer perspective in terms of how much value brands can create through the use of different interactive tools on Facebook. This thesis does not discuss brand equity financially or economically as the focus of this thesis is to investigate how brands can improve brand equity in a more qualitative sense.

Facebook brand equity: In this thesis, social media brand is viewed as a new framework developed to measure how brands can use Facebook as a tool to improve brand equity, and is a combination of already existing frameworks discussing brand equity.

Consumers: When mentioning “consumers” in the thesis, it will be defined as a person with some purchasing power that is active on Facebook, if nothing else is stated.

Delimitation & limitations

This thesis only discusses data from the Danish market, as the goal of the thesis is to look at a foreign country doing business in Denmark and how to build brand equity locally. However, as the findings should be applicable across the North European market, as the cultural differences are limited.

The data collection process has its limitations, and it needs to be taken into account that the survey is sent by a student and not a research company. This may reflect in the response rate- and or responses negatively in the sense that the respondents may not take the questionnaire seriously. Another limitation which has to be mentioned is that the diversity of the respondents. Because of the high level of younger respondents and respondents from the Copenhagen-area, the data collected can be somewhat biased.

Methodology

Methodology is the skeleton of the thesis. Without any methodology the thesis would not be scientific or distinguishable to non-scientific papers e.g. fiction. A lot of papers presented today are not of scientific standards as they lack methodology. One clear example would be brands that try to differentiate themselves from competitors with products which have “scientifically proven to work” (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007).

It is important to choose the right methodology according to what you want to investigate, because different methodologies yield different results. In the following section I will shortly present a theoretical background of methodology and then present the methodology I see fit for this research question and thesis. Lastly arguments and consequences for utilizing the chosen methodology will be presented. The section will include arguments for and against using: quantitative and qualitative data, primary vs. secondary data and limitations of the different methods.

Research philosophies

The six different research philosophies can help clarify the research design and illuminate decisions, granted that they are argued in a proper way. Research should be based on reason and observation. How it is conducted is the argument behind the research philosophy journey. According to Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill (2007) and Blumberg et. al (2011) the relation between reason and observation is an ongoing debate when discussing knowledge creation. The six research philosophies: interpretivism, positivism, realism, pragmatism, constructionism and realism, each with different views of the world; how knowledge is created and how the research should be conducted (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007).

Realism is a pure scientific view of subjects and argues that all we sense is reality. Realism can be divided into direct realism and critical realism (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007). Interpretivism is most often used when dealing with issues in management, marketing or organizations, because it allows the researcher to be a part of the research. Furthermore interpretivism argues that what we experience and see is unique and can therefore not be summarized into generalizations. This yields the problem that data can lose validity after short time, simply because the perception of the subject has changed (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007)

Objectivism and subjectivism both accept the existence of reality, external to social factors. This means that reality is not dependent on the social actor being present for reality to exist (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007). Subjectivism focuses on the social world and consequences of actions. It can be argued that method is less important compared to epistemology and ontology (Guba & Lincoln 1994). If this premise is accepted the research philosophy would be pragmatic. The choice of research philosophy does not have to be singular. Sometimes a combination of research philosophies can give a better understanding of the research (Orlowski, Baroudi 1991)

If choosing positivism as the research philosophy, the researcher should be able to conduct a research without interfering with the research field. Hence regarding reality as it is presented, and value free. Three basic principles come to mind when defining the principles of positivism. The social world exists externally, is viewed objectively and is value free while the researcher is independent and can be a part of the research without being subjectively influenced. A basic rule for positivism, is that everything can be broken down into explainable facts, which can be observed and noted without subjective influence (Blumberg et al 2011)

However the way we view the world will always be affected as all have a different background. Interpretivism and positivism are located in opposite ends of research philosophy. But there are some philosophies that have a mixture of the two. Realism is one of them and this view takes into account that

not everything can be viewed as value-free. Realism also accepts the premise that reality can exist without human belief or behavior (Blumberg et al. 2011). Realism also argues that understanding people and their behavior require acknowledgement of the subjective inherent knowledge, human possess (Blumberg et al. 2011).

In this thesis the focus is on positivism as the research philosophy. In addition it has been taken into account that the philosophy has its downsides and therefore interpretivism is somewhat used as well, in order to complete the study in a thoroughly manner. The advantage of this is that it does not bind our research to a specific research philosophy. The disadvantage is that it can make the research somewhat blurry in terms of methodology, if the utilization of the two philosophies is not clear. (Orlowski, Baroudi 1991)

The choice of research philosophy is important in order to construct the research design. This thesis is built on a mixture of positivism and interpretivism. Some would argue that this mixture could be defines as realism, but such a clear definition can be hard to comprehend. Thus a mixture of the before mentioned research philosophies is more accurate for this study as the different data collection methods from both paradigms has been utilized in the thesis (Orlowski, Baroudi 1991). The consequences of this choice of research philosophy is a stronger base for the study, clearer definitions of the research field and finally a better preliminary answer to the research question.

Primary data and secondary data

One of the main issues in the research process is gathering the empirical evidence to support data for further falsification or verification of the research question and hypothesis (Blumberg et al. 2011). For the purpose of this thesis a research question and a hypothesis has been presented.

Two types of data exist: primary data and secondary data. In the following sections these terms will be presented and advantages and disadvantages of the two types of data will be discussed. Furthermore the focus of this thesis in terms of data and the consequences of the choice will be presented.

Primary data

Primary data, as the name states, are primary to the research. This also means that the empirical evidence has been collected for the purpose of this thesis only. To understand how brand equity is affected by the different types of interactive Facebook activities it was necessary to ask direct questions according to the research question. Furthermore, the methods involved in the data collection process and the research philosophy have been determined in order to secure more reliable and valid answers (Blumberg et al. 2011). One of the biggest challenges with collecting primary data is the resources

needed to do so. It is both time consuming and in some cases also expensive. In addition biased or invalid results can occur as the researcher can be biased in the evaluation of the primary data. (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007),

Secondary data

For the purpose of further validation of the research, secondary data have also been used in this thesis. The secondary data also helps with more in-depth understanding of the research field. Some disadvantages need to be discussed before secondary data can be accepted into the thesis. Secondary data are collected for another purpose than the current thesis. If the research is similar the data would be collected for the same purpose but then this thesis would be unnecessary as the purpose is not to disprove any former research.

In this thesis data from Toyota annual report and surveys about internet behavior conducted by others have been utilized. The secondary data used in this thesis are mostly used for a better understanding of the result field and the gaps this thesis may contain. This is crucial knowledge in the pursuit of further research.

Another concern that has to be taken into account is that secondary data may be biased or flawed. It is not known under what circumstances the research was conducted under, who financed the research or if the researcher followed the high academic demands for a scientifically valid research. Research papers are often criticized with numerous different views which in turn make the research more valid.

Secondary is used in numerous different ways. It can be used for the purpose of determining whether and area has been researched enough and/or base assumptions for a new research. In this thesis the secondary data plays the role of supporting the end conclusion. It is furthermore assumed that all ethical and academic laws and standards are upheld in order to use the data as valid research.

Qualitative & Quantitative research

In the following section qualitative and quantitative research methods and the advantages and disadvantages are presented and discussed. Both research methods have advantages and one cannot disclaim the other. In addition perspectives on why method is more utilized than another will be presented. Finally the consequences of the choices made will be discussed.

Qualitative data collection and research methods

The advantage of qualitative data compared to quantitative data is that it will give more exact answers to the research question with pinpoint results from e.g. in-depth interviews and/or focus group interviews. It is important the interview guide is conducted in a scientific way so that the data are not biased or in

worst case invalid. This form of data collection method require a lot more resources than its counterpart; Quantitative data collection. Especially time is a factor as it both takes time to conduct the interviews but it also very time consuming to analyze the answers given during the interview(s).

Qualitative data will furthermore grant the researcher with in-depth answers and the possibility to watch, hear and even feel emotions when the interviewee answers the questions. There are a number of different methods to obtain qualitative data. Two of the most used are presented below.

In-depth interview

In-depth interviews are often used for larger research projects as it gives a more thorough understanding of the replies. The interviewer has the opportunity to evaluate each specific answer and analyze them with numerous factors in mind; the respondents way if answering, facial expressions and the pitch in which the interviewee replies. The researcher can dig deeper into the answers an get a more fulfilling and explanatory reply from the respondent (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007). For the purpose of this thesis, five in-depth interviews were conducted. The in-depth interviews were conducted in order to improve and correct any flaws in the survey.

Focus group

Compared to in-depth interviews, focus group interviews is easier way of obtaining qualitative data, in less time, but still with the opportunity of getting more thorough answers. It gives the participants the chance to discuss and elaborate on topics and questioned presented by the interviewer. When viewed from a positivism perspective, this form of data collection method has it flaws as the answers and information can be biased because of peer pressure. This is especially a challenge when the topic discussed is about controversial topics, so that the respondents could end up being looked upon as irresponsible and/or stupid. This could be the cause of a biased result. In addition, a single participant may take the leading role, and by that dominate the interview process. With this in mind, a focus group still is a good way of supporting the research proposition. Focus group interviews often lead to new questions and a deeper understanding of the research field (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007). For this thesis a focus group of 5 people has been conducted.

Quantitative data collection and research methods

The advantage of quantitative research methods are that the data collected have strong testability and can be verified or falsified by probability statements and correlations analysis. In-depth answers are very resource consuming and the researcher could miss a critical point in order to reject or accept the research proposition (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007). When utilizing quantitative data collection methods the respondents are guided and are limited to a number of options pre-determined by the

researcher, this make it easier for the respondents. In turn it can lead to bias answers as the respondents may not have the opportunity to answer truthfully (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2007). Quantitative research methods are often used when the focus is gathering empirical evidence for proving or disproving a hypothesis. In addition data can be correlated and crosschecked for other justifications, than the researcher had in mind, in the first place. When choosing this form of data collection method, the most common is questionnaires. Furthermore scales are used as a complement to the questions presented in the survey.

Survey & scales

Surveys are the primary data collection method used by researchers who wish to conduct quantitative research. The way of obtaining answers are many, it can be sent out by E-mail, snail mail, personal interview, phone interview or via social media. Regardless of which method is used to send the questionnaire, the purpose is to get more respondents, faster, compared to qualitative data collection methods. The main reason, other than getting more respondents faster, to use questionnaires as a data collection method is that the questions are direct and fairly easy to answer. The questions asked in the survey should not lead to debate about how to interpret the questions or misunderstood. It is important that the researcher aims to ask questions which are precise, and use sentences and words which are easy to understand by the target group. Furthermore a good questionnaire is supposed to be interesting, objective, easy to complete and not burdensome (Schiffmann, Kanuk 1997). The communication channel utilized to send out the survey has been Facebook and direct mail, as the target group for this survey is respondents who use the internet and social media daily.

Scales are often used as a combination with the questionnaire. The respondents are presented a list with different statements concerning interactive Facebook activities and asked what of the statements they can relate to. There are several different scales which can be used for this matter; Likert scale, semantic scale, differential scale, behavioral scale, intensity scale and rank order scale. Of these scales, Likert scale is most used as it is the easiest to prepare and interpret. Furthermore it is easy for the respondents to understand and therefore respond truthfully. After the answers have been obtained, the researcher can easily analyze them (Schiffmann, Kanuk 1997).

In relation, the survey for the purpose of this thesis, utilizes the Likert scale and rank order scale. The respondents are required to agree or disagree in certain statements. To minimize false-positive answers the option "Do not know" has been added. This was done so that respondents who do not have an opinion about certain questions or statements do not have to give "false" answers. This insures more reliable results. In this context you can conclude that if 50 % or more of the participants answer "do not

know” to a question or statement, which is important for the results of the survey, the sample population do not fit the target group or the question is too hard to understand.

Theoretical Framework

In this section a deeper understanding, of branding and brand equity, are provided. The frameworks discussed in this section will be the foundation of the framework developed in order to measure brand equity on social media. The new framework developed for the purpose of this thesis will then be the foundation of how Toyota’s use of Facebook impacts their local brand equity and how this can be improved.

Branding

The concept branding and how to best brand, a product, service or company, is a study that is constantly scrutinized. It has been discussed and debated over decades, and is still a topic of which the definitions and practices are still shifting. And especially the concepts of new media and social media has changed concept of branding. Despite all of the changes in branding concepts and theory, it can be argued that the basic purpose of branding will always be the same. It will always be the purpose of branding to affect consumers to identify themselves with certain brands in order to make them choose these brands over others. The tricky part is to achieve this goal, and with the introduction, and increasing use of new media, it has been more complex than ever before (Edelman 2010).

Before the issue of how to best brand a product, service or company can be discussed it is essential to understand the concepts of branding and branding strategies. When wanting to design an appropriate marketing strategy for a brand it is crucial that you understand what brand personality the company wants to communicate. While brand personality is defined as the representation of how you want the consumers to see you, brand image is how the consumers actually grasp the brand. Thus one of the key challenges of branding is to align these two concepts in order to build brand equity (Keller, Aperia, Georgson 2008).

Branding strategies

For corporations branding is a crucial competitive advantage if utilized correct. It can be used to accomplish many different purposes, e.g. to brand a product or to brand a corporation (Morsing 2002) The focus of this thesis will be branding strategies for the purpose of corporate branding where the company’s unique identity is used as a competitive advantage. Aaker (2004) argues that it is important to apply a strategic which is coherent with the company’s identity.

Corporate branding can be defined as a process of creating and maintaining good relationships within the company, toward internal and external stakeholders e.g. employees and consumers. Furthermore it is defined as communication with a strong and consistent message to all of the stakeholders. The purpose of corporate branding is to consequently communicate the same brand identity to both external and internal stakeholders (Shultz 2006).

Aaker (2004) argues that there are two reasons for building a strong corporate brand. Firstly a strong corporate brand facilitates differentiation and positioning as it often aligns a company with their products. In every market it is important to differentiate your brand as products can become very similar. Corporate branding helps differentiate a company for others without necessarily revolutionizing the product portfolio. Furthermore, a strong corporate brand will typically also build positive brand associations towards their customers and thereby help customers choose that brand over a brand with a vague corporate brand. An example: if a consumer has the choice of several similar products of different brands, the one product with the strongest will typically be the one which is chosen the most times. The second reason for building a strong corporate brand, according to Aaker (2004) is that a strong corporate brand facilitates better opportunities to communicate and build relations with external and internal stakeholders. However it is important that the internal stakeholders are all on the same page and is informed about what brand identity is intended. Otherwise it becomes difficult to obtain and communicate the wanted brand identity externally.

It can be argued that corporate branding consists of four different components; culture, strategic vision, image and identity. Thus, based on this argument corporate branding is based on these characteristics. This means it becomes possible for companies to express their identity to stakeholders while also involving them in order to make the corporate brand sustainable and relevant (Cornelissen 2004).

Olins (1989) argues for three different corporate branding strategies: branded identity, endorsed brand identity and monolithic brand identity. This thesis will primarily focus on monolithic brand identity, which can be defined as; one name and one visual identity, in form of a logo for all products in the portfolio. The benefits of this strategy are that you achieve a recognizable and coherent identity.

In the world of today companies face a lot of different challenges when trying to build a strong corporate brand. The consumers have increasingly more power and influence on branding as of more interaction and communication between brands and consumers (Antorini et al. 2005). Furthermore the identity of products relies on the common external communication from the company. In addition relations with consumers are getting more and more important. It is crucial to determine how much they

should be included in the company without compromising the corporate brand. Furthermore it is very difficult if not impossible to categorize the way communication flows between consumers and brands, but the Four Models of Public Relations by Grunig and Hunt (1984) is a good starting point. The four different dimensions are: Press agency/ Publicity, Public information, Two-way asymmetric and Two-way symmetric. Two-Way asymmetric and Two-way symmetric is somewhat similar, but still different, as it is defined as communication which flows to and from publics. The Two-way asymmetric argues that the organization does not change as a result of public relations, but instead observes the public in order to change the common attitude and behavior, using PR. The Two-way symmetric argues that dialogue is the focus and that companies adjust their PR-strategy in response to the common attitude and behavior in the market, and this is where the two dimensions are different.

With the four public relations in mind, Louro and Cunha (2001) cluster the dominant conceptualizations around different paradigms; product paradigm, projective paradigm, adaptive paradigm and relational paradigm. A closer look at the projective paradigm with the monolithic brand identity in mind is relevant for the purpose of this thesis. The projective paradigm focuses on reinforcing and developing the brand positioning and by that achieving and enhancing a coherent focus towards all stakeholders (deChernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley 1998). By using this perspective the conceptualizing of brand are a platform for articulating and implementing a corporation's strategic intent. In contrast, the relational paradigm is focused on consumers. It argues that branding as a dynamic process which never ends, and where brand value is a co-creation through behavior, collaboration and competition (Putnam, Phillips, Chapman 1996). The two paradigms will be the base for further discussion throughout the thesis.

The models and theories provided above are chosen according to discuss the direction of branding communication of Toyota later in the thesis. Although none of the theories or models provided, states a clear description of how communication strategies can be utilized, they provide a good indication and basis of how to make a successfully branding strategy.

New Media

In this section, the impact of new media will be discussed and described. Furthermore the implications and impact of a marketing strategy for new media and how these aspects influence the brand-consumer relationship is discussed.

Marketing efforts and new media

The emergence of new media such as the internet, smartphones etc. has challenged marketers' way of communicating with consumers and thereby the traditional perception of building strong links between consumers and brands.

One of the largest changes, in the world of new media, is that the entry barriers when wanting to communicate and build relations with customers, is very low. Especially the pop-ups of blogs and social networking sites have dropped the entry barrier for building relations with your target group. This has affected the way marketers must operate in order to create a sustainable competitive advantage through brand-consumer communication. In order to create this competitive advantage in the world of new media, marketers and brands have to have great attention on creative, interactive and informational content when communicating with their target group (Wilson and Abel 2002). This is further argued by Eid and Trueman (2002) who argue that an interactive approach to the online marketing strategy is a vital cornerstone.

When referring to new media and marketing efforts in our time, especially the internet has led to a change in paradigm, which then has changed the way brands and companies try to get the consumers attention, and by that build brand-consumer relationship. As mentioned above informational content in the new paradigm are increasingly important, which Rayport and Sviokla (1995) supports by emphasizing the value of information for the consumers in virtual marketing opposed to the more traditional attitude to marketing efforts. Because of the ever-present digital world with e.g. smartphones, smartbooks, laptops and tablets, consumers are constantly exposed to information and promotions, which may or may not have value for the individual. Thus, as argued earlier, the importance of having the right creative, interactive and informational content which somehow gives the target group value is more important than ever. Furthermore individualized marketing campaigns and promotions, still having creative, interactive and informational content, are also very important if wanting to attract the attention of the consumers which, is exposed to thousands and thousands ads every single day¹. Consequently individualizing and personalizing marketing campaigns and communication will help marketers to get the consumers to pay attention to their messages and simultaneously provide a foundation for brand-consumer interaction and maybe even a brand-consumer relationship which could improve brand equity in the long run.

The U-space

Taking the above to the next level a more recent approach to new media is presented by Watson et al. (2002) which discusses the concept of U-space and argues for the importance of networks and personalization in the next generation of marketing through omnipresent networks. Through this concept of U-space or über-commerce marketing becomes independent of time and space which

¹ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/cutting-through-advertising-clutter/>

supports the argumentation of the internet being a new marketing tool and channel, which can be combined with a lot of other communication channels, e.g. print and broadcast.

The concept of U-space is defined by three stages: market place then market space and at last U-space. Market place is described as a traditional and physical market place where the exchange of goods and services is happening via face-to-face physical interactions. Secondly The market space is defined as an informal market place where the goods and services are dealt via computer interaction. At last the U-space is defined as a combination of physical and computerized interaction between brand and consumer (Watson et. al. 2002). In addition Watson et. al (2002) defines u-commerce as the use of ubiquitous networks combined with a unified, personalized and uninterrupted communication between a company and its stakeholders.

Although this concept is presented as a possible next generation of marketing this thesis argues that a lot of the aspects have already become a reality. Thus the concept of u-commerce is important for the purpose of this thesis as it facilitates a view of interactions between networks and individuals.

Brand Equity

As described in the problem formulation the purpose of this thesis is to investigate how brand-consumer interaction on social media impact brand equity, furthermore apply these findings to the case of Toyota Denmark and their efforts on social media in order to improve their social media marketing strategy. However, no framework for measuring and analyzing the connection has been developed. Later in this thesis a framework for measuring the value of brand equity in terms of social media is presented. In order to present such a framework it is important to present and discuss already existing literature and frameworks. In this section the three existing frameworks, which has been used for re-conceptualizing brand equity, will be presented and discussed.

Brand Equity Ten

Another appropriate framework for re-conceptualizing the brand equity framework for this thesis is Aaker's Brand Equity Ten. Aaker (1996) argues for ten different measures divided into five categories. The first four categories are measurements which represent the perception of the brand, from the view of the consumer. The fifth dimension, market behavior, will not be included in the framework since the focus of this thesis is to have a closer look at brand-consumer interaction on Facebook and how consumers perceive how these impact brand equity. The ten measures divided into categories are seen below;

I. Loyalty

- a. Price Premium
 - b. Satisfaction
- II. Perceived quality
 - a. Perceived quality
 - b. Leadership
- III. Associations
 - a. Perceived value
 - b. Brand personality
 - c. Organizational association
- IV. Awareness
 - a. Brand Awareness
- V. Market behavior
 - a. Market share
 - b. Price and distribution

Loyalty

Aaker (1996) defines loyalty as one of the core dimension of brand equity and, as seen above, consists of price premium and customer satisfaction. Loyal consumers are important for almost every brand as it has the potential to raise the barrier of entry for new competitors. Furthermore it can be the basis for charging price premiums, because the loyal consumers are willing to pay more to buy their favorite brand and be loyal. These factors will provide competitive advantages and thereby also put the company in a better position in terms of its competitors.

Perceived quality

Perceived quality is another important dimension in the Brand Equity Ten framework and consists of the measures perceived quality and leadership/popularity. This dimension is associated with price premiums, brand usage, stock return and price elasticity (Aaker 1996). These factors can also provide the basis for price premium but it is also important in the pursuit of being able to obtain price premium when inquiry of the brand declines.

Associations

Aaker (1996) defines in his brand equity ten framework associations as image dimensions, which are unique to a brand. In addition he distinguishes between three different perspectives; brand-as-product, brand-as-person and brand-as-organization. According to Aaker these perspectives are important when

structuring the measurements of brand equity ten and in the end reveal consumers perceptions of a brand.

Awareness

Brand awareness is another measure which is very important for Aaker's brand equity ten, and can have great influence on perception and attitude of consumers towards brands and products. Aaker (1996) argues for three levels of brand awareness; first brand recognition, which describes if the consumers even know the brand; secondly top-of-mind, which focuses on how consumers recall brands as the first brand which comes to mind; lastly brand opinion, which describes the opinion consumers have of the brand.

After describing the four different parameters from Aaker's brand equity ten, which will be used and further discussed in this thesis, it is important to mention that each of the four parameters could involve some problems when using them to measure brand equity. Some of the problems which can occur are that a lot of the factors/measurements are not that easy to define e.g. innovation, interpretation of brand, key drivers etc. Thus this thesis will try to utilize the more generic categories of the brand equity ten framework and apply them to the Toyota case study, described later in the thesis, and thereby analyze the impact of social media in terms of the specific parameters chosen for the Facebook brand equity framework.

ORS Brand Equity

The importance of this framework by Christodoulides (2006), in terms of this thesis cannot be overlooked. The framework has its starting point in Aaker's framework and definitions from 1991, but argues that existing literature of brand equity frameworks and measures overlook the brand potential of computer-built environments. Furthermore this framework identifies the facets of online brand equity in terms of e-business. Christodoulides (2006) argues that this framework is intended to fill the gap in the existing literature and produce a new, valid and reliable scale to measure brand equity in terms of e-business through his 5 dimensions of online brand equity. The fifth dimension, fulfillment, will not be included in the new framework as it is intended for pure e-business which makes the dimension irrelevant as no sale of goods or services happens directly from a company's Facebook page.

- I. Emotional connection
 - a. Affiliation
 - b. Care
 - c. Empathy

- II. Online experience
 - a. Ease of use
 - b. Navigation
 - c. Speed
- III. Responsive service nature
 - a. Responsiveness
 - b. Interaction
- IV. Trust
 - a. Privacy
 - b. Security

Emotional connection

In order to build and obtain a powerful brand it is important for companies to make an emotional connection with the consumers (Christodoulides 2006). The emotional connection between consumer and brand can have a big impact of the perception of the brand, and ultimately influence the consumers choice of brand and also play an integral role in building of brand equity for any brand or company which interact with the consumers not only in the physical sense, but also in the digital space of social networking. Christodoulides argues that emotional connection may even be more important for companies and brands interacting with consumers in the digital space.

Online Experience

Online experience is defined as ease of use, navigation and speed. Furthermore it is argued that online experience is a very important and powerful concept in the digital world (Christodoulides 2006). It is important for brands to maintain and develop certain standards as much as possible, as the consumers have constant access to brands and their competitors online. Thus the online experience of a brand is crucial for creating a positive impact on the consumers' perception and awareness of the brand.

Responsive service nature

Christodoulides (2006) refers to responsive service nature as a support to the storefront and the level of customer service interaction. Furthermore he argues that customer service is one of the most important characteristics for digital brands. At last he argues that it is a key differentiator, for customers when choosing online brands. As for this thesis the concept of responsive service nature is slightly altered, so that the parameters are adapted to the purpose of this thesis. This is discussed later in the thesis.

Trust

This parameter discussed by Christodoulides is somehow connected to e-commerce as it is defined as expectations of reliability and intentions when involving consumer risk, e.g. when buying goods online. This is not directly connected to the purpose of this thesis, as there are no direct transactions or other interactions on Facebook that need extreme trust, but this author argues that some trust should exist within social networking communities when consumers interact with brands.

The new framework – Facebook brand equity

In this section of the thesis the new framework, Facebook brand equity, is presented and a deeper understanding of the chosen parameters, in the context of social media, is provided. Furthermore the choice and purpose of parameters, in terms of Facebook brand equity is described and explained.

Below the Facebook brand equity framework is listed in five categories. The new framework will be used to research and analyze how Facebook interactions, between consumers and brands, impact brand equity and provide the foundation for the sections “Analysis of findings” and “Recommendations for a future social media strategy.”

Facebook brand equity framework:

- I. Loyalty**
- II. Perceived quality**
 - a. Perceived quality**
 - b. Leadership**
- III. Associations**
 - a. Brand personality**
 - b. Trust**
- IV. Brand awareness**
- V. Online Experience**
 - a. Emotional connection**
 - b. Responsiveness**
 - c. Interaction**

As described earlier in the thesis the new framework is an alternation of different brand equity frameworks when combined give us a framework to help measure brand equity on social media.

The first parameter described in the new framework is loyalty which will be used to measure how social media impact the consumers’ decision to stay loyal to a specific brand or company. Thus these

parameters will include how brand-consumer interaction and relationship is impacted by social media communication. Thus it is important to mention that the aspect of price premium will not be included in the new framework. As earlier implied the focus in this thesis will be on how interaction between consumers and brands on social media will impact consumer satisfaction and thereby loyalty. However price premium is still viewed as a vital part of brand equity, but is outside the scope of this research and thereby irrelevant for this thesis.

The next parameter included in the social media framework, also defined by Aaker, is perceived quality. Both of the sub-parameters described by Aaker are found relevant for the analysis social media's impact on brand equity and therefor included in the framework. The perceived quality sub-parameter is included in order to analyze how the perception of a brand's or company's quality is changed when consumers and brands interact on social media. The second sub-parameter, leadership, is a key factor in order to analyze how social media presence impact the way consumers think of a brand or company. Is the presence on social media helping brands and companies become the most popular and thereby brand leader in a specific industry? Although Aaker argues that this element is somewhat uncertain because of the lack of research, it is very important in the terms of social media interaction and the impact on brand equity. Thus this parameter is used in order to analyze how interaction between consumers and brands on social media impact the perception of a brand or company is a leader within their specific industry.

In the context of this thesis, associations are the second parameter chosen for the new framework. Associations are highly relevant when measuring and analyzing Facebook brand equity, as they can reveal what value a given product has and gives to the consumer. Is the value merely functional, brand-as-product or do the brand have a bigger value and meaning for the consumer, brand-as-person. Because of the purpose of this thesis is focused on consumer-brand interaction on social media it can be argued that the value presented to a consumer through a Facebook page is not physical but more emotional. Thus the new framework will not include the perspective of brand-as-product. However the two other aspects of associations defined by Aaker (1996), brand-as-person and brand-as-organizations will be included as they both focuses on brand personality, which is an important aspect of the purpose of this thesis. Furthermore it is highly relevant in analyzing how brand associations are impacted through consumer-brand interactions on social media, and how this affects brand equity. These two parameters will be joined under the sub-parameter Brand personality. In addition Christodoulides (2006) defines trust as an important parameter when measuring brand equity. And since the focus of this thesis is investigating the impact of consumer-brand interaction it can be assumed that some trust has to be developed when these interactions occur. Thus this parameter will be utilized in order to research how important consumers see trust when interacting with brands and companies on social media. As

explained earlier in the thesis, Christodoulides (2006) defines trust as privacy and security. However the focus of this framework is more the overall feeling of trust when consumers interact with brands on Facebook. Thus privacy and security will not be included in the new framework. Trust will be the second sub-parameter of associations since trust is considered an association and an outcome of consumer-brand interaction.

Brand awareness is somehow connected to associations but is still an important parameter when analyzing and measuring brand equity. In the social media framework brand awareness is utilized to analyze how social media interactions between consumer and brand affect how consumers remember brands and companies. Are they top-of-mind after social media interaction, or not. Consequently this parameter is used to measure what impact brand-consumer interactions on Facebook have on brand awareness.

The first parameter chosen for the social media framework, from Christodoulides, is online experience. Although Christodoulides uses his framework solely in reference to online brands the importance of this parameter is undeniable for this thesis. Everything concerning interaction between consumer and brand on social media sites has a connection to an online experience. Furthermore, for this thesis, the parameter is extended a bit. Emotional connection and the two sub-parameters responsiveness and interaction, are the parameters included. The reason for this is that, in the context of this thesis, it can be argued that the measurement of online experience would be inaccurate without the additions of emotional connection, responsiveness and interaction. The additions of the extra parameters can be explained by the ever-changing nature of the internet and the digital world, so that the earlier frameworks by Christodoulides and Aaker is outdated for the purpose of this thesis.

When altering and combining the parameters described above, into the social media framework, a new framework is developed, which for the purpose of this thesis is suitable for measuring and analyzing brand equity.

Social media theory

In recent years more and more people have joined the social networking sites, which have opened the eyes of brands and companies to the social media marketing opportunities within these networking sites. However, while, a lot of brands & companies already have some form of presence on social media the question a lot of CMO's have is whether or not this presence actually generates any form of Return-on-investment (Ladueque 2010).

The literature to answer this question is still limited, but maybe the question which should be answered in order to see any form of return-on-investment is what strategy is needed in order to have success on social media. Thus many companies fail to even have a target group, goal etc. which is a big problem as the best results in social media marketing, as for any form of marketing comes with a plan a strategy (alt om data 2014).

According to Factbook (2012) the common sense is that the best success parameters when being present on social media sites are word-of-mouth, engagement in dialogues and good PR. In this section the term word-of-mouth and the importance for this thesis is discussed. Furthermore a more general overview and discussion of social networking and how it can be used are provided. At last all of the different interactive Facebook activities are presented and a discussion of how they can be utilized in terms of the goal of this thesis is also provided.

Social media Word-Of-Mouth

Before discussing social networking in general and what it can offer for the users it is important to take a deeper look at theories and concepts which have a central role in determining the impact social media marketing have on a brand or companies brand equity. One concept which, if implemented correct, could have a major impact and makes social media marketing so powerful when branding products or services through social media is word-of-mouth (Zeisser 2010).

In contrast to traditional marketing, engaging and interactive marketing concepts such as word-of-mouth are defined as earned marketing which have benefits e.g. having lower costs than traditional paid marketing (Zeisser 2010). In addition Trusov (2009) argues word-of-mouth eliminates the resistance, a consumer can have to accept paid marketing and have a faster delivery time especially through the assistance of the internet e.g. blogs, social media and online review sites. In order for brands and companies harness the opportunities of word-of-mouth it is important to provide some valuable and useful content for the target group (Zeisser 2010). Consequently Zeisser (2010) argues that companies need to make the members of the network to feel important and appreciated. As mentioned earlier they key question and problem for many companies is to form the right strategy and meet the goals, if having any. This is a key problem as any marketing efforts need goals and strategies to have success. However, if companies do implement the right strategy for social media word-of-mouth it can become a very important tool for marketers to improve brand equity through social media (Zeisser 2010).

Social Networking

With social media becoming more and more important for brands and companies in order to interact with and expose consumers with marketing material it is important to understand social networking and

what social media further entails. This is done in order to better understand what especially Facebook have to offer in terms of different interactive elements.

Online social networking is basically a web-based service of which the users have the opportunity to create connections to other members of the digital network/community by creating an online profile and/or community. Of all the different online networking opportunities Facebook is, at the moment, the social media site which is most popular for the population in Denmark. Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter are other well-known and well-used social networks (Infomedia 2013). With the still increasing number of members and time-of-use it is really important for brands and companies to understand how they can utilize social media as a marketing tool, so that they can gain competitive advantage when communicating and interacting with the consumers on social media.

Whether the user is an individual trying to find old friends, an older woman who wants to find love or companies who want to interact with their stakeholders the different ways to interact are many. But if you do not have a plan, the goal can be hard to obtain. However, if the strategy is well executed and the goals are realistic, Facebook can prove to be a very useful and successful marketing tool. Before describing and discussing the different interactive Facebook activities, a basic overview of Facebook is provided.

As mentioned earlier the purpose of Facebook is to provide a platform where users interact, join and find with other users and communities on the platform. But in the start it was a platform for college students whereas today everyone with a valid e-mail address can sign up and use Facebook. Users need to create a profile in order to join the social network where they can present information about who they are, what they like, where they work etc. Every profile has a “wall” where friends and followers can post comments and other stuff. More importantly for the purpose of this thesis are the possibilities on Facebook for brands and companies with a page. The possibilities for a company page are a little different from a personal page, with the most important differences being able to create different tabs and the opportunity to write a short introduction to your company including contact information². Within these opportunities there are many different ways brands and companies to interact with consumers.

Interactive Facebook activities

In relation to the purpose of this thesis a group of different interactive Facebook activities, which brands and companies can utilize to interact with the consumers, are analyzed and discussed. In order to

² Appendix 1: Examples of activities on a company Facebook page

analyze what impact the different interactive elements have on Facebook brand equity the analysis of the elements is done in close relation to the parameters discussed earlier in the Facebook brand equity framework³. Before analyzing the impact on the Facebook brand equity, later in this thesis, a brief presentation of the different interactive Facebook activities are presented below.

“Like” a brand’s or company’s Facebook page is when you "like" a brand's/company's Facebook page and thereby you automatically give Facebook the indication that you are interested in news and other material, which will show in your own newsfeed⁴ and on your Facebook wall.

Write a post on a brand’s or company’s Facebook wall is when a fan writes a comment directly on the brand’s or company’s wall. Furthermore this interactive Facebook element allows other users to comment or “like” the post, which, depending on the activity, will help brands and companies to get increased exposure on Facebook.

"Like" a post is when you "like" a post written by someone else or yourself

Comment a post is when you comment on a post written by someone else, yourself or the brand or company itself.

Picture interaction is When you "like", comment or post a picture on a brand's/company's Facebook wall.

Video interaction is when you "like", comment or post a video on a brand's/company's Facebook wall

Contest participation is when you participate in a contest via a brand's or company's Facebook page. Furthermore this form for interactive Facebook element consists of commenting or “liking” the contest

As mentioned earlier in this section of the thesis, the interactive Facebook activities will be utilized in order to analyze how the different opportunities for interacting with consumers on Facebook impacts brand equity. In order to analyze and discuss and answer the research question and sub-questions provided for this thesis, it is necessary to investigate the interactive Facebook activities, presented above, in relation to the Facebook brand equity framework. In order to support the Facebook brand equity framework, a model which visualizes the connection between the interactive Facebook activities

³ Appendix 2: Figure of Facebook’s impact on Facebook brand equity

⁴ A newsfeed is shown on the users start page and shows the latest activities of your friends and pages you have “liked”

and the Facebook brand equity parameters, is provided. The figure is presented in appendix 2: “Model for mapping and visualizing the connection between interactive Facebook activities and the Facebook brand equity parameters.”

Brand-Consumer relationship

Before being able to completely analyze and discuss the incoming data from the internet survey and the focus group, and thereby how the interactive Facebook activities can be utilized by brands and companies to build and improve brand equity it is necessary to look at brand-consumer relationship and how this is developed. Brown (2011) argues that the way consumers develop their relationship to brands and companies have changed as the time we use online has drastically increased and thereby changed the way we interact. Hence, this section of the thesis will help understand how the development of brand-consumer relationship has changed over time and how this can be connected to the world of online- and especially social media.

Foundations of brand-consumer relationship

Before looking more deeply into the brand-consumer relationship on Facebook, it is beneficial to take a deeper look at how brand-consumer relationships were developed before the digital world seriously affected us. This is done, part, in order to better understand the foundations behind brand-consumer relations and part because the literature on developing brand-consumer relationships on social media is limited, at best. Hence it is important to fully understand what lies behind this type of relationship. As Fournier (1998) argues, it is crucial for a relationship to exist, that both partners must have some form of interdependence. Fournier (1998) defines this form of interdependence as partners who affect, define, and the redefine the relationship. When applying Fournier’s (1998) definitions to the brand-consumer relationship it is necessary for the brand to build an identity and personality, which the consumer can recognize in themselves, in order to surpass the perception of simply being a brand. Furthermore, the brand has to be an active member of the relationship, which would be nearly impossible without an identity and personality. This is where different marketing tools come to play, as marketing can be a way of contributing with information and other material which engages the consumers and provide them with the information and values of the brand, which will help define the identity and personality, seen through the eyes of the consumer (Fournier 1998).

Fournier (1998) further argues that the relationship is not only developed by interdependence and mutual exchanges of information. She argues that there have to be elements which provide a purpose for the partners in the relationship. In addition Fournier (1998) presents two definitions, which can help understand the foundation of relationships. The first definition, “Multiplex phenomena” can be

explained as relationships are phenomena which can take many forms and take place everywhere. The other definition, which can explain the foundations of relationships “process phenomena” is described as relationships are dynamic and changes with the change in environment and will continue to evolve as long as the relationship progresses.

Once the mutual relationship, is formed with the above characteristics in mind, Fournier (1998) argues that five sociocultural parameters has a great influence on how the relationship will progress in the future; age, life cycle, gender, social network and culture. All of the parameters are very important when forming a relationship as they can influence the strength of the relationship, how emotional expressions are perceived, how easily the relationship can end and if partners want to create a long-lasting commitment (Fournier, 1998). All of the above is, not only, important for relationships between individuals but also when brands want to interact and build relationships with consumers.

Neuromarketing

Despite already having established the foundations for relationships and how it is applied in this thesis, it is still very interesting to investigate how brand and consumers interact. In this section the definitions of neuromarketing and how it influences brand-consumer relationships is provided.

The topic of neuromarketing has become more and more interesting for marketers as it argues that neuroscience can influence brand awareness and the consumers’ decision making process. The interesting aspects of neuroscience for marketers are that it gives an insight to the functions of the brain. The brain does not only have functionalities which regulates heartbeat, make you walk etc., it has also another side to it which is the interesting part for marketers. The other side known as the mind is more thoughtful and emotional when making decisions, which is very interesting when trying to influence consumers (Perrachione & Perrachione 2008). Although the opinions of neuromarketing, regarding how much it can be used in terms of marketing- and branding strategies, are many, some has the opinion of neuroscience being very important for marketing. Lovell (2008) argues fully that neuroscience should be included, when discussing marketing- and branding strategies, as it provides the marketer a deeper understanding of the consumers’ mind when going through the decision making process. However it is still important to have in mind that neuromarketing is not an exact science but merely a tool in the marketing process, and should therefore only be a part of bigger picture. Furthermore there is no clear indication of how neuromarketing influence the effect of branding strategies. However there are still many ways in which neuromarketing could prove to influence how consumers, subconsciously, can be influenced in their decision making process.

In the context of this thesis, the concept of neuroscience and neuromarketing help understand subconscious behavior and how this impact consumers' behavior on Facebook when interacting with brands and companies. The connection between subconscious behavior and Facebook is analyzed discussed later in the thesis.

Identity through brands

After presenting brand-consumer relationship and neuromarketing, the next important term to review, in order to research how consumer-brand relationships impact brand equity, is brand identity. The term brand identity can be explained by an extension of self through property or belongings. To what extent people view brands as a part of their own identity differs from person to person and can depend on which stage in life the consumer is in (Belk, 1988) In addition Belk (1998) argues for four different levels of what role the belongings play in the development of humans. The four roles span from an infant realizing that it is an individual to the elderly who make possessions a help to creating and maintaining the past.

Belk (1988) also argues that the sense of self is associated to possessions such as physically items e.g. cars, clothes and technology, but can also include members of your network such as family members, colleagues or friends. In addition it is also possible to create an identity through non-brand possessions such as being a smoker, diver or tattoo enthusiast. Thus for the purpose of this thesis, the question are not whether or not people brands as an identity but more how it affect the behavior of the consumer when interacting with brands on social media.

As much as consumers identify themselves through brands, by buying the same brand over and over, it can be argued that consumers who interact with and recommend their chosen brands on Facebook, is also creating some sense of identity through brands. Many Facebook users go onto a brand's or company's Facebook page and like them which, maybe subconsciously, signals to their social media network that they want to be associated with this brand or company. Even if interactions with brands or companies are subconscious, most people will choose brands which reflect their own identity or, perhaps more importantly, how they want others to think of their identity (Fournier 1998). The importance of understanding why and how people identify themselves with brands, is undeniably for thesis, as it can provide insight into what impact certain interactive Facebook activities can have on brand equity.

The reasons for consumers to present to others what brands they like is not only to create an identity toward themselves and others, but also to increase control one's possessions and other opinion (Belk 1998). In the sense of Facebook the interaction a consumer has with a brand provides the sense of

control over the brand. Belk (1998) argues that the more sense of control one has over their possessions the more likely they are to consider it a part of themselves and thereby see it as part of their identity. Other ways users of Facebook can believe they have more control of their own identity through brands is to use one of the other interactive Facebook activities, presented earlier in this thesis. In addition brands and companies can utilize this knowledge by optimizing their presence by giving the consumer a feel of increased control. This optimization can be done by providing the users with different opportunities such as a live-chat and a section for praise and criticism. Consequently the benefits of this is not only giving the sense of control to the consumer but can also have the benefits of increasing the chance of building a sense of brand community as the brand or company transfers some control to the consumer (Fournier 2009).

When wanting to create an identity, Brown (2011) argues for two different types of identities; the found identity and the made identity. The found identity is defined by our surroundings e.g. parents and childhood. The more interesting identity for the purpose of this thesis is the made identity, which is defined as the identity oneself creates with the purpose of being looked upon in a certain way by others. Furthermore the made identity is also defined as how oneself wants to be (Brown 2011). The latter of the two types of identities mentioned by Brown (2011) is especially important when brands want to interact with consumers on Facebook. Thus as mentioned earlier, brands and companies have to appeal to the made identity of the consumer in order to optimize the use of social media pages.

By understanding how to build and maintain a strong, reliable and long-lasting relationship with consumers who identify themselves with the brand a base for a successful social media strategy for Toyota, which can build and improve brand equity, is provided.

Brand communities

Facebook cannot only be utilized as a digital platform to extend one's self's made identity, and express and share feelings and meanings, towards brands, companies, everyday life etc., by interacting. Facebook is also a platform in which you are a member of a digital community, and more or less member of a brand community. A brand community can be defined as a community where a group of enthusiastic consumers can discuss and share experiences of a certain brand they identify themselves with and love. It is important to mention that Facebook is not a traditional brand community but still has the necessary features in order for brands to create a functional brand community which could benefit both brand and consumer.

As mentioned above, brands and companies need to give up some control in order to create reliable and beneficial relationships with consumers. This fact is the same if wanting to create a functional brand

community. It is important when creating a brand community that the consumers can have the sense of control while at the same time being in the spotlight in front of digital friends and peers. Another important point for creating a successful brand community is for the company to let members of the community shape the conversation and only intervene if necessary, as the main reason for consumers to participate is for example to find support, discuss with peers and find ways to contribute to the community and brand they identify themselves with and love (Fournier 2009).

All of the above mentioned factors can be seen on a brand's or company's Facebook page where brand-consumer interactions such as wall posts and comments can be a way for consumers to interact with the brand and other fans, and by that feel they contribute to a community of peers. Furthermore the Facebook brand community also able the consumer with a sense of control and the possibility to have a sense contributing with ideas which can improve the community or the entire brand. This can be done through all of the before mentioned interactive Facebook activities. Thus Facebook can be a beneficial platform for creating a brand community if executed properly.

The theories and concepts of brand communities, presented by Fournier (2009) and above will be utilized later in the thesis in order to answer the research questions and provide guidelines for recommendations of how Toyota could build their Facebook page in order to build and improve brand equity.

Tribalism

Along with interacting with brands, companies and friends who reflects the identity and personality, users wish to imitate social media also encourages communication across cultures & countries and digital tribalism. Brown (2011) defines digital tribalism as people who wants to find and interact with others who share similar interests and is like-minded e.g. family, childhood friends, colleagues, etc.

Humans have always had a need for sharing experiences and feelings with others, which consequently means wanting to find others who want to listen to their storytelling (Hooper 2011). This form of modern storytelling is a perfect example of what Facebook can facilitate. As people become more and more interesting in social link building instead of only the objects of social consumption (Cova & Cova 2008) it can be argued that marketing should go in the direction of surrounding consumers with the sense of being part of a shared community, hence tribal marketing. The expression tribal marketing is used because of the similarities of social dynamics in ancient tribes, where the power was decentralized and members of the tribe had common interests and were like-minded. Tribal marketing occurs when the so called tribes focus around brands or companies, which in some ways is similar to brand communities, described earlier in the thesis.

The possibilities for the members a tribe can also be seen in the world of Facebook as members are free of social restraints and can be more focused on personalization and showing their own differences and unique identity. Furthermore the concept of tribalism is also seen in Facebook as the idea of modern tribe members are ones with close connection to their country, hometown, religion, language etc. (Cova & Cova 2002), which is all qualities most Facebook members elect to share in their profile. Thus being able to understand why people are passionate about certain brands and how these can create and utilize environments that encourage such a behavior will help when analyzing which of the before mentioned interactive Facebook activities has the potential of creating the most brand equity value. Another very important factor is that the idea of belonging to a tribe can become very important for most people and even more important of belonging to a certain social class (Cova & Cova 2002). This point by Cova & Cova from 2002 can be compared to the world of Facebook, where people sometimes may find being a fan of a certain brand or belonging to a certain group reflects more of their personality than their real-life social status. Another very important argument by Cova & Cova (2002) is that consumers are given access to a tribe by purchasing certain brands and products. Consequently, meaning that it is the connection to the brand or company that has the most value for the consumers, and not the use of the product itself.

Research design

The research design chosen for this thesis can be categorized as exploratory and has the purpose of investigating the connections between the interactive Facebook activities and the social media equity framework and further how best to improve brand equity through Facebook interactions. The population of interest for the research has been consumers who could be interested in buying a car in the near future with the focus on the younger population, 18-30 year old who uses social media, as the marketing potential for this target group is long term opposed to a more elderly target group.

In order reach the right respondents and get as many, valid and reliable, respondents as possible a web-based survey followed by a focus group interview has been selected. The survey was sent via Facebook as most of the 18-30 year old uses Facebook for socializing and in the search of information.

Furthermore this form of Facebook survey eliminates any respondents who do not uses Facebook on a regular basis. Approximately 500 were invited to participate in the survey with the aim of reaching about 100 respondents. Because of the chosen communication channel for the survey the risk of the survey being ignored or incomplete, the length of the questionnaire was held at a minimum. In addition, the respondents were promised complete anonymity and were informed about the purpose and benefits of the study, which is very critical and of great importance (Blumberg et. al 2011). Finally, in order to

enhance motivation for answering and finishing the survey, two movie tickets were awarded as a prize. In addition to using a web-based survey the other communication approach for gathering data utilized was Focus group. For the focus group interview five people, in the age of 18-30 were invited to participate in the interview. In order to get some diversity, two of the participants were women and three were men. The focus group interview was conducted in order to support the data from the survey and to get a more qualitative view of the connection between the interactive Facebook activities and the Facebook brand equity parameters

Survey design

Blumberg et. al (2011) argues that it is important to choose the right type of approach when collecting data. In order to do so it is important to know what type of data is needed, who to target and what information is needed. Furthermore Blumberg et. al (2011) describes some criteria for building the good survey.

Target population & bias

By narrowing the target population down to Danish residence in the age of 18-30 year old who are active Facebook users, it can lead to some bias and consequences. First of all the survey only regards the Danish population and only the younger population which is not all of Toyota's online target population. The answers could vary if other nationalities and age groups were asked to answer the questionnaire. This can lead to some bias by generalizing all of the answers because the respondents are from a small group of the total population. Furthermore it is uncertain how the results of the survey would have been, if the survey were sent to Facebook users in other countries than Denmark or to a more diversified age group.

Sampling method and bias

Even though social media is a good, easy and cheap way of reaching a large number of respondents, the risk of bias has to be taken into account. By sending out the questionnaire through a communication channel like Facebook everyone with a Facebook account can possible answer the survey. Consequently this means that people are not prevented from answering the survey more than once in order to increase their chance of winning the movie tickets. Another aspect of bias which can occur is that one cannot be sure of how serious the respondents answer the questions as one does not know who the respondents are. Furthermore some respondents may have a personal reason to answer in a certain way, e.g. if respondents want to boost the potential of Facebook as a marketing tool or the opposite.

Sample size and bias

Blumberg et al (2011) argues that the size of the sample should range somewhere between 50-100 participants. The sample size for this survey ended up being 77 which should be sufficient according to Blumberg et. al. (2011). However, since the population of Danish Facebook users in the age between 18-30 is approximately 900,000⁵ it can be discussed if the sample size for this survey of 77 is large enough, but for the purpose of this thesis the sample size should be sufficient in order to provide a recommendation for Toyota's future social media strategy, which builds on the general opinion of brand-consumer interactions and the impact on brand equity. The data used for the recommendation is furthermore supported by the focus group interview.

Validity

When discussing validity Blumberg et al (2011) argues that it refers to the degree to which a study answers the specific concepts and measurements, the researcher are trying to measure and investigate. In this thesis the study addresses the research question described earlier and the challenges according to Facebook brand equity. One thing which can make the data biased are the demography; the high number of respondents from the capitol area. For a less biased result it is recommended that a more varied and equal sample of Facebook users is targeted, so that the respondents would vary more; residence and age.

Reliability

When discussing reliability it refers to which extent the study would produce the same results of repeated by another researcher (Blumberg et. al 2011). In order to increase the level of reliability for this thesis the survey was thoroughly pre-tested, using in-depth interviews of 4 people. However, as mentioned above, the high number of respondents from the same area could lead to some measurement error.

Non-response error

When using probability sampling as method it is very important to have a response rate as high as possible to ensure that the sample is representative. However, factors regarding non-response error still need to be taken into account when analyzing and using the results of the survey later in the thesis. The reasons why one would choose not to participate in the survey are many, which all have to be considered when analyzing the data. Some of the reasons could be lack of interest for the topic, non-availability or pure lack of interest in participating in any surveys. If a high number chooses not to

⁵ <http://thomasbigum.dk/2012/02/nye-danske-facebook-tal/>

participate, despite having received the survey, certain segments of the target group who shares the same characteristics which make them not want to participate in the survey. If missing certain segments of the target group it could lead to a biased representation, which in turn would lead to a biased result.

For the purpose of trying to reduce the non-respond rate as much as possible, three methods have been used. The first method utilized has already been mentioned earlier in the thesis, and is the chance of winning 2x2 movie tickets if completing the questionnaire. The second method utilized is informing the participants as much as possible about the survey and what it would be used for. This was done in order to help the respondents to better understand and thereby be more willing to complete the survey. The last method which was used in order to reduce the non-response rate was a call-back-strategy, which Blumberg et. al (2011) describes as the most effective method of decreasing the non-response rate. The call-back-strategy is utilized as a reminder for the individuals who have received the invitation to participate in the survey, but have yet to start or complete the questionnaire.

Structure

The most common way of gathering quantitative data is through a questionnaire, maybe because it is a fairly good way to reach a high number of respondents without using a large amount of time and resources and without any major complications. Furthermore, a well-organized, survey allows the researcher to correlate data and crosscheck for explanations which the researcher did not first anticipate (Blumberg et al. 2011). Despite the risk of bias, a well-structured online survey has the potential of giving insightful knowledge of the minds of the respondents. Blumberg et al. (2011) describes three different categories of measurement questions, which for the purpose of this thesis is used in order to structure the survey, so that the questions has a logical flow and a vast variety of respond alternatives from which the participants can choose from. The three categories of questions mentioned by Blumberg et al. (2011) are:

1. Administrative questions which are used to identify the respondent and deals with questions such as age, gender and residence.
2. Classification questions which determine the demographic variables of the respondents. This form of questions is often used to identify any potential patterns.
3. Target questions which compose the body of the questionnaire and are used as investigative purposes and for information relevant for this thesis.

All of the questions should request a conscious level of information and be undisguised as the research is not investigating any socially unacceptable topics or sensitive views which could prompt the participant to answer any of the questions (Blumberg et al. 2011).

In the end, the purpose of the survey is getting responses which are informative and useful in the pursuit of answering the research question. Thus the questions asked in the questionnaire should be asked in a manner which is easy to understand so that the respondent can answer in an accurate and adequate manner (Blumberg et al. 2011). When conducting the survey the risk of bias, other than already mentioned, is apparent as leading questions sometimes is asked because the researcher knows more about the research question than the participants of the survey. Thus, leaving out or including information that could hamper the respondents' ability to answer the questions adequately. Blumberg et al. (2011) further argues that it is of great importance to balance between generality and specificity in order to get valid and thorough answers. This balance is important because generally asked questions can result in a detachment between the respondents and the subject of the research. Contrastingly if questions are asked in a very specific manner it can be difficult to represent the general population.

Another important aspect when conducting the survey is the risk of being misunderstood by the participants of the survey. Thus, it is very important that the wording of the questions is thoroughly thought through. In order to minimize the risk of the respondents misunderstanding the questions Blumberg et al. (2011) presents 6 criteria which should be met. The criteria are presented below:

1. A question should be stated in a vocabulary commonly used by the target population
2. A question should not have multiple meanings.
3. A question should not contain unsupported, unfair or misleading assumptions.
4. A question should not contain confusing wording.
5. A question should be personalized in a valid and reliable way.
6. Adequate alternatives to answering a question should be provided.

If the six criteria presented are met, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the respondents understand and is able to answer the questions adequately. This should be the case for the survey conducted for the purpose of this thesis.

Presenting the survey

When constructing a survey it is important to be aware of the possible bias, such as the ones described above. Thus, all of the questions be must be examined in order to neglect words that have positive or negative meanings which could bias the result of the questionnaire. By that it will minimize that risk of

the participants being influenced in a certain way when answering the questions. In order to better understand the purpose of the survey and the different sections of questions the survey are presented more in-depth in the following section. Furthermore it should be noticed that the questionnaire is presented and analyzed according to the Facebook brand equity parameters. The survey utilized for the purpose of the thesis can be found in the appendix.

Before starting the actual research concerning interactive Facebook activities and Facebook brand equity parameters, some administrative questions are presented for the participants; age, gender, residence. Thus being able to examine if the sample population is diverse and secure that not all of the respondents are part of the same age, gender or residence segment.

In the next part of the survey the participants are asked questions regarding "liking"/following brands or companies on Facebook. They are asked how many brands they follow/"like" on Facebook and why they have chosen to do so. These questions are asked in order to investigate the underlying reasons of choosing to follow certain brands on Facebook. It can be argued that some of the reasoning behind choosing to follow certain brands is subconscious, but the question may still be able to uncover some knowledge to why consumers think they follow brands on Facebook.

After having answered and categorized what brand the respondents interact with the most, the participants are asked to answer and rate how they feel about different interactive Facebook activities. This is important in order to investigate how often the respondents engage in the different interactive Facebook activities and what general attitude they have towards them. Furthermore, these questions can be used to determine if there is any correlation between the attitude towards a certain interactive Facebook element and how often the respondents are using them. The results of this section of the survey can later be utilized to determine the most popular forms of interacting with brands in Facebook.

When having determined the general opinion of how people most likely want to interact with brands on Facebook and how popular it is to interact with brands, the more parameter specific questions are presented. Thus, covering the five parameters of the Facebook brand equity framework, conducted earlier in the thesis:

Loyalty

As argued by Aaker (1996) one of the best measures of loyalty, in terms of brand equity, is recommendations by one consumer to another. Thus, questions regarding loyalty are presented in to analyze how willing the participants, of the survey, are to recommend a brand to others after having interacted that brand on Facebook. This helps analyzing which of the interactive Facebook activities

have the biggest impact on loyalty, in terms of brand equity and if interacting with brands on Facebook impact loyalty at all.

Perceived quality

In order to examine which of the interactive Facebook activities have the biggest impact on perceived quality in terms of brand equity, the respondents were asked to answer questions regarding their feelings about having the opportunity to interact with brands on Facebook. When asking the respondents the above mentioned questions, the study hopes to uncover how consumers view companies and brands with an active Facebook presence opposed to the ones without one, and how this impacts perceived quality. The questions for investigating the impact on perceived quality are presented in order to gauge how consumers view one brand compared to a competitor, which according to Aaker (1996) is one of the best methods of measuring perceived quality, in the context of brand equity. In addition the respondents are asked to answer the question how important they think it is for a brand to have an active Facebook profile.

Associations

To investigate the two sub-parameters of associations, trust and brand personality, the participants were asked to indicate to what degree they feel communication from brands on Facebook are trustworthy and how important trust in general is when interacting with brands and companies on Facebook. This is important in order to analyze how important consumers rank trust when interacting with brands and companies on social media. Furthermore, it can help analyzing if consumers trust communication material on Facebook at all. Examining these factors will help determine how and how much associations, in terms of brand equity are impacted.

The second sub-parameter of associations in which the survey focuses on is brand personality. The respondents were asked to what extent they identify themselves with a given brand after engaging in one of the seven interactive Facebook activities chosen for this study. This will help examine how consumers identify with brands on Facebook and which of the interactive Facebook activities impacts brand personality and thereby associations, in terms of brand equity the most.

Brand awareness

In order to investigate how brand awareness is impacted by brand-consumer interaction on Facebook the participants were asked to rate the likelihood of remembering a brand the day after utilizing one of the seven interactive Facebook activities provided. All though, there are many levels of brand awareness the most important, for the purpose of this thesis, is top-of-mind and remembering a brand after interacting on Facebook in general.

Online experience

The last parameter from the earlier conducted Facebook brand equity framework, which is examined through the questionnaire are online experience, presented by Christodoulides (2006). The respondents were asked to answer how important they feel it is to have the opportunity to communicate and interact with brands and companies on Facebook. This is connected to the sub-parameter interaction/responsiveness. The questions are asked to get an insight of how important it is for consumers to interact and communicate with brands and companies and if it alters their view of the company or brand. Additionally it can help determine how important responsiveness from companies and brands, in terms of brand equity are to the consumers.

Focus group interview

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the focus group is conducted in order to supplement the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire. Focus group interviews are besides used when wanting to investigate the general opinion of new products or for the sake of this study, relatively new methods of brand-consumer interaction. The choice of implanting data, to this thesis, from a focus group interview is chosen as it can help provide insightful answers which can support and further explain the data obtained from the web-based survey. The goal of using a focus group as research method is to provide the analysis with insight and challenge preformed ideas and opinions of the participants, within the scope of this thesis. Furthermore it will provide the thesis with in-depth knowledge of consumer behavior and brand-consumer interactions on social media. In addition the researcher has the opportunity to ask more specific questions. However, some disadvantages must also be considered. The participants of the focus group have limited time to speak and discuss their thoughts and opinions, which can prove difficult to go into a deeper discussion within the limited time frame (Zaltman 2009).

Aside from being a complement to quantitative data, the focus group is also utilized to clarify potential flaws and limitations associated with the survey. In order to give the participants the best possible chance of discussing the themes it is crucial to plan and chose correct and open questions which incites to discussions that can be used later in the thesis. The interview is organized with its base in two models of the consumer journey conducted by two consulting companies, Mckinsey (2008) and Mindshare (2011)⁶. The two models is somewhat similar, with the model by Mindshare (2011) being the most online oriented of the two. Both of the models are divided into four steps that have helped organize the focus group interview:

1. Initial considerations – Seek

⁶ Appendix 3: Illustrations of the consumer journey

2. Evaluation – Involve
3. Moment of purchase – Act
4. Post purchase experience – Share⁷

Initial considerations – Seek

The first part of the focus group interview will take the point of departure in the first step of the consumer journey model, initial considerations/seek. In this step, the consumer searches for information, in stores, on search engines or social media. For the sake of this research the most interesting way of searching for information is through Facebook. The purpose of this part of the focus group interview is to shed light to what and how consumers uses Facebook in this part of the consumer journey.

Evaluation – Involve

In the second step of the consumer journey, the consumer evaluates the information obtained and starts to eliminate options, in the way to their final choice. In terms of Facebook interaction this is where the consumers get involved with a brand's or company's Facebook page and starts interacting beyond just "liking" the page. This brand-consumer interaction should then lead to the next step of the consumer journey, act, but only if the consumer evaluates the interaction to be adequate and satisfying.

Moment of Purchase – Act

The moment of purchase/Act are the third level of the consumer journey. This is the only step where the interactive Facebook activities are not relevant as there are no features, at the moment, which enables consumers to use Facebook as a purchasing platform. Thus, it can be argued that the step from involve to act can interpreted as brand equity generated through brand-consumer interactions on social media.

Post purchase experience – Share

The last step of the consumer journey is highly connected to loyalty as the consumer could be likely to share their post purchase experience, either by praising the brand or company or by criticizing them. McKinsey (2008) argues that this may be the most important step of the consumer journey as this is where consumers are deciding if they want to become loyal customers and go through the so-called loyalty loop⁸. By doing so, it will get the consumer faster through the decision process and will probably make the consumer to choose the same brand, company or product. This step of the consumer journey are used to get the participants of the focus group to discuss and share their feelings about sharing and

⁷ All of the questions used for the focus group interview can be seen in appendix 8: Focus group questions for guiding the interview.

⁸ Appendix 3: Illustrations of the consumer journey

evaluating brands and companies post purchase and if they use online media and social media in particular to do so.

Analysis

Before actually engaging in the discussion and analysis of the data, some considerations and clarification are provided.

The survey participants were asked to write and categorize the brand they thought they interacted with the most on Facebook. This was done in order to investigate if there were any industry specific patterns. Furthermore it showed that the most prevalently represented industries included Fashion; 34.5 % Other; 22.4 % and Entertainment; 17.2 %. More interesting for this thesis was that only 1.7 % or one of the participants answered that the brand they interacted with the most, on Facebook, could be categorized in the automotive industry. Both Charity and High Tech also scored low with respectively 1.7 % and 3.4 % of the respondents interacting the most with brands representing these industries. The last options, Food & Beverage and Travel, scored somewhat in the middle with 8.6 % and 10.3 %. It is possible that the low percentage of people interacting the most with brands and companies in the automotive industry may be explained by that automotive brands in Denmark are not that active on Facebook or that there are not as many automotive brands with an interactive Facebook page compared to the industries of Fashion and Entertainment. Thus, emphasizing the relevance of the sub-question concerning the case of Toyota.

Furthermore some unexpected bias occurred, when analyzing the survey-data. the participants who did not follow or “like” any brands’ or companies’ Facebook page are not allowed to answer the rest of the survey although they may have had interesting opinions of the interactive Facebook activities. Further survey flaws are presented in appendix 7.

The analysis of the obtained data from the survey and focus group interview will focus on the Facebook brand equity parameters and the interactive Facebook activities. In addition the analysis will try to shed light on how to maintain, build and/or improve Facebook brand equity, using the theories discussed earlier in the thesis. Ultimately, the analysis will lead to recommendations of how Toyota can enhance and optimize their Facebook presence in order to improve brand equity in Denmark.

General findings

Before presenting the more thorough analysis of the specific parameters a more general overview of the results of survey, focus group and Facebook behavior are presented and discussed. When analyzing the

results it is important to secure and mention that the respondents are within the target group and reasonable represented. The distribution of gender in the survey was 52 % men and 48 % women⁹. Also, the age distribution within the target group was fairly even represented. The geographical representation, however, was not as even as hoped, which could lead some bias, 72 % of the respondents answered that they have residence in Region Hovedstaden (incl. Bornholm). The same distribution was also applicable for the focus group. Two was women and three was men. The ages of the participants were 18, 21, 25, 27 and 30. As for the geographic distribution, one was from Region Sjælland, one was from Region Nordjylland and three was from Region Hovedstaden (incl. Bornholm)¹⁰. However, it should not generate any serious issues or bias of the results as all of the regions are represented in the survey and the cultural differences of the regions in Denmark are minimal. In addition it is important for the analysis and results that the respondents has an active Facebook profile as it is important to have a frame of reference when answering a survey (Blumberg et al. 2011). As mentioned earlier in the thesis this issue was eliminated by distributing the survey through Facebook.

“Liking” a brand’s/company’s Facebook page

When asking how many brands or companies the respondents “like” or follow on Facebook the majority answered that they “like” 1-3 brands, 36 %. Furthermore it is even distributed between the rest of the options provided as 21,3 % of the 75 “like” 4-6 brands, 11 respondents or 14,7 % “like” 7-10 brands and 24,6 “like” more than 10 brands on Facebook¹¹. The result of the focus group was somewhat similar as three out of five said they “like” 1-3 brands while the two remaining said they “like” more than 10.

Trying to analyze how important and valuable fans of brands on Facebook are to the specific brands, the concepts and theories by Belk (1998) are utilized. Belk (1998) argues that the consumers are purchasing and acquiring possessions for the purpose of both defining their identity as well as an subconscious purchase. This argument also applies to “liking” brands on Facebook as it showed that two of the participants actually “liked” more brands on Facebook, than first anticipated when asked to check their initial answer. Furthermore, Belk’s (1998) theory supports the notion that the consumers not always put that much thought into “liking” brands or companies on Facebook. When “liking” a brand’s Facebook page without much consideration it can be discussed how much value it actual provides the specific brand. However, it is argued that the brand will still appear as a representation of the consumer’s personality, even if the “like” is done without much consideration. In addition items purchased or acquired still have a role in creating an identity and personality externally (Belk 1998). This could be

⁹ Appendix 5: Survey data

¹⁰ Appendix 9: Focus group data and quotes

¹¹ Appendix 5: Survey data

why individuals typically chose to relate to people, possessions and brands which help define and improve their image and identity, outwardly. Thus, it can be assumed that, not only, does brands that consumers “like” on Facebook help define their image and identity but also conclude that the ones who “like” fewer brands may have put more consideration and heart into the brands compared to the Facebook users who “like” a larger number of brands. Furthermore, it can be argued that consumers who “like” fewer brands have a tighter connection to those brands and are more likely to think of these brands as extension of self, compared to consumers who like more brands on Facebook.

Brand-consumer interaction

As mentioned earlier “liking” is the most simple form of interacting with brands on Facebook and only the first step into more brand-consumer interactions, which is what is desired by brands on social media. The data of the survey shows that the more engaging the interactive Facebook activities are, the more infrequent the participating uses them. “Commenting”, which should be ranked as a fairly high engaging interactive Facebook element, 79.2 % of the respondents answered that they use this form of interaction once a month or less, compared to the less engaging interaction of “liking” a post whereas 58.3 percent answered they use this form once a month or less, leaving 41.7 % using liking a post once a week or more¹². Using the theory of made identity by Brown (2011) the brands which has the strongest connection to a consumers personality and made identity is the brands where the Facebook user choses to interact with the more engaging interactive Facebook activities. Consequently, it is apparent that, the more engaging elements are used less, which could mean that they are utilized with fewer brands. This further support the conclusion that consumers who interact with fewer brands have a tighter connection to these compared to consumers who interact with a large number of brands. The results also show that even if an individual “likes” a brand, further interaction is not, necessarily, implied. The focus group data also support these results as the general opinion is that people only interact with few brands at a time, even if they have “liked” more. Thus, raising the question of why people are becoming fans of brands on Facebook, just to forget them again. Both the survey and the focus group interview provide a variety for “liking” a brand and why it is so easy to forget the “liked” brand again. The reasons for becoming a fan, provided by the focus group interviewees, were somewhat similar ranging from wanting information over wanting to participate in a contest to “liking” a brand’s Facebook in order to have the opportunity to complaint. On the other hand the participants were more at odds when discussing, the reason for forgetting the brand quickly again. Kasper, 18, and Julie, 21, agreed that they thought the reason could be that the brand was not good enough to provide interesting content or did post it to rarely. The three others, Jonas, 25, Michelle, 27, and Frederik, 30, did somewhat agree that the

¹² Appendix 5: Survey data

reason was that they sometimes “liked” brands that they never really had intentions of interacting with other than trying to win a prize (participating in a contest). The survey shows that most of the respondents of the respondents “like” a brand just because they “like” it, 74.1 %. Contest participation, 24.1 % and search of information with future purchase in mind, 39.7 % were also popular reasons for “liking” a brand on Facebook¹³. The results of the survey further support the perception that the more engaging forms of interactions scores low. Only 6.9 percent answered that the reason for “liking” a brand was that “I wanted to participate in discussions and debates about the brand/company and/or its products”¹⁴. These results further shows, as mentioned earlier, that there are reason for brands and companies to re-evaluate their Facebook strategy and content as the real value comes with more engaging and interactive consumers (Svarre 2011). Based on the theory about digital tribalism as a community, in which the members shares interests and passions (Brown 2011), it can be concluded that the 74.1 % of the respondents who “like” a brand because they like the brand, in a sense and maybe subconscious chose to join a digital brand community. Even though it can seem somewhat ridiculously obvious that consumers who chose to “like” a brand on Facebook actually like the brand, it can be assumed that the brand in fact has achieved level of perceived quality and brand awareness in the mind of the consumer, and thereby on the way of building and/or improving valuable brand equity via social media.

The idea of collecting items in order to the sense of identity by Belk (1998) may help in explaining why some level of perceived quality is obtained only by “liking” a brand. While Facebook users choses to “like” brands for reasons more or less subconscious the brand is still brought into the collection of items which by the theory by Belk (1998) suggests that there is a sense of value and identity associated with the “liked” brand. Therefore, by liking a brand, no matter what reason, the fact has become a fan of the brand, and thereby added the brand to the collection of items, proposes that the consumer has achieved a more positive sense of self. Consequently implying that some level of perceived quality is associated with the brand, through “liking” a brand’s Facebook page. However, Grunig & Hunt (1984) argues that it is important to have focus on two-way symmetric relations, centered on dialogue and interaction. The argument is a vital point when building, improving and/or maintaining brand equity via social media. The reasoning behind is, that it is not enough to merely achieve brand awareness and perceived quality through a “like” on Facebook, as it is not engaging enough. Brands and companies need to use it as a building block and further develop toward more engaging interactions with consumers. The conclusion is supported by the thoughts of focus group participant, Michelle, 27. She argued that “liking” a brand if

¹³ Appendix 5: Survey data

¹⁴ Appendix 5: Survey data

really liking and wanting to interact with the brand, is only the first step towards a more engaging and interactive relationship. When asked the question why Michelle “likes” brands on Facebook she answered as follows: ‘I like brands on Facebook in order to find information and try to benefit from, for example contests or by getting special offers or deals.’ (Focus group 2014)¹⁵. These thoughts were supported by the rest of the focus group participants. In addition Eid & Trueman (2002) argues that it is of highly importance to have an interactive strategy when being present online. The need for interaction suggested by Grunig & Hunt (1984); Eid & Trueman (2002) and the focus group also supports the results of the survey regarding contests being one the most popular reasons for “liking” a brand. This form of dialogue, taking a simple form of interaction further, makes contests a viable and effective way of getting consumers to engage more, simultaneously with gathering “likes” and fans. Another successful way of engaging consumers is through valuable and unique content, which was also pointed out by the focus group and the survey as the second most popular reason for “liking” a brand on Facebook was to find information with future purchase in mind¹⁶. This can be interpreted as the respondents wanting to interact with the brand in to get valuable information and offers before acting and purchasing the brand. This is further supported by Rayport & Sviokla (1995) who point out the importance of information and how valuable it is in itself. However, something not covered by Rayport & Sviokla (1995) is a point stated by the focus group. All members of the focus group agreed that the information had to be unique and personalized in order to feel valuable and adequate to them.

Contrastingly to the more effective ways of acquiring fans and “likes” the word-of-mouth effect is more moderate as only 15.5 percent of the survey participants answered that they “like” a brand because a friend did so. While this is rather surprising some of the reason may be explained by the participants not understanding the option as it does not include family or acquaintances, but only friends, When that is said it does correlate with the data from the Focus group as the general feel was that is more annoying than intriguing when getting requests from friends to “like” brands among other things. On the other hand, the participants also agreed that the one situation when word-of-mouth, or more precisely E-word-of-mouth, has a positive effect is when a friend who owns or works for a brand request a “like”. Then all of the participants were more than willing to “like” and interact in other ways with the brand. This can partly be explained the increasing tendency which Cova & Cova (2002) earlier have argued. It is now the social connection to the brand instead of the actual object/item which is becoming most important. The importance of the social aspect connected to a brand can be explained by the fact that primal instinct of individuals want to be part of a community, and with new media this has become easier,

¹⁵ Appendix 9: Focus group data and quotes

¹⁶ Appendix 5: Survey data

online. In other words, social media sites such as Facebook has provided individuals with a platform where it is achieve the human desire of becoming a member of a community or tribe. However it can be discussed if the same value of belonging to a physical community compared to a digital community can be achieve Since the redal goal, as argued by Grunig & Hunt (1984), is to create two-way symmetric relations it is important, as mentioned earlier, to utilize the interactive Facebook element “liking” as a building block that encourage further and more engaging brand-consumer interactions.

As emphasized by Rayport and Sviokla (1995) and further supported by the focus group, it has shown that the content on a brand’s Facebook page is very important. Rayport & Sviokla (1995) argues that information has a value in itself; this notion can be taking a step further, as discussed in the focus group, content on a brand’s Facebook page, or online in general, needs to be relevant, new, interesting and personalized in order for the participants to want to follow brands online. Another element of how brand-consumer interactions occur on Facebook, which can show how consumers most often decide to interact with brands is the fact of how often they choses to engage in the different interactive Facebook activities.

The first observation, when looking at the results of the survey is that very few or almost none engages in any activities with brands on Facebook daily. Only “liking” a post has more than 3 respondents engaging in this activity daily, where 16.7 % or 12 respondents say that they “like” a post on a brand’s Facebook page daily. This may seem strange as it is high compared to “liking” a brands Facebook page, 3 respondents engages in this activity daily, but this is explained by the fact that you can “like” a Facebook page more than once. The activity that most participants of the survey in some level choses to engage in, is “liking” a post, where 88.9 % answers that they in some interval other than never engage in this activity. Coming in at second and third most probable activity which in some point is used is commenting a post, 61.1 % and participating in a contest, 59.3 %. This observation emphasizes earlier conclusions that the most popular interactive Facebook activities are the least engaging, as it does not take much thinking or time to engage in such a way. For example if comparing “commenting a post” and “writing a post”, 44 of 72 respondents said they at some point uses “commenting a post” while only 34 of 72 answered that they would write a post on a brands Facebook page. This again shows that consumers want to interact with brands and companies in ways that are easy and do not take much time or thinking as participating in an already going discussion is easier and less time consuming than starting it (the difference between “commenting a post” and “writing a post”. The interactive Facebook element that the fewest respondents answered they were likely to use more than never was video

interaction, where almost 65 % said they would never chose to use this activity¹⁷. This may be explained by three reasons, first of all it can be that not many brands choses to post videos themselves, which consumers can engage in. The second reason could be that the respondents feel that it is to engaging to start uploading videos themselves, and have misunderstood that video interaction should imply, “liking” and commenting to, but this should not be the case as it seems like the respondents are willing enough to engage in picture interaction. The last reason and maybe the most plausible together with the fact that not many brands chooses to upload videos on their Facebook page and consumers does not either, is the fact that the results of the survey also shows that the general attitude towards video interaction is somewhat negative as 33.3 % answered that they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with video interaction¹⁸. While the survey data provide some insight of which interactive Facebook activities are most popular, it is very important to note, that frequency and type of interaction are very correlated with the quality of the content on a brands Facebook page. This notion was of generally opinion of the focus group, but especially emphasized by one of the participants; Julie, 21. Julie argued as followed when asked how important the quality of the content on a brand’s Facebook page:

I think that the content is very important as no one wants to “like” or spend time on a Facebook page if the content is shit. But if the content is good and interesting it would make me want to spend more time and interact more often on the Facebook page. (Focus group, 2014)¹⁹

The 7 interactive Facebook activities

In order to take a deeper look of how Facebook users generally think of the 7 interactive Facebook activities provided in the survey, Figure 1 are presented.

It can be argued that integrating the principles and characteristics of U-space to a brand’s marketing strategy it will provide brands and companies with the opportunity of offering consumers value that is capable of exceeding the value of traditional marketing (Watson 2002). This can be a part of the explanation of why it is “liking” (both Facebook pages and posts) number 1, contest participating number 2 and commenting posts that are the ones which the respondents are most satisfied with, as seen in fig. 1. Furthermore these activities are also the most popular reasons for becoming a fan of brand on Facebook, shown and discussed earlier in the thesis. For example by providing consumers with the opportunity of commenting and posts and participating in contests on a Facebook page it provides the consumer with a more interactive and engaging way of communicating with a brand, combined with a

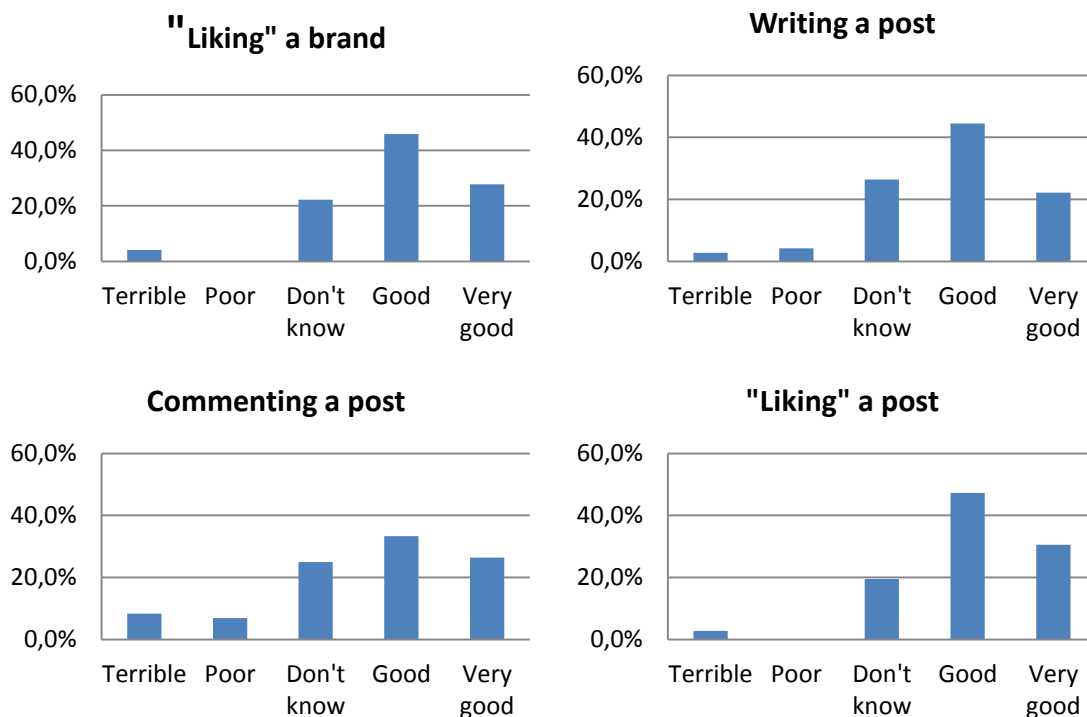
¹⁷ Appendix 5: Survey data

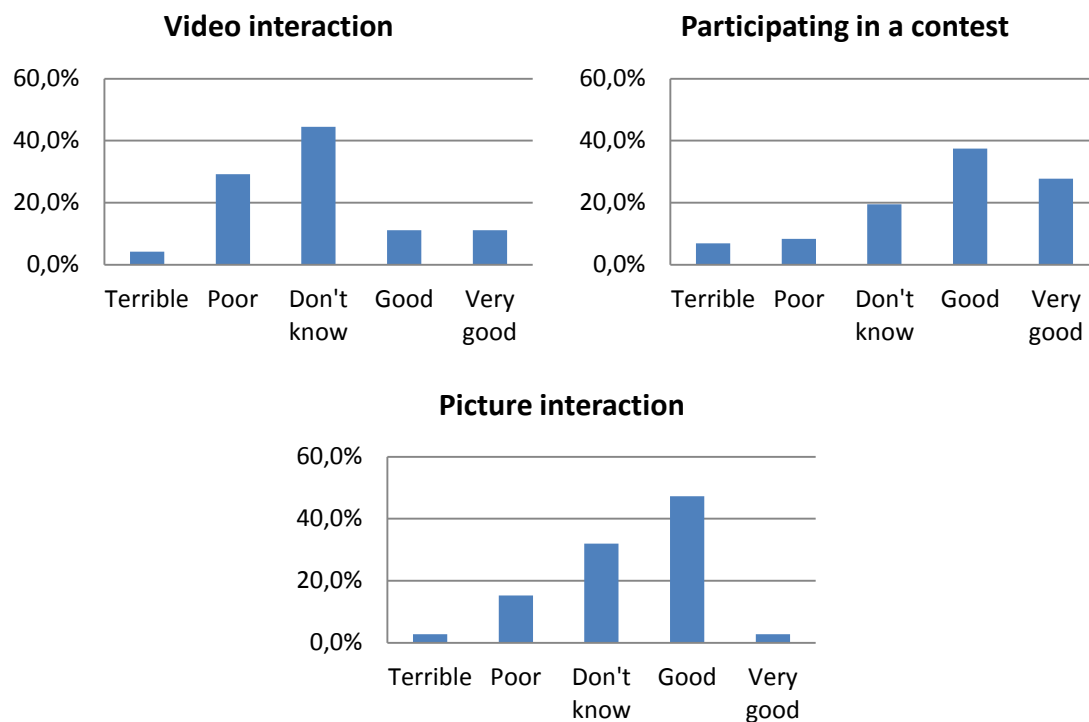
¹⁸ Appendix 5: Survey data

¹⁹ Appendix 9: Focus group data and quotes

feel of omnipresence and personalization when interacting with brands on Facebook. In addition it can be seen, in fig. 1, that the most unliked interactive Facebook element is video interaction, which has already been covered earlier in the thesis. One tricky part of the results is the fact that many respondents has chosen the option, “don’t know” which may be explained by that the respondents in this form of Facebook activity frequently enough to have an opinion. This pattern has the potential of its own analysis. However, this will be left as a recommendation for future studies as it is outside of the purpose of this thesis.

Figure 1 General opinion of the interactive Facebook activities





Source: Survey data

Analysis of the specific Facebook brand equity parameters

Now that the general findings of how consumers like to interact with brands and companies on Facebook has been presented and analyzed a more specific discussion and analysis of the Facebook brand equity parameters will be presented.

Loyalty

As Aaker (1996) argues, one of the best ways of achieving and measuring loyalty is through recommendations. Thus this aspect of the parameter is a very important to analyze and discuss. From the survey it is found that the respondents are not that keen of recommending brands to other on Facebook as 44.4 percent answered that they have never recommended a brands Facebook page to others. However, 50 percent answered, they had at least done it a few times, while 5.6 of the participants had recommended a brand through Facebook 7-10 times²⁰. The results of the focus group is of similar fashion as the majority said that they, not really uses Facebook as a platform for recommending brands, but they would do it in the “real” world instead.

²⁰ Appendix 5: Survey data

The digital tribe described by Brown (2011) and the tribe of the modern society presented by Cova & Cova (2002) both describes a group of people who shares the same interests, hobbies and passions. Thus it can be argued, that the Facebook users who chose to recommend brands on Facebook will do it to a group of relevant peers who shares the same interests, which can be argued symbolizes their belonging to a modern digital tribe. Taking the analysis a step further, Belk's (1988) ideas of giving away possessions as a method of extending one's self to others has is very useful. Combining the theory of Belk (1988) with the ideas and thoughts by Cova & Cova (2002) and Brown (2011) it can be argued that Facebook users uses the activity of recommending brands on Facebook as a tool to share a part of their personality and identity to others in their digital tribe. Thus, giving the consumers a sense of control and sense of enhancing their own identity. These positive effects of recommendation could be why recommending a brand of Facebook impacts loyalty of the fans positively. The positive effect on the made identity will then further encourage the consumers, maybe subconscious, to further interact with the brand, and thereby continuously associate with the brand, which ultimately will lead to loyalty to the specific brand.

Another aspect of loyalty which Belk's (1988) theory about handing over possessions in order to extend oneself is the fact that the focus group participants somewhat agreed that they had no problem sharing thoughts about and recommending brands publicly. Only one participant said that he would rather send a private message, than publicly recommending a brand to his friends. By using the theory of Belk (1988) it may explain, that persons who do not feel comfortable by recommending brands publicly, are nor comfortable extending their identity publicly. While discussing these issues, further findings surfaced as the discussion lead to agreeing that the participants would rather comment on a post from a friend asking what brand he/she should chose compared to just recommending a brand publicly.

Furthermore it can be argued that E-word-of-mouth can be a powerful tool to achieve loyalty from the consumers. The recommendations coming through Facebook are taking place as result of both Facebook being an easy-using forum for recommending brands but also solely by interacting with brands on Facebook as friends will see some of the interactions and should interpret it as some form of recommendation. This shows that E-word-of-mouth possibly can be an effective method of achieving loyalty through recommendation on Facebook. However, this conclusion contradicts earlier findings about E-word-of-mouth, describe earlier in the thesis, which implies a need of being critical when using recommendation as a measure for loyalty.

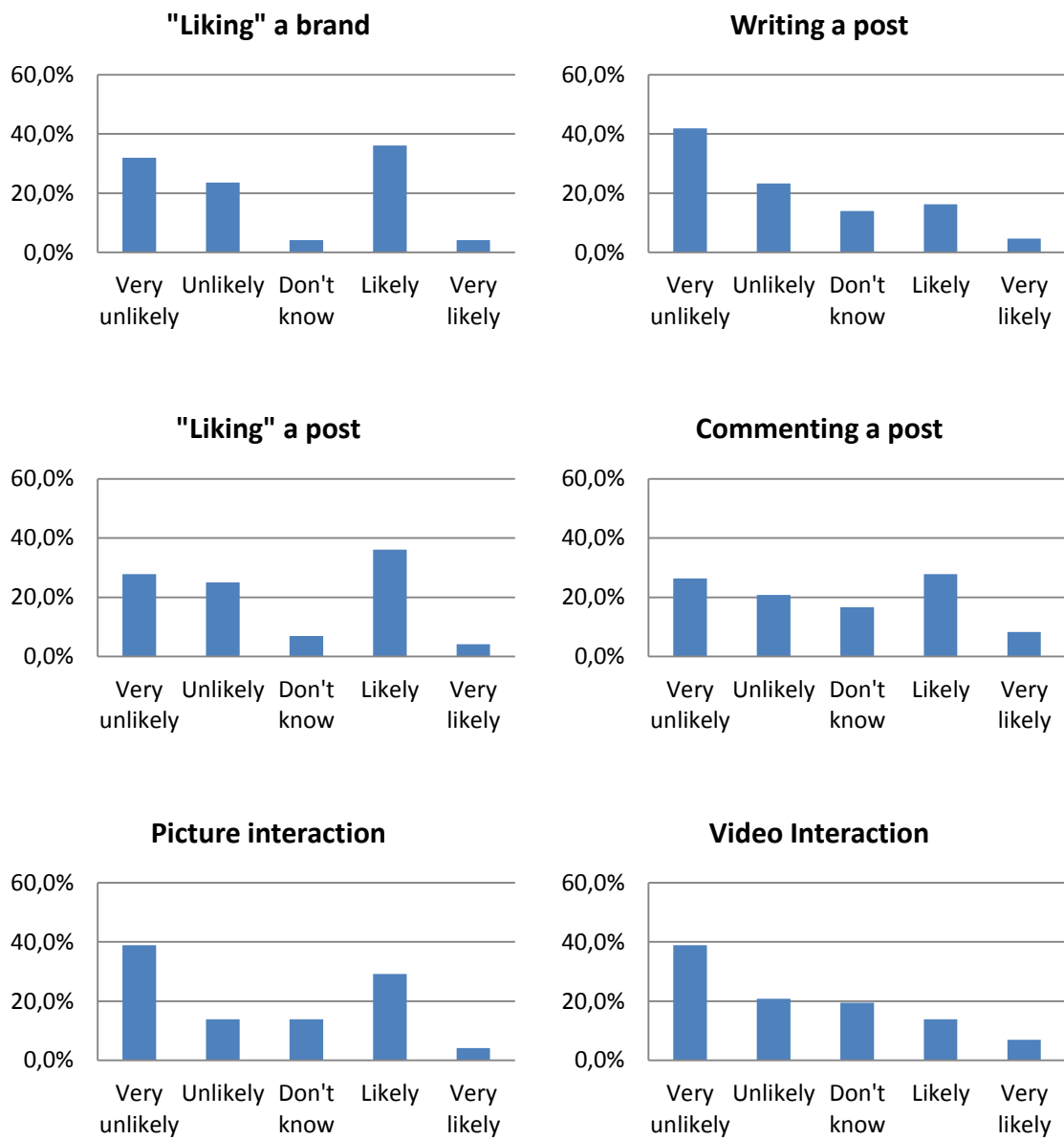
People generally choose to associate themselves with brands and companies that they want others to compare and associate them with (Fournier 1998). Using this idea it can be reasoned that through the

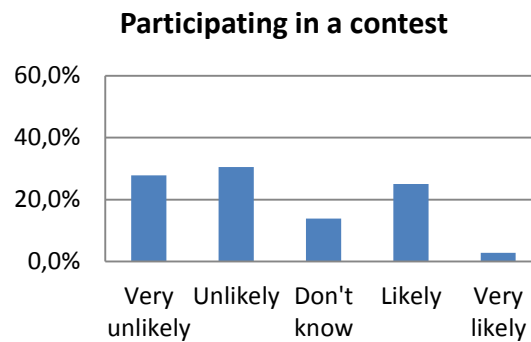
activity of recommending brands to others on Facebook, consumers are sharing their identity in a way the want to be portrayed to others. Using Hooper's (2011) thoughts of storytelling, this can be viewed as a way for the consumer to tell a story through a brand. Returning to the theories of tribes by Brown (2011) and Cova & Cova (2002) it can be concluded that through the urge of wanting others to like one's story, or brand, the consumer are in one sense asking others to be a part of their digital tribe through the digital platform of Facebook.

While having shown a positive correlation between recommendations of Facebook and loyalty it is also necessary to investigate which of the seven interactive Facebook activities that create the most loyalty and why, in the mind of the consumers. To do so Figure 2 shows the likelihood of Facebook user wanting to recommend a brands Facebook page after having engaged in the different interactive Facebook activities. As seen in fig. 2 the survey participants are most likely to recommend a brand to others after having "liked" a brand's Facebook page, commented a post or "liked" a post, whereas video interaction again has the lowest score of only 20.8 % being likely or very likely to recommending a brand after engaging in the activity of video interaction. By having more control over one's possessions the more they feel that the possessions are a central and vital part of one's sense of self (Belk 1988). This can help understand why commenting is one of the top scorers of the probability of recommending a brand, and by that also their loyalty towards a brand. For example, when commenting on a brand's Facebook page it can be assumed that the person has taken a lot of time doing so, and are through the activity using a high level of commitment in order to being heard, and by that taking control. Since the sense of control is relatively high, the centralization of the brand as a sense of self will also increase, consequently raising the likelihood of recommending the brand, and thereby improving loyalty towards the brand.

The general view of the Facebook activities having a positive effect on loyalty seems somewhat positive. Despite the focus group disagreeing with "liking" a brand's Facebook page having a direct impact of loyalty, the fig. 2 shows that the survey participants generally feels that the simple task of "liking" a brand's Facebook does have a positive effect on the chances of recommending a brand to others, and by that also loyalty. Zaltman's (2009) thoughts could help explain the conflict between the focus group data and the survey data as he would argue that 95 % of all consumer behavior happens subconsciously, which could explain why the answers differs.

Figure 2 Loyalty; likelihood of recommending a brand to others via Facebook





Source: Survey data

Perceived quality

In this section a deeper look into how the interactive Facebook activities impact the Facebook brand equity parameter of perceived quality will be presented. Furthermore, it will be discussed and analyzed if brands in fact need to be actively present on Facebook in order to being considered a leading brand.

In order to determine how much Facebook can impact perceived quality, a closer look into how important consumers think a brand's presence on Facebook are, is necessary. From the survey data it is very clear that the respondents feel it is important or very important for a brand to be actively present on social media in order to be considered a leading and popular brand. Only 18 percent answered that it was less important or not important at all, while almost 70 percent answered that it is important or very important for brands to be present actively on Facebook if wanting to be looked upon as leading brand. Again, the focus group somewhat agreed with the survey data, although the general feel was that it was only important if the content and information available was interesting and unique. These aspects of the results, suggests that there is a great upside of having an active Facebook page, if the content and information available are of high quality. Thus, stating that an active Facebook presence with the right content could provide the consumers with additional value. This is another demonstration of how interesting content and information can be a source of value to consumers in today's virtual marketing paradigm (Rayport and Sviokla 1995). Therefore it can be concluded that the content of the Facebook page is as important if not more important than the actual Facebook presence itself, for the impact of perceived quality, and thereby brand equity.

To understand why Facebook users seems to think that a brand without an active Facebook presence cannot be seen as a leading brand compared to brands with and active Facebook page, Watson (2002) provides helpful theories and thoughts. Watson (2002) argues that brands and companies need to incorporate a sense of ubiquity and omnipresence in to their communication strategy in order to

sustainable have success and be looked upon as a leading and popular brand. This is further emphasized by the focus group, which agreed that it is a given that almost all brands have an active Facebook profile. This notion suggests that brands and companies without an active Facebook presence will be regarded as unpopular and unserious, in the view of the consumers, as it is expected of all brands and companies to be active on social media.

Furthermore it is interesting to take a look at the discussion and theory concerning brand communities and why people join them by Fournier (2009). First of all it is argued that the most stable and successful brand community is that of a developed web and without this web a brand community would probably not be able to exist (Fournier 2009). Furthermore, Fournier (2009) argues that some of the most successful companies in the world have implemented brand communities in to their marketing strategy, in order to foster strong passions and interests surrounding their brands and social links. It can be reasoned that Facebook can be the web in a brand community, as it is built around interactions and relations between fan and fan as well as fan and brand. Thus, when using the principles of Fournier (2009) emphasizing that brands need to have an active Facebook page in order to being taken serious and further highlights the importance of having an interactive and engaging social media strategy, which provides value to the consumers through great content.

When further investigating perceived quality and its sub-parameters it is necessary to hold the brand up against other brands, which can be categorized in the same industry (Aaker 1996). The data of the survey in this matter has a very divided result as the 48.6 % both answered yes and no when asked if they had a more positive attitude towards brands and companies with an active Facebook page compared to others in the same industry who do not²¹. Consequently it can be concluded that the respondents is very split, and it is therefore hard to conclude anything from this part of the survey data. With that in mind the discussion of brands with an active Facebook page compared to the ones without will take its point of departure in the focus group interview. When asking the participants of the focus group whether or not a brand with a Facebook presence would be chosen over a competitor without any Facebook activity that it depends. The overall conclusion of the participants was that there can be some advantages in terms of being selected over a competitor because of Facebook activities, but it should be by valuable content which ultimately could improve the perceived quality of the brand. Thus, it emphasizes the points made earlier in this thesis that it can be argued that it is the activities and content on a brand's Facebook page rather than the Facebook presence itself that impacts how consumers view the perceived quality of a brand. For example the content provided by a brand on Facebook should

²¹ Appendix 5: Survey data

provide their followers with an element of importance, engagement, innovation or a special deal in order to alter the view of perceived quality, especially in a high involvement and long purchasing process of the automotive industry. The request for a more engaging and innovative way of interacting with brands, can in part be explained by the reasoning, that there have to be some level of co-creation between brand and consumer in order to increase the perceived quality (Putnam et al. 1996). Furthermore, from the data and the theories by Putnam et al. (1996) it can be concluded that the information and content provided on a Facebook page will have greater impact on the consumers' purchasing behavior and perceived quality if there is already built a sound foundation for a strong and sustainable relation and if it has an element of personalization and co-creation. The arguments by Louro and Cunha (2001) stating the importance of the brand being centered around the consumers and creating an ongoing and open dialogue which is open also helps conclude that a brand's or company's Facebook activities need to be a two-way communication that also gives the consumer an opportunity to co-create the brand to better improve perceived quality, and therefore brand equity.

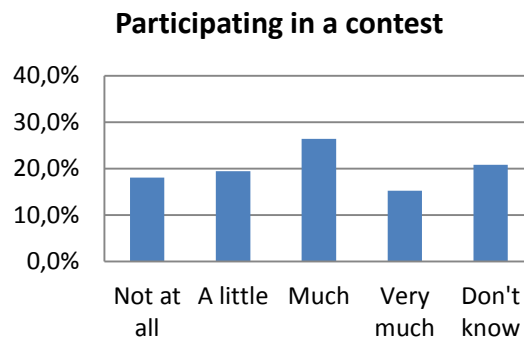
By analyzing the results of the survey data and focus group interview it can be generalized that having a Facebook presence is important and has a positive effect on perceived quality. However in order to fully understand the underlying aspects of what it is that generates this positive feeling for brands being present on Facebook, an analyze of which interactive Facebook activities impact perceived quality the most is provided underneath. To get a clear overview, figure 3 is presented below featuring the answers of each interactive Facebook activity.

Overall it can be seen that most of the interactive Facebook activities has some positive effect on perceived quality, with writing posts and commenting being the most impactful, with respectively 55.6 % and 47.5 % having a more positive view²². Furthermore, the least impactful activities are "liking" brands and posts. Thus concluding that the most successful way of increasing perceived quality is through posts and commenting which can be explained by the Facebook user feeling it gets additional value by participating in a discussion or starting one, and by that obtaining valuable information and content by other fans and the brand itself.

²² The percentage was calculated by adding the two most positive choices: "Much" and "Very much".

Figure 3 Perceived quality; a more positive attitude toward a brand on Facebook





Source: Survey data

Associations

In this section of the analysis a deeper understanding of how Facebook activities impact associations and the two sub-parameters, brand personality and trust are provided through discussions and analysis of the data obtained from both the web-based survey and the focus group interview.

In order to dissect if Facebook activities have an impact on associations, it is necessary to look at brand personality and whether or not the focus group and survey respondents feel that the brands they interact with on Facebook can be seen as a reflection of themselves. Fournier (1998) argues that people usually like and purchase brands that they feel, in some way, represents who they want to be as a person, as well as how they want to be looked upon by others. If applying this thought to the world of Facebook, it can be reasoned that this is also applicable for the brands people interact with on Facebook, this notion also supports the idea that people, even if they do not know it, are still “liking” brands on Facebook they feel they can relate to and portrays their identity in a positive manner. Building on these observations and the data from the focus group it can be concluded that the type of brands Facebook users interact with says a lot about them as people. A good example is an answer from the focus group interview. Kasper, 18, told that especially “liking” brands which are connected to fashion and what is modern says a lot about a person, because people have a lot of pre-determined ideas of other people:

“I think that people is very observant on which brands they “like” on Facebook in order to look good and cool in front of their friends. For example if I “liked” or commented on a negatively seen brand’s Facebook page (read. among friends) that I loved their clothe, then my friends would give me all kind of shit and look crooked at me, the next day at school” (Focus Group 2014)²³

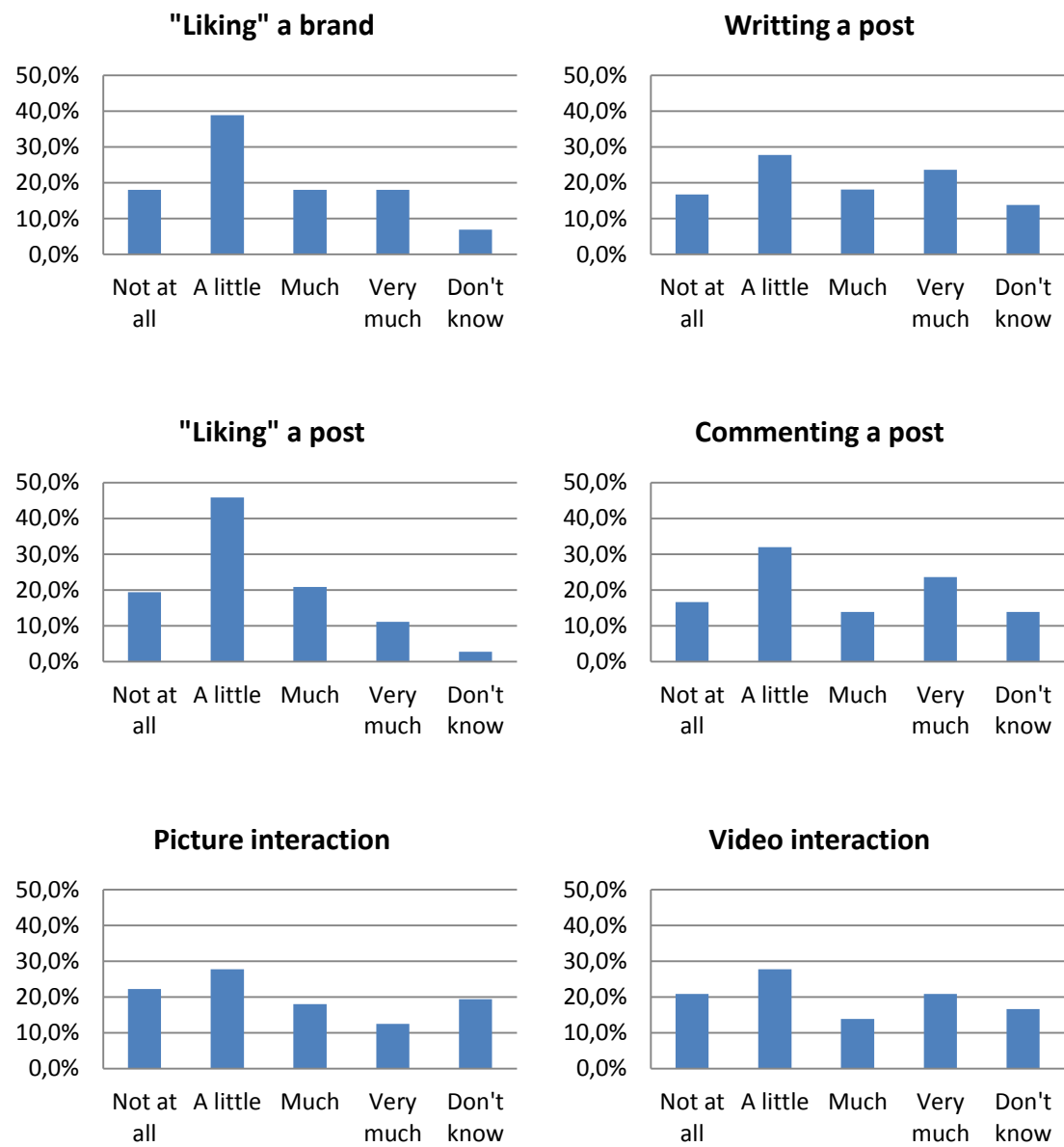
²³ Appendix 9: Focus group data and quotes

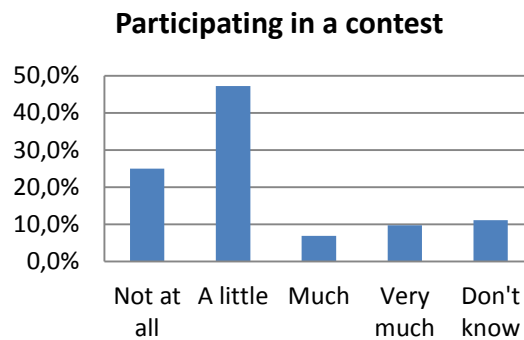
This argument was in some sense agreed by the other participants of the survey, though in a limited way, as they said that they agreed but not in such an aggressive sense. Thus, it should be taken into account that the statement was pointed out by the youngest participant of the group. But it still supports the argument that interacting with brands on Facebook sends a signal of how consumers want to be portrayed and how others perceive their personality. This can also help the consumers of figuring out what personalities are associated with the specific brands. Furthermore the concept of made identity by Brown (2011) can be useful in further explaining why brands that consumers interact with on Facebook can be seen as an element of brand personality. Using the concepts and principles of made identity, described earlier in the thesis, it can be assumed that when Facebook users choose to interact with brands on Facebook it is a way of building and forming their made identity.

In order to investigate which of the interactive Facebook activities lead to the most impact on associations, the survey participants were asked to answer, to what the degree they identified themselves with a brand after having engaged in the different interactive Facebook activities. From figure 4 it can be seen that writing a post and commenting are the activities where the respondents can most identify themselves with the brand afterwards. This can be due to the fact that this is the two most engaging activities and the two that take most effort. Consequently it can be assumed that consumers that take the time to write post or comment on a brand's wall is very committed to the brand, and can therefore identify themselves with the brand. In addition, Belk's (1998) ideas concerning peoples association to brands that help portray identities as they wish to, can also help explain why it is writing a post and commenting that are the most successful activities in order to improve associations. It can be assumed that consumers that engage in one of the two activities are very interested in the brand and hold it very closely to their sense of self, and by that identifying themselves with the brand. Furthermore if the brand is very central to the Facebook user's sense of self then it can in turn be reasoned that their post or comment can provide a link to their perceived identity and then the personality of the brand.

Furthermore the focus group discussed if it was important to know the perceived personalities of others who interact with a brand. They agreed that while in some occasions there can be a situation where knowing what other fans represent can impact the decision of whether or not to interact with a brand, it must be assumed that everyone who interacts with the brand has something in common. This in turn would then negate the impact of knowing the made identity of other fans. The concept of tribalism, discussed earlier, by Cova & Cova (2002) may explain some part of the statement as they point out that tribes are a gathering of people that shares the same passions and interests. Since the shared passion or interest in the world of Facebook is about the brand it can also be reasoned that this idea by Cova & Cova (2002) applies to digital tribes on Facebook.

Figure 4 Associations; identification through brands

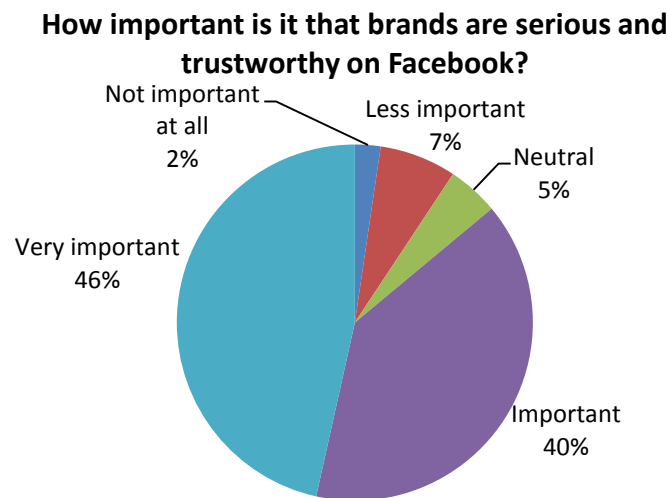




Source: Survey data

Another aspect of associations is trust, and while the aspect of identifying oneself with brands and brand personality is strong elements of associations the topic of trust also impacts the brand-as-person aspect of associations. Trust is a difficult topic to define as there are many interpretations of the word, depending what situation there is talked about. For example, in a context of online shopping the consumer has to trust that the internet site is secure and that the company will not share sensitive information such as credit card number in order to complete the transaction. While Facebook users are not in the same situation when interacting with brands on Facebook the data from the survey shows that trust is still a very important factor in brand-consumer interactions of Facebook. Figure 5 shows that 86 percent of the respondents think that it is important or very important that the content and information in which is posted on a brand's Facebook page is serious and trustworthy. While it is not specifically pointed out, in the discussion about tribalism, it can be assumed from the theories presented that trust is an integral part of building a successful tribe or community. Since it can be assumed that trust is an important part of building a tribe and that tribalism is important in order to understand how to build and/or improve brand equity through Facebook, it can be concluded that trust also has to be a vital part of a successful brand equity building Facebook strategy. The focus group supports the conclusion and especially emphasizes the aspect of trust as the agreed that without trusting the brand with information, which can be seen on many Facebook profiles, the idea of an interactive relationship would have no value for them, consequently lowering the chance of building and/or maintaining brand equity.

Figure 5 Associations; trust in a brand-consumer relationship on Facebook



Source: Survey data

Brand awareness

In this section it is analyzed how the different activities on Facebook impact the fourth parameter of the Facebook brand equity framework, brand awareness. The analysis will have its focus on how likely the consumers are to remembering a brand.

Brand awareness is an integral part of brand equity which can have impact on the consumer journey and especially the part of journey of initial considerations – seek and moment of purchase – act is very likely to be affected by brand awareness. In addition, Loyalty is another aspect which is very likely to be affected by brand awareness, and thereby also brand equity (Aaker, 1996). In order to investigate which of the interactive Facebook activities that has the most impact when wanting to increase brand awareness through interactions on Facebook, figure 6 is presented below. The data presented in figure 6 shows that the general feel is the more engaging and time consuming interactive Facebook. This is no surprise as these interactions with a brand should, in some way, impact brand awareness as the consumers will be heavily exposed to brand names and logos and is taking time to consider a subject concerning the brand. Furthermore as concluded earlier, it can be hard for the consumers to remember all of the brands they have “liked” on Facebook.

The focus group supported the survey results, stating that the impact on brand awareness is biggest with the one or two brands which the individual interact with the most, and has minimal impact on the brands which is not interacted with at the moment. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the consumers do not by

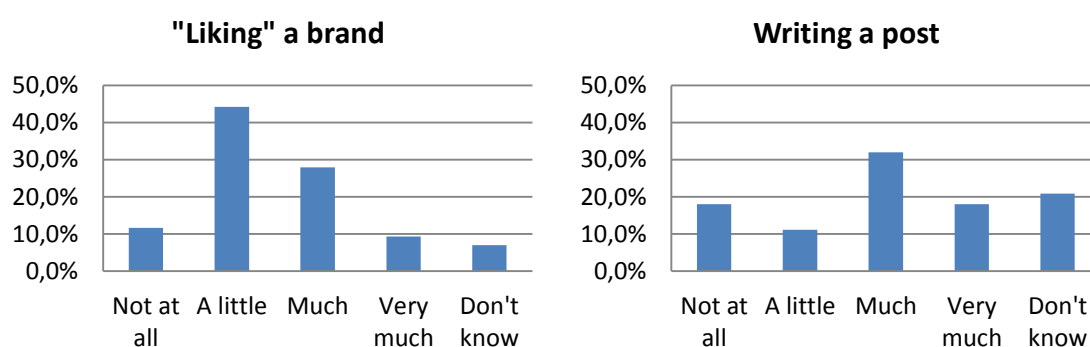
themselves no that their brand awareness is impacted, as some of the brand awareness that is a result of brand-consumers interactions on Facebook are happening below the level of awareness or, in other words, subconsciously. The reasoning has its roots in the ideas and theory of Chartrand (2005) who claims that 2/3 of the actions between consumers and brands are happening below the level of awareness. By using Chartrand's (2005) theory and ideas of neuromarketing and subconscious consumer behavior it can be argued that the impact on the respondent's likelihood of remembering a brand represents the outcome of an activity, thus also the interactive Facebook activities. Despite the somewhat negative attitude towards the effect of Facebook activities, in terms of impacting brand awareness, the focus group still agreed that, if the overall content is engaging, interesting, innovative and unique then it could have some impact on the brand awareness. Furthermore the participants of the focus group concluded that they did not think it was the simple act of "liking" that could impact brand awareness but instead the future interaction and dialogue that generally takes place post "liking" a brand's Facebook page. Consequently concluding that it is uncertain if "liking" a brand's Facebook page, in fact, impacts brand awareness. Additionally stating that whether or not "liking" a brand on Facebook does impact brand awareness it is very dependent on the specific situation, which is further supported by Chartrand (2005).

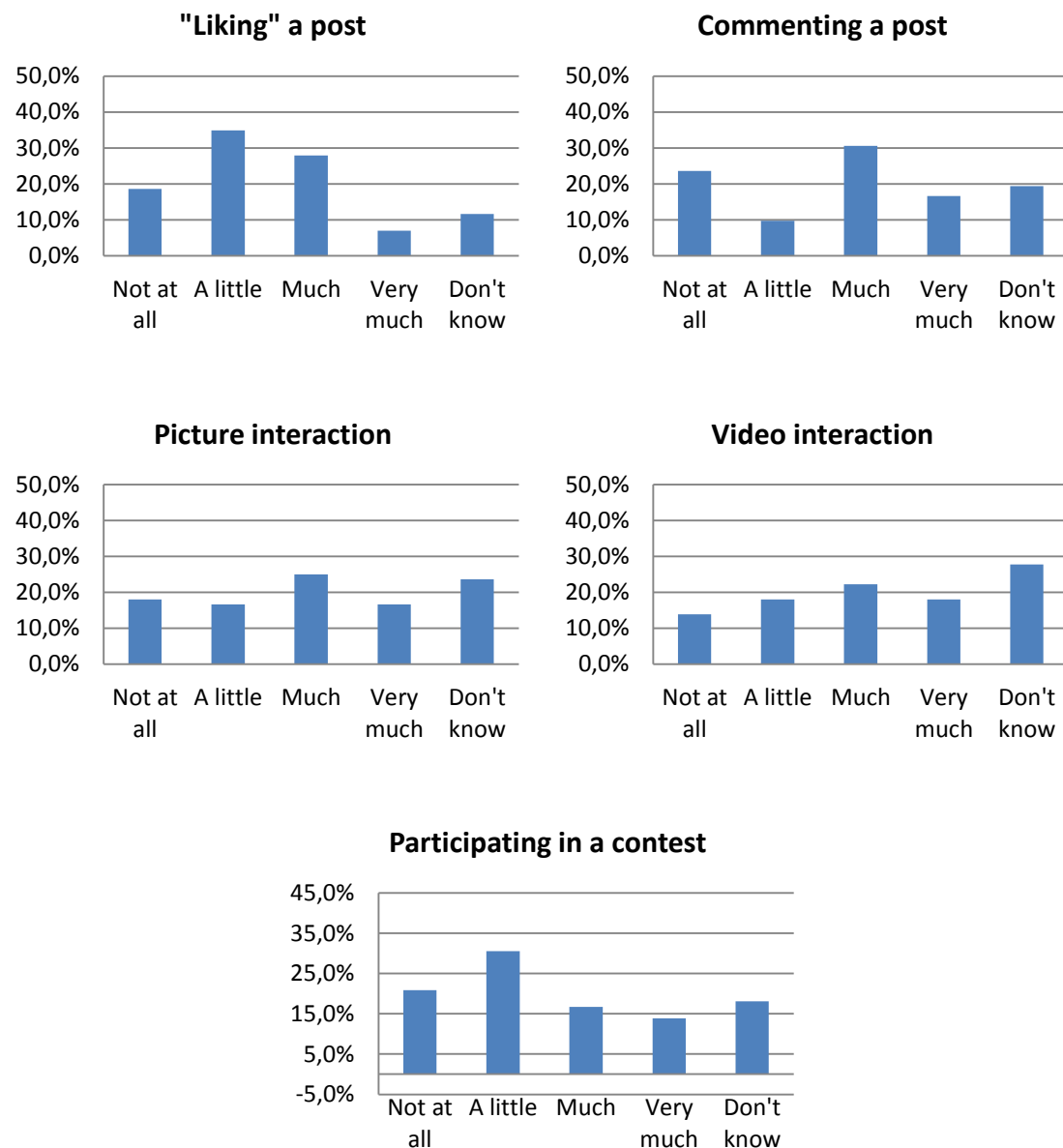
In figure 6 it can be seen that the act of "liking" a brand, "liking" a post and contest participation are the activities which consumers least remember the brand the day after, 55.8 %, 53.5 % and 51,4 % respectively stated that they did not at all or just a little remember the brand after engaging in those activities. This can be explained by the earlier stated observations of the focus group, that people may participate in contests without even knowing the brand there is distributing the contest. It is also shown that the acts which has the most impact of brand awareness is writing a post and commenting a post, which 50 % and 47,2 % said that they would remember the brand the day after, after having written a post or commented a post. It can be reasoned that the reason the two activities that have the biggest impact on brand awareness is writing a post and commenting a post, is due to the fact that, as previously mentioned, the two activities that takes the most effort and commitment. Thus concluding, if a Facebook user takes time to write a post a comment concerning a brand, it can be assumed that he/she are more likely to recall the interaction, and thereby also the brand the day after.

Two Facebook activities which the survey participants scored in the middle of remembering a brand the day after, is picture- and video interactions. These activities were highlighted by the focus group as interactive Facebook activities which could potentially have great impact on brand awareness. A lot of examples were discussed in the focus group but the general opinion was that if having seen a funny picture or video concerning the brand then it would be impact brand awareness. Further they agreed that

visual messages are easier to remember than text, which in turn will argue that picture and video interactions are good Facebook activities in the sense of impacting brand awareness. Why exactly visual messages which are funny has such a big impact on brand awareness can in part be explained by the discussion of corporate branding, and the focus on creating emotions that are tied to the brand and are capable attracting and retaining customers (Morsing 2002). In addition, taking the point of departure in Fournier's (2005) work on brand representing a sense of self it can be reasoned that consumers wanting to interact with funny pictures and videos signals that they are associating to the humor of the picture or video. Furthermore it can be assumed that this would also apply if the video or picture triggered other emotions than amusement. Utilizing the concepts and principles of tribalism by Cova & Cova (2002) it can further help explain why emotional pictures and videos presented to a digital tribe are a good way of impacting brand awareness. For example if a picture or video triggers strong emotions it will in turn create a stronger bond between the Facebook user and the brand. Thus, showing the importance of triggering strong emotions in the consumer, if wanting to improve brand awareness, through picture- and video interactions. Cova & Cova (2002) may argue that a solid bond being created is solely between one consumer and another rather than between a consumer and a brand or company, it can be argued that, in the context of Facebook the bond are also strengthening the brand community as a whole. As argued by Fournier (2009) strengthening brand communities through webs such as Facebook will in most situations improve the way consumers perceive a brand. Thus it can lastly be concluded that through strong emotions, which is easily triggered through pictures and videos, the bond between consumer and brand is strengthened, consequently impacting brand awareness and brand equity.

Figure 6 Brand awareness; remembering a brand the next day





Source: Survey data

Online experience

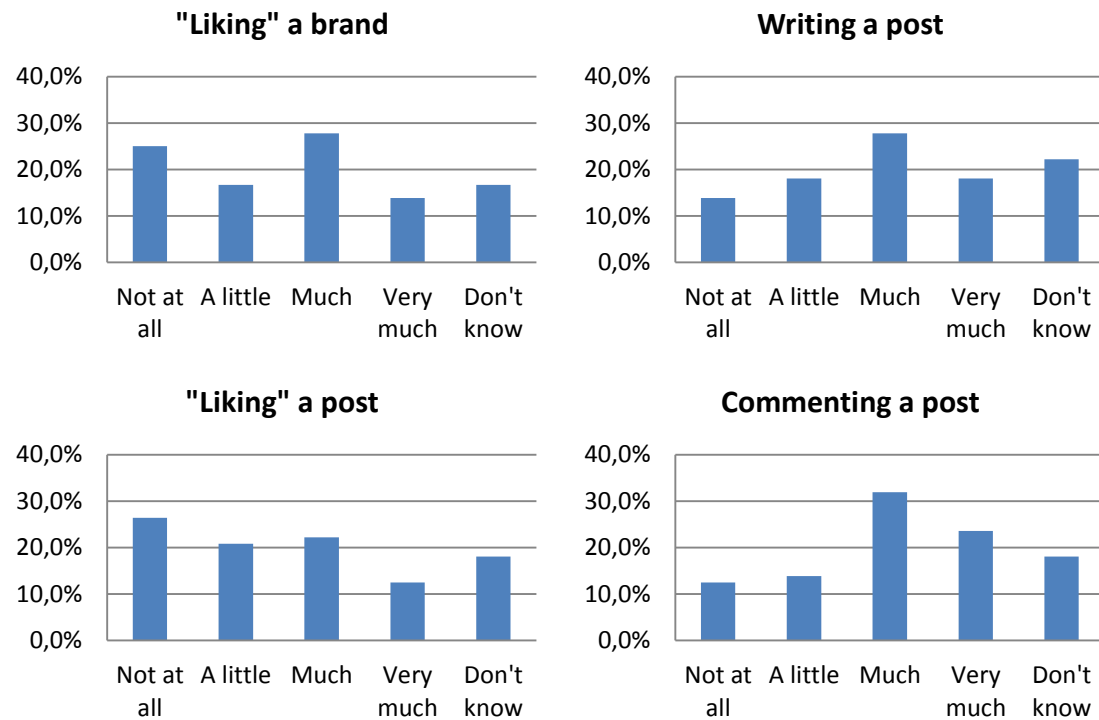
In this section of the analysis a deeper understanding of how and which interactive Facebook activities are impacting Online experience and the sub-parameters of emotional connection, responsiveness and interaction. In order to investigate these concerns, precise questions about emotional connection were presented to the survey participants and focus group, whereas the analysis concerning responsiveness and interaction is based on general opinion obtained throughout the survey data and focus group interview.

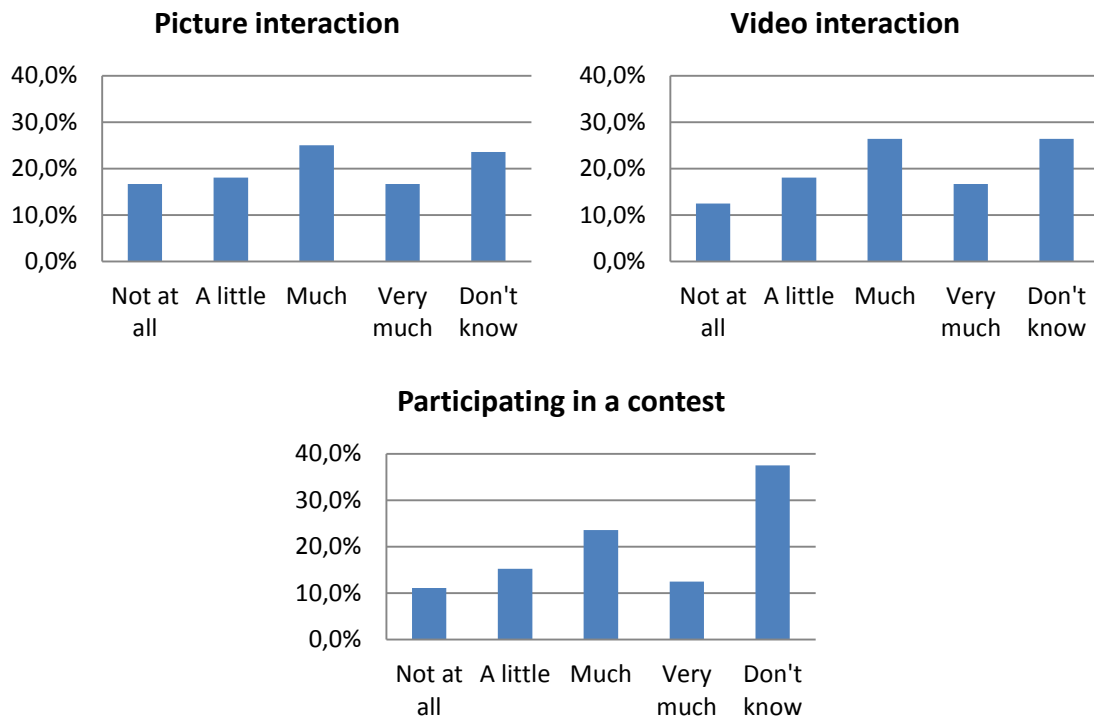
In terms of having an emotional connection to a brand after having engaged in one of the seven interactive Facebook activities, figure 7, shows that the act of commenting a post has the highest percentage, 55.5 %, of respondents answering that they feel much or very much connected with the brand. Writing a post comes in at a close second with 45.8 % answering that they feel much or very much connected to the brand after having written a post. Once again the focus group only partly agree as they states that they also feel that you would feel more connected to a brand after having written or commented a post, but that picture and video interaction may have an even greater impact on emotional connection and by that online experience. This comes back to the discussion of triggering emotions, which the focus group feels is easier through visual elements, discussed earlier in the thesis. Thus it can be argued that the success of impacting part of online experience through interactive Facebook activities lies in the ability to reach and spark emotions in the consumers. This can also explain why “liking” a post is the one activity that has the lowest impact on emotional connection to a brand as it presents the consumer with a one-dimensional and simple activity compared to picture- and video interaction, and writing and commenting a post, which provides the consumers with a more personal and encouraging way of interacting with a brand. As earlier stated in the thesis and by Cova & Cova (2002) tribes and communities are often based on shared passions and emotions, this notion would strongly implies that Facebook users who interact with brands on Facebook has a desire of feeling connected. To further understand why it is particular picture- and video interactions along with writing and commenting posts that are impacting emotional connection, the theory of Fournier (2009) can be utilized. Fournier (2009) argues that people want a deeper sense of connection, which will suggest that building emotional connections between brands and consumers on Facebook is a vital part in creating a successful and sustainable brand community, which will improve the sense of online experience. In terms of this thesis, it is found that this deeper sense of connection can best be obtained through strong emotions evoked by writing and commenting posts and through picture and video interactions. By introducing an innovative and exciting element to the before mentioned interactive Facebook activities brands also has the chance to elevate dialogue, interaction and responsiveness, which in turn will have a positive impact on online experience.

By using the arguments of the work of Cova & Cova (2002), it can further be concluded that in order to successfully impact emotional connection, some extraordinary and/or unique content has to be included in the interaction in order to foster emotions in the consumer. When creating an emotional connection with fans on Facebook, the focus group further emphasizes that the content should be exclusive and not just a link to YouTube or other digital media. This would make the consumers feel more special, as they feel they have the exclusive right to specific content. Furthermore it can be argued that by having the

sense of being more important by having access to exclusive content it can be assumed that the content will have a stronger impact on the sense of self of the consumers. This will create a stronger and more sustainable emotional connection between consumer and brand, improving online experience and by that brand equity.

Figure 7 Online experience; emotional connection to a brand





Source: Survey data

Based on the discussions and the research provided so far, it shows that the two last sub-parameters of the social media framework, responsiveness and interaction also is of great importance to creating brand equity through social media. Argued by Bezjian-Avery et al. (1998), it is new media which enables brands to build strong and long-lasting relations with consumers. By combining this notion with the research of Grunig and Hunt (1984) it can be argued that in order to build a strong relationship with consumers, brands and companies have to utilize new media and focus on creating two-way communication with the consumers of the brand. Furthermore this is emphasized by the focus group, which elaborated on the subject, by stating the importance of dialogue when interacting with brands on Facebook, which in turn illustrates the importance of the sub-parameters of responsiveness and interaction. Another interesting observation is that it can be argued that responsiveness and interaction are not only limited to the parameter of online experience but also the rest of the framework and the entire purpose of the thesis. Without responsiveness and interaction, building brand equity, through all of the other parameters of the social media framework would not be achievable either.

Recommendations for a successful Facebook strategy

Based on the results of the data presented, discussions and analyzes presented in this thesis, the recommendations for a successful Facebook strategy will be provided in terms of creating a Facebook presence which improve and/maintain brand equity. Starting by presenting the general followed by examples of ways of converting brand equity achieved through Facebook to additional/real value for the company. Afterwards a general presentation of how to build brand equity through a strategic Facebook presence is presented, with the focus of which of the seven interactive Facebook activities should have the focus in Toyota's Danish Facebook strategy, and why. Lastly a more specific focus on Toyota and how they as a company can benefit from the findings and conclusions of the thesis in order to improve brand equity is presented. The strategic recommendations for Toyota's future Facebook strategy in Denmark will include several areas of Toyota to focus on, as well as detailed examples of how Toyota best can create a brand equity building Facebook presence locally.

Strategic implications

As the analysis of the different interactive Facebook activities it is evident that being present on Facebook has indeed potential of building brand equity. But as concluded brands utilizing Facebook as an marketing platform need to be aware of how to build proper relations and to create a two-way dialogue through the different activities in order to obtain the best possible gateway of creating and/or maintaining brand equity through the parameters of loyalty, perceived quality, associations, brand awareness and online experience.

All brands wanting to express a unique brand identity need to establish a strong and unified corporate brand is essential in order to optimize communication toward the consumers. This is also applicable for the brands operating on Facebook, which in addition should focus on brand-consumer interaction, which is engaging and is centralized on the consumer. The latter aspect of the relational paradigm is vital as it focuses on co-creation and importance of the consumer feeling important, thus creating value for the consumer and company. Overall it is important to have in mind that implementing or directing focus on new media such as social media should not alter the company's core value or strategy but instead expand reach and focus of the strategy to incorporate omnipresence and two-way brand-consumer interaction.

As stated early in this thesis it is very interesting and of great need not only to study and evaluate how to build brand equity through the world of Facebook but also how the gained brand equity can be transformed to additional and noticeable value for the company. This thesis suggests three focus areas where additional value from brand equity through Facebook can be seen.

Confirm and enhance brand position

The platform of Facebook provides companies with the opportunity to build on their existing brand-consumer relations and brand equity in a sustainable manner. When a consumer chooses to interact with a brand on Facebook, e.g. by “liking” their Facebook page it enables the brand to communicate and engage with the consumer any place any time through the communication channel of Facebook. This enables the brand to constantly reaffirm the consumers of what the brand’s values and visions, and assure the consumer that he/she still belong to the digital tribe or brand community. How brands chooses to confirm and reassure members of the brand community are many and up to the specific brand. However some examples for doing so, is by triggering emotions that the brand stand for through posts, pictures and videos.

Confirm and expand brand propositions

Another way of converting brand equity created through a successful Facebook presence is to expand and confirm the company’s brand propositions. This can be achieved by creating and promoting social initiatives, CSR. Thus, help improve the company’s image in terms of CSR and ultimately overall associations. An example of confirming and expanding brand propositions through social initiatives and Facebook, is to corporate with a non-profit organization or charity and collect donations via interaction on Facebook. This will again impact how consumers view the brand, consequently improving brand equity. This is especially an ideal example for the case of Toyota as the company emphasizes CSR initiatives and environmental responsibility (Toyota Global Vision 2014).

Increased sales

It cannot be denied that one of the biggest reasons companies want to build brand equity is to improve sales, which is why the final suggestion to how a company can convert brand equity created through Facebook activities into additional value, is increasing sales. This can be obtained by for example awarding members of the brand community (read. Consumers who “like” the brand’s Facebook page) with special offers or by different sorts of contests such as giving discounts to the ‘N’ First Facebook fans that visit the local store or buys a product online. Through such activities it can be concluded that Facebook brand equity in fact is capable of generating and increasing sales. However, this kind of maneuver may be difficult to implement with a product such as cars and by that for Toyota. But if altering it to including accessories to the first ‘N’ Facebook fans who order a car or is taking a loan at Toyota.

Optimizing the Facebook presence

In this part of the recommendations for a future Facebook strategy, a detailed recommendation concerning how brands can structure the different Facebook activities and interact with consumers, in order to improve brand equity, will be provided.

No matter of how many brands consumers “like” on Facebook they generally only interacts with a few of them at a time. Thus, creating dialogue and brand-consumer interactions is vital if wanting to achieve improved brand equity through the use of Facebook. First of all, brands and companies need to focus on are the quality of content provided on the page as the frequency and engagement consumers interact with brands on Facebook are highly correlated with the quality and value of the content. This means that brands has to focus on two-way communication and providing their fans with content and information that provides additional value to the consumer in order to make them want to interact and engage in dialogue. Furthermore it is important to mention that one of the biggest motivational factors for consumers for engaging in a dialogue with brands on Facebook are primitive instinct of wanting to belong. Thus if a brand wishes to optimize their Facebook presence they need to create a Facebook page that gives the consumers a feeling of belonging and a place where they can find information and content of high quality that gives additional value.

While all of the Interactive Facebook activities, in some way or another, provide some value to creating brand equity, it can be concluded that some of the activities are more important for brands to focus on, in terms of improving and/or maintaining brand equity through interactive Facebook activities. The elements which are recommended for brands to focus on, are presented below.

“Liking” a brand

The first step of optimizing any brand’s Facebook presence, in terms of brand equity, is to get enough consumers to “like” the Facebook page – generate a substantial base of followers. If there are no consumers who “like” the brand on Facebook, there is no base for creating further interaction and by that impossible to build brand equity through Facebook. The act of “liking” should be considered as a building-block, as it is only a gateway to make consumers want to interact with the brand in a deeper and more engaging manner. While there are no direct impact on brand equity through the act of “liking” a brand, it would not be possible to create and/or maintain brand equity without this activity. The research of this thesis shows that there are several reasons for consumers to “like” a brand on Facebook, but the reasons which has shown most effective besides just “liking” the brand is that consumers want additional information with future purchase in mind, and in order to participate in a contest. Thus, arguing that the interactive Facebook element of providing contests is good way of attracting consumers

to become a fan of the brand. In order to generate a larger fan base on the reason of just “liking” the brand, the brand should try to focus on better the Facebook brand equity parameter of perceived quality, as it will help improve the view consumers have on the brand, consequently achieving a larger fan base. At last brands should insure that the content and information that they put on their Facebook page is of high quality, relevance and value to the consumers.

Writing and commenting posts

Overall these two interactive Facebook activities are the most effective in generating Facebook brand equity compared to the other options described in the thesis. While consumers are not engaging in these two activities as much as other interactive Facebook activities, the general feel is that this is the activities which is most beneficial for the consumers. Thus, brands that want to improve loyalty should focus on generating posts which invites to discussion and that provide value for the consumer as this will also generate comments to the specific post. This is also the case if wanting to improve perceived quality. In addition it is important that the content and posts, provided by the brand, is somehow innovative and exciting in order to trigger strong emotions in the consumer. Thus, it is recommended that brands focus on motivating their fans to write and comments posts through innovative, exciting and emotional reasons to do so. By implementing elements of emotion and innovation into the interactive Facebook activities it will have the biggest impact on brand awareness and online experience, through emotional connection. Ths

Visual interactions

From the research of the thesis it is evident that brands who operates on Facebook in fact can improve brand equity by focusing on interactions including visual elements – picture and video interactions. In order to successfully improve brand equity through visual interactions the brand needs to concentrate the content of their pictures and videos around strong emotions and innovation. This is especially important, in the case of Toyota as innovation is supposed to be a part of their global vision²⁴.

Furthermore it is important that the visual content are unique and not just a YouTube-clip or TV-commercial, as the consumers prefer unique and personalized content. Additionally brands should implement visual elements as a vital part of their Facebook strategy if wanting to improve brand equity, as pictures and videos provide the brand with opportunity to impact the way consumers perceive and view the brand. Consequently, visual interactions, if implemented correct will have the capability to impact brand equity through Facebook positively.

²⁴ http://www.toyota-global.com/company/vision_philosophy/toyota_global_vision_2020.html

Participating in contests

Aside from being one of the most chosen reasons for why consumers are becoming fans of brands on Facebook, the act of providing contests can also impact the parameters trust and brand personality plus improve the sense of additional value of brand-consumer interaction, in the eyes of the consumer. In order to utilize trust to improve brand equity, brands providing contests on Facebook have to reveal winners in a post, so that the fans feel that the contests are executed in a trustworthy manner.

Furthermore is also important to consider what prizes are offered. The prizes should be in line to what the members of the brand community want, while also representing the identity the brand wants to portray externally. Furthermore, by providing contests, brands will be able to frequently interact with consumers in a more innovative and engaging manner, which in turn will have a positive impact on brand equity.

Overall, it can be concluded that the above mentioned interactive Facebook activities are the ones which this study recommends brands and companies to focus on implementing into their Facebook strategy, in order to improve brand equity. In addition it can be argued that it is four underlying themes which drive the impact on brand equity through Facebook, in the eyes of the consumers. The themes are listed below:

- Strong emotions.
- Innovative and visual elements.
- Improvement of sense of self and made identity.
- Getting additional value, for the time spend interacting with brands and companies on Facebook.

Recommendations for Toyota

In order for Toyota to optimize their Danish Facebook strategy, in terms of brand equity, they recommendation from this research is to implement the interactive Facebook activities as described above. The above mentioned strategic implications should provide the foundation for Toyota's Facebook presence. However, it is of vital importance that Toyota integrates the recommended Facebook strategy with focus on their key values and visions of the brand. From Toyota's annual report 2013, it is emphasized that Toyota want to be innovative and environmental responsible along with putting smiles on the consumers faces and making driving fun²⁵. Thus, when implementing the strategy Toyota needs to have these attributes in mind in order to maintain a consistent brand identity across all marketing channels. It is further recommended that Toyota has an increased focus on providing personalized, relevant and exciting content via their Facebook presence. Thus, focusing on a more

²⁵ Appendix 11: Examples of current marketing material

regional or local Facebook strategy, instead of a more global strategy. This is important because of the cultural differences between different regions and countries.

Toyota should implement the recommended interactive Facebook activities in an innovative way, in order to differentiate themselves from other brands and entice consumers to increase their engagement in the brand and level of interaction on Facebook. Thus, the recommendations of a Facebook strategy divided into four parts are presented below.

Staying Local

In order to strengthen and personalizing the communication between Toyota and the consumers it is important for Toyota to maintain and even increasing the focus on local Facebook presences. As mentioned earlier, this will help the sense of value created for the consumer by interacting with Toyota on Facebook. Furthermore, by focusing on a more personalized brand-consumer relationship the level of trust will be increased as physical distance and potential language barriers are no longer issues. This will ultimately increase the parameter of perceived quality. Additionally it is easier to achieve a strong emotional connection, when operating locally instead of globally. This emotional connection can further be improved by utilizing the next part of the recommended strategy.

Utilize memories and dreams

When focusing on interacting with consumers locally instead of regionally or globally it allows a higher level of interaction between Toyota and their local Facebook fans. One way of increasing interaction and emotional connection is to get the consumers to get in touch with their memories and dreams. The memory part can be done by getting the fans to post pictures of their first Toyota²⁶. The dream part, on the other hand can be tackled in a much more innovative way. One way could be to get fans down to the local dealership and take a selfie with the Toyota they most wish they could own. In order to motivate people to do so, it is suggested to motivate them with a contest and prize. Thus, Toyota should post a contest which is stating that the consumers are automatically entered to the contest of they go down to their local Toyota dealership and take a selfie of their dream car, publish it on the local Toyota Facebook page, and tag themselves and Toyota in the picture. This will publicize to all of the consumers' friends on Facebook, thus, impacting the parameters of brand awareness, associations and perceived quality. It additionally provides Toyota to obtain a sense of omnipresence as the consumers are interacting with Toyota multiple ways. Furthermore it has the purpose of getting the consumers to the dealerships, where they are then not only affected by Toyota's presence on Facebook but also by the

²⁶ This has already been done by Toyota Denmark, see Appendix 1: Examples of Toyota's Danish Facebook page

sales personal at the dealership. At last it also brings the consumers closer to act of purchasing step of the consumer journey as they are physically present in the dealership.

Newsletter

Another way of providing the consumers with additional value is through personalized and unique content plus, creating a sense of ubiquity and omnipresence, allowing the consumers to interact with Toyota no matter the destination. Thus, this part of the four part strategy emphasizes on intergrating the Toyota newsletter, so that it is also possible to sign-up for the newsletter on Toyota's Danish Facebook page. The suggested solution for integrating the newsletter to the Facebook strategy is to make the sign-up sheet available in a tab²⁷. When a new newsletter is available this should be posted on the wall, so that the consumers are aware of the possibility to read exciting news and stories about Toyota. Furthermore it should be integrated in the newsletter that it is possible to "like" the newsletter, which would then turn up on the consumer's own Facebook "wall". Not only will the integration of a sign-up form to the Facebook page make it more visible but it will also provide additional pull effects because of the additional value the newsletter brings to the Facebook page. By providing the opportunity to "like" the newsletter it also gives the consumers a chance to extend their sense of self to their friends on Facebook, which in turn would build brand personality and brand awareness, and consequently brand equity for Toyota.

Active brand personality

As previously, one of the most successful Facebook activities to build brand equity, in the eyes of the consumer is commenting posts. Thus, Toyota should motivate the fans of the Facebook page to do so. This will in turn improve associations, if executed properly. In order to motivate people to write or comment posts, the activity of contests is a good motivator. Furthermore Toyota should also get the conversation/discussion going by asking questions which triggers strong emotions and relations in the consumers mind. Thus two examples of conversation/discussion starters are provided. Along with each of the conversations/discussion starters, a brief explanation of why it is recommended for Toyota to use these two examples and questions of similar kind, is presented.

Example 1

The first example of question asked in order to start the conversation/discussion is to trigger the memories of the consumers and how they feel about the history of Toyota. The answers provided should in turn make people think of old times, in terms of Toyota, and then impact brand personality and associations. The suggested question is presented below:

²⁷ Appendix 1: Examples of Toyota's Facebook page

- What Toyota, which is no longer manufactured, do you dream of driving?

By asking such a question it should provoke memories and emotions toward Facebook and speak to the active brand personality. In order to elevate the brand building potential of this activity, it could be combined with the interactive Facebook strategy of contests. One example for Toyota could be that they tell their fans that they automatically enter the contests of getting to drive the Toyota not manufactured anymore, that most people wish they could drive. This would not only add elements of motivation and emotions, but it also further build on associations and emotional connections as it appeals to the customers memories and dreams. Taking this concept a step further in order to get all of the brand equity building potential out of the activity, Toyota should film the winner's trip in the old Toyota and post it on their Facebook page. Not only would this improve trust between brand and consumer, by showing that the winner actually got to drive the car, it would also increase the level of brand-consumer interaction and elevate the sense of omnipresence and multidimensional communication, in the eyes of the consumers.

The second question which Toyota could ask on their Facebook page in order to get the conversation started, are presented in order to portray brand personality externally. Again the question should provoke strong emotions, such as dreams, memories and/or humor, which in turn will strengthen the bond between Toyota and their fans on Facebook. The suggested question is presented below:

- Which Danish celebrity, would you most want to test-drive the newest Toyota, together with?

Again, getting the consumers to engage in commenting the posts could be done with a contest, where the winners got to sit next to celebrity while the most wanted celebrity test-drives the newest Toyota. Furthermore this should again be filmed and posted on the Facebook page. If choosing to engage in such a question and contest, Toyota has some work to do by getting the celebrity to actually test-drive the newest Toyota with the winner sitting next to them. But if it can be accomplished it will positively impact Toyota's brand equity.

Both of the examples could also be implemented as a polling activity which would give Toyota more control. But as earlier mentioned consumers like to have some sense of control when interacting with brand. This would be evoked if choosing the activity of polling. Furthermore polling is not discussed in this thesis as it is assumed that it can be replaced by other and better alternatives, such as the activities described in this thesis

Implementing values and visions

As seen in Toyota's annual report 2013 and appendix 11, some of their core values and visions are the ones of innovation, environmental responsibility and making driving fun. In order to highlight these values and visions Toyota should implement a Facebook strategy that focuses on associations, perceived quality and portraying a brand personality that relates to the values and visions. Three examples of incorporating the visions and values of Toyota into the Facebook strategy are provided below

Example 1

One of the things Toyota emphasizes the most is to be environmental responsible, which is a vision that can trigger strong emotions in the Facebook users. A way of triggering the emotions about environment is through posts and discussions about Toyota and the environment. Thus, it is suggested that Toyota should have one day a week or month according to the interest, where it is possible for fans of the Facebook page to ask questions about Toyota and the environment. This session could be called "discussion day" or something else which is catchy. This will in turn provide the consumers with additional value and impact the parameters of associations and perceived quality, while also portraying a brand personality that is concerned about the environment. However the discussion could also be about making driving fun or innovation. Toyota should get the fans to interact in this activity by making them post questions or comment a post, posted by Toyota, with their questions.

Example 2

The next example of how Toyota can implement their visions and values into their Facebook strategy is through the concept of Fun Fact Friday. It is suggested that Toyota every Friday should post some fun facts about Toyota and environmental responsibility, innovation and making driving Fun. This would in turn create expectations, which has the opportunity of getting the fans to interact with Toyota every Friday, thus strengthening the bond between Toyota and the consumers. Furthermore it impacts brand personality as the subjects which is taking up is all values and visions of Toyota wants consumers to associate with the brand. Consequently impacting brand equity.

Conclusion

Through the research and analyzes throughout the thesis, it has been concluded that a brand's Facebook presence, if implemented appropriately are capable of impacting brand equity. Furthermore it has been concluded that personalized and emotional content is very important in order to build brand equity, which emphasizes that a local Facebook presence are the correct strategy to implement.

In order to reach the conclusions of the thesis, it proved to be necessary to develop a new framework, capable of measuring the brand equity associated with Facebook. By researching the concepts of new media, brand-consumer relations and tribalism, it has become clear that it has to consider the underlying motivations of brand-consumer interactions, as they provide a vital element of the analysis and recommendations.

In addition it can be concluded that the act of "liking" has no direct on Facebook brand equity, but rather it is other interactions that create brand equity and value for a brand. The interactive Facebook activities that have proven most successful at generating Facebook brand equity are writing and commenting post combined with visual elements such as pictures and videos. It can also be concluded that the success of building brand equity lies in the ability to evoke emotions in Facebook users and create a deeper emotional connection between fans and the brand. Thus it has been recommended that Toyota should focus on implementing these activities and elements into their future Facebook strategy. Furthermore it is recommended should implement a 4 step strategy including; staying local, utilize memories and dreams, newsletter and active brand personality. Additionally, Toyota I was recommended that Toyota should design their Facebook strategy in a way that differentiates the brand through strong emotions excitement and omnipresence while also incorporating their core values and visions.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Examples of Toyota's Facebook page

“About” including contact information

The screenshot shows the 'About' section of the Toyota Facebook page. The header includes the Toyota logo and navigation tabs: 'Tidslinje', 'Om' (selected), 'Billeder', 'Synes godt om', and 'Flere'. The 'Om' section contains a description of Toyota's commitment to customer service, a firm description of Toyota Danmark A/S as an importer, and a brief history of the company in Denmark since 1963. The 'Grundlæggende oplysninger' (Basic information) section lists the founding year (1963) and products (cars, vans, service products, etc.). The 'Kontaktinformation' (Contact information) section provides the phone number, email address, and website.

TOYOTA Biler og reservedele Synes godt om Følger Besked

Tidslinje **Om** Billeder Synes godt om Flere ▾

Om

Vi vil rigtig gerne hjælpe dig med spørgsmål herinde, men har du spørgsmål om konkrete sager eller spørgsmål af teknisk karakter, henviser vi til kundeservice på toyota@toyota.dk

Firmabeskrivelse

Toyota Danmark A/S er eneimportør af Toyota bilmodeller i Danmark. Privat- og erhvervskunder serviceres af et stort netværk af over 60 Toyota-forhandlerforretninger og 90 autoriserede Toyota-reparatører.

Beskrivelse

Toyota har været i Danmark siden 1963 og har haft stor succes i mange år. Dette afspejles ved, at Toyota er et af de mærker, der kører flest biler af på vejene i Danmark - nemlig 275.000. Vejen til denne succes skyldes primært tre forhold - dygtige forhandlere og medarbejdere - og gode biler.

Mest beundrede bilmærke i 2010 og 2011

Grundlæggende oplysninger

Grundlagt	1963
Produkter	Personbiler, varebiler, serviceprodukter, udstyr, reservedele, finansielle ydelser.

Kontaktinformation

Telefon	44850400
E-mail	toyota@toyota.dk
Website	http://www.toyota.dk

“Wall”

The screenshot shows the 'Wall' section of the Toyota Facebook page. The header is similar to the 'About' page, but the 'Om' tab is not selected. The 'Tidslinje' (Timeline) tab is selected, showing a post from Toyota Danmark A/S. The post is about a festival and includes a link to a website. The left sidebar shows the number of likes (11,661) and a list of people who liked the page. The right sidebar shows a list of years from 2014 to 1966, with 'Grundlagt' (Founded) at the bottom.

TOYOTA Biler og reservedele Synes godt om Følger Besked ...

Tidslinje **Om** Billeder Synes godt om Flere ▾

PERSONER >

11.661 synes godt om

Inviter dine venner til at synes godt om denne side

OM >

Vi vil rigtig gerne hjælpe dig med spørgsmål herinde, men har du spørgsmål om konkrete sager eller spørgsmål af teknisk karakter, henviser vi til...

LÆS MERE

<http://www.toyota.dk/>

Slå op **Billede/video**

Skriv noget på denne side ...

Toyota Danmark A/S
for 6 timer siden

Skal du til festival denne sommer?

Skil dig ud fra mængden med RAV4. Læs mere om den her:
<http://www.toyota.dk/new-cars/rav4/index.json>

Seneste

- 2014
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2009
- 2005
- 1985
- 1966
- Grundlagt

Posts on the “wall”

OPSLAG PÅ SIDE >

8. juli kl. 20:33 

jeg syntes jeres biler er super gode min mor og far har en Aygo i sort

Synes godt om · Tilføj kommentar

8. juli kl. 16:05 

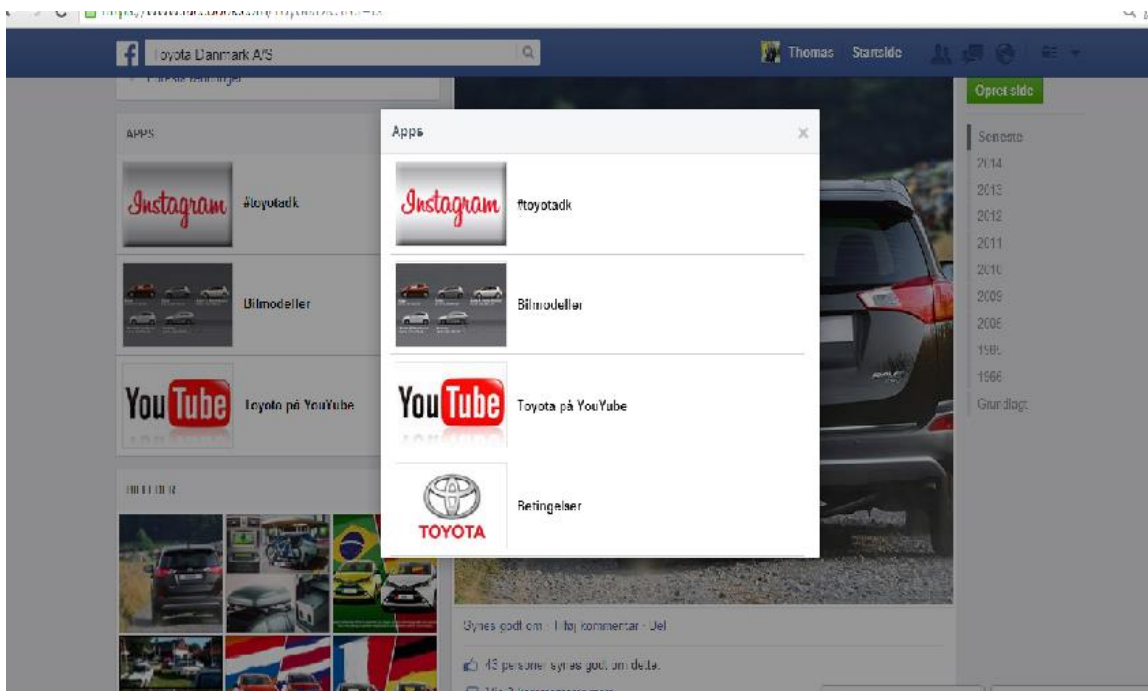
Jer, har man sgu ikke været heldige med. Og selv om det er studenter... [Se mere](#)

Synes godt om · Tilføj kommentar  1

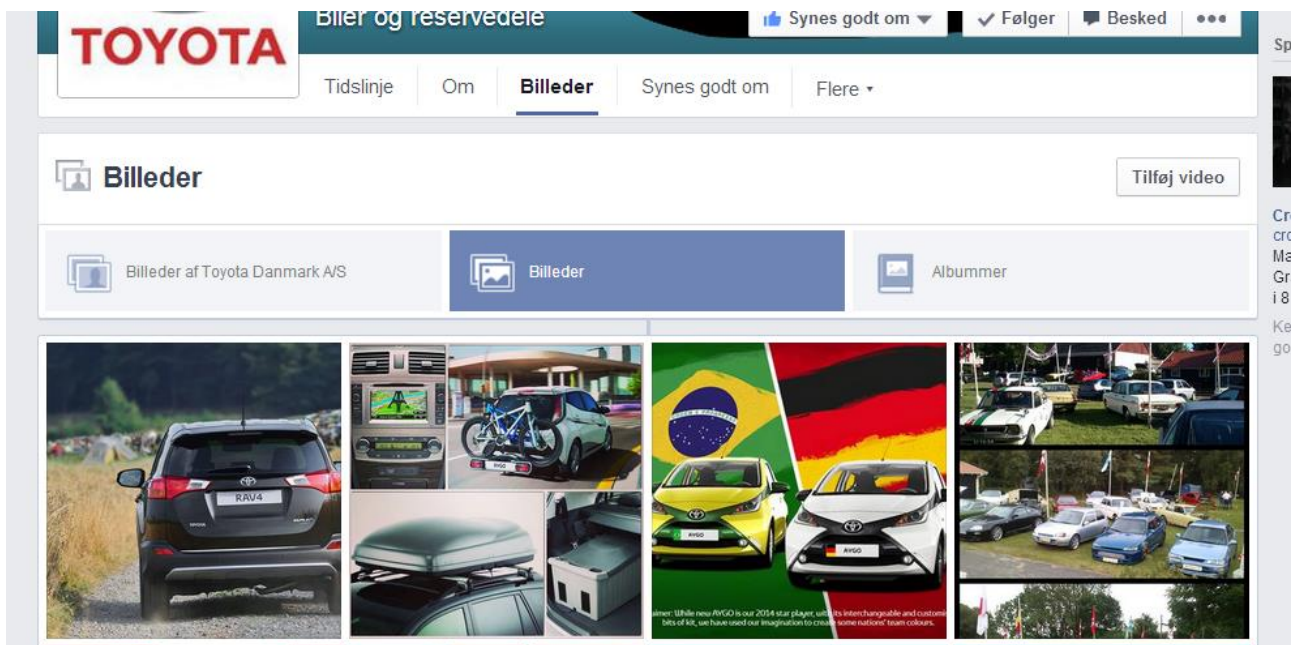
7. juli kl. 13:02 

Hvornår udtrækkes vinderen af den nye Toyota x-Press?

Tabs



Pictures



“Liking” a brand



Translated: What Toyota were your first love



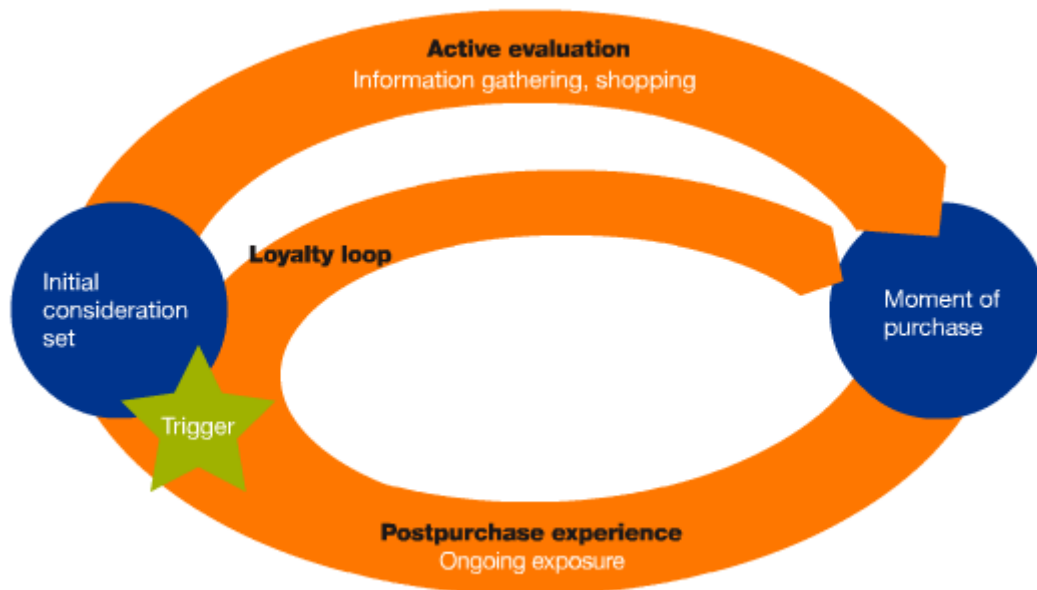
Appendix 2: Figure of Facebook's impact on brand equity

Model for mapping and visualizing the connection
between interactive Facebook elements and the social
media brand equity parameters

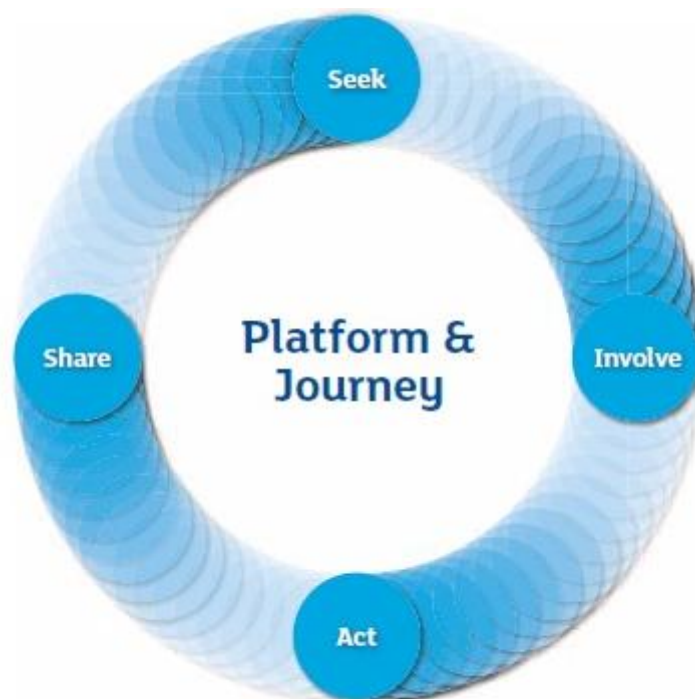
		Interactive Facebook elements						
		"Like" a Facebook page	Write a post	"Like" a post	Comment a post	Picture interaction	Video interaction	Participate in a contest
Facebook brand equity parameters	Loyalty							
	Percieved quality							
	Associations							
	Brand awareness							
	Online Experience							

Source: Own contribution

Appendix 3: Illustrations of the consumer journey



Source: http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/marketing_sales/the_consumer_decision_journey



Source: <http://blogmindshare.dk/blog/2012/10/24/path-to-conversion-ikke-laengere-bare-et-buzz-word/>

Appendix 4: Final survey (translated)

For my thesis in International Marketing & Management at Copenhagen Business School I am analyzing how interaction between companies and consumers on Facebook, influences loyalty and their knowledge of brands and lastly what companies can do to improve their efforts on social media.

All answers will be kept anonymous and are only used for this thesis.

The questionnaire only takes 5 minutes to answer and if you want, it is possible to participate in the draw for 2 movie tickets at the end of the questionnaire

Thank you for participating

Gender

☐ Man ☐ Woman

Age

Residence

☐ Region Sjælland ☐ Region Hovedstaden (incl. Bornholm)
☐ Region Syddanmark ☐ Region Midtjylland ☐ Region Nordjylland

The next part of the survey is about "liking"/following brands or companies on Facebook.

How many brand or companies do you "like" on Facebook?

☐ None ☐ 1-3 ☐ 4-6 ☐ 7-10 ☐ More than 10

Choose one or more of the following reasons which best describes why you chose to follow/"like" a brand or company on Facebook:

- ☐ I just liked the brand/company
- ☐ I was interested in buying a product from the brand/company and needed additional information
- ☐ I wanted to work at the company
- ☐ My friend(s)"likes"/follows the brand/company
- ☐ I wanted to participate in a contest on the brand's/company's Facebook page
- ☐ I searched for information about the brand/company
- ☐ I wanted to participate in discussions and debates about the brand/company and its products
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Please write the name of the brand / company that you feel you most interact with and select the category that best defines it.

Kategori

Brand/company ☐ Food & Drinks ☐ Automotive ☐ High Tech ☐ Travel ☐ Charity ☐

This part of the survey deals with various interactive Facebook activities.

The various activities are explained on the right.

"Like"

When you "like" a brand's/company's Facebook Page

Write a post:

When you write at comment on a brand's/company's Facebook wall

"Liking" a post:

When you "like" a post written by someone else on a brand's/company's Facebook wall.

Commenting a post:

When you comment on post written by someone else on a brand's/company's Facebook wall.

Picture interaction:

When you "like", comment or post a picture on a brand's/company's Facebook wall.






Video interaction:

When you "like", comment or post a video on a brand's/company's Facebook wall.

Participating in a contest:

When you participate in a contest via a brand's/company's Facebook page.

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities.

	 Terrible	 Poor	 Don't know	 Good	 Very good
"Liking" a Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liking" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commenting a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picture interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page?

	Never	Rarely (a couple a times per year)	Averagely (once a month)	Often (once a week)	Very often (once a day)
"Liking" a Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liking" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commenting a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picture interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part of the survey is about your thoughts and feelings when interacting with companies or brands on their Facebook Page

How often have you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member?

☐ Never ☐ 1-3 times ☐ 4-6 times ☐ 7-10 times ☐ More

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when:

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Don't know	Likely	Very likely
You have "liked" the Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have written a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have "liked" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have commented a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have "liked", commented or posted a picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have "liked", commented or posted a video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have participated in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How important do you think it is for a company or brand to have an active Facebook page in in order to be viewed as a leading brand?

☐ Not important at all ☐ Less important ☐ Neutral ☐ Important ☐ Very important

Do you have a more positive attitude towards companies with an active Facebook page

over competitors without an active Facebook page?

Yes No Don't know

☐ ☐ ☐

To what extent would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you have:

	Not at all	A little	Much	Very much	Don't know
"Liked" a Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commented a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked", commented or posted a picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked", commented or posted a video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participated in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How important is it that companies' or brand's posts and other communication on Facebook are serious and trustworthy?

☐ Not important at all ☐ Less important ☐ Neutral ☐ Important
☐ Very important

The last part of the survey is about how you remember and identify yourself with brands and companies

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when:

	Not at all	A little	Much	Very much	Don't know
You "like" a Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You write a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You "like" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You comment a pst	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You "like", comment or post a picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You "like", comment or post a video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You participate in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To what extent do you remember a company or brand the day after you have:

Not at all A little Much Very much Don't know

"Liked" a Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commented a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked", commented or posted a picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked", commented or posted a video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participated in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have:

	Not at all	A little	Much	Very much	Don't know
"Liked" a Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked" a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commented a post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked", commented or posted a picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Liked", commented or posted a video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participated in a contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you would like to participate in the draw for 2 movie tickets, you have to enter your E-mail address below. The winner will be contacted in early August.

Thanks for participating

Have a nice day!

Appendix 3: Survey data

Age

	Respondents	Percent
18	3	3,4%
19	2	2,3%
20	4	4,6%
21	7	8,0%
22	7	8,0%
23	3	3,4%
24	6	6,9%
25	14	16,1%
26	13	14,9%
27	6	6,9%
28	3	3,4%
29	3	3,4%
30	4	4,6%
Older	12	13,8%
Total	87	100,0%

Gender

	Respondents	Percent
Man	39	52,0%
Woman	36	48,0%
Total	75	100,0%

Residence

	Respondents	Percent
Region Sjælland	14	18,7%
Region Hovedstaden (incl. Bornholm)	54	72,0%
Region Syddanmark	3	4,0%
Region Midtjylland	3	4,0%
Region Nordjylland	1	1,3%
Total	75	100,0%

How many brands or companies do you "like" on Facebook?

	Respondents	Percent
None	3	4,0%
1-3	27	36,0%
4-6	16	21,3%
7-10	11	14,7%
More than 10	18	24,6%
Total	75	100,6%

Please chose on or more of the following reasons which best describes why you chose follow/"like a brand or companey on Facebook:

	Respondents	Percent
I just liked the brand/company	43	74,1%
I was interested in buying a product from the brand and needed additional information	23	39,7%
I wanted to work for the company	10	17,2%
My friend(s) "likes"/follows the brand/company	9	15,5%
I wanted to participate in a contest on the brand's/company's Facebook page	14	24,1%
I searched for information about the company	5	8,6%
I wanted to participate in a contest on the brand's/company's Facebook page	4	6,9%
Other (please specify	9	15,5%
Total	72	100,0%

Please write the name of the brand/company that you feel you interact with the most and select the category that best defines it.

	Respondents	Percent
Mad & Drikke	5	8,6%
Biler	1	1,7%
High Tech	2	3,4%
Rejser	6	10,3%
Velgørenhed	1	1,7%
Mode	20	34,5%
Underholdning	10	17,2%
Andet	13	22,4%
Total	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opnion on the following Facebook activities: - "Liking" a brand's Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Terrible	3	4,2%
Poor	0	0,0%
Don't know	16	22,2%
Good	33	45,8%
Very good	20	27,8%
Total	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities: - Writing a post

	Respondents	Percent
Terrible	2	2,8%
Poor	3	4,2%
Don't know	19	26,4%
Good	32	44,4%
Very good	16	22,2%
Total	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities: - "Liking" a post

	Respondenter	Procent
Terrible	2	2,8%
Poor	0	0,0%
Don't know	14	19,4%
Good	34	47,2%
Very good	22	30,6%
I alt	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities: - Commenting a post

	Respondents	Percent
Terrible	6	8,3%
Poor	5	6,9%
Don't know	18	25,0%
Good	24	33,3%
Very good	19	26,4%
Total	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities: - Picture interaction

	Respondents	Percent
Terrible	2	2,8%
Poor	11	15,3%
Don't know	23	31,9%
Good	34	47,2%
Very good	2	2,8%
Total	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities: - Video interaction

	Respondents	Percent
Terrible	3	4,2%
Poor	21	29,2%
Don't know	32	44,4%
Good	8	11,1%
Very good	8	11,1%
Total	72	100,0%

Please indicate your opinion on the following Facebook activities: - Participating in a contest

	Respondents	Percent
Terrible	5	6,9%
Poor	6	8,3%
Don't know	14	19,4%
Good	27	37,5%
Very good	20	27,8%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their

Facebook page? - "Liking" a Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Never	9	12,5%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	26	36,1%
Average (once a month)	25	34,7%
Often (once a week)	9	12,5%
Very often (once a day)	3	4,2%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page? - Writing a post

	Respondents	Percent
Never	38	52,8%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	9	12,5%
Average (once a month)	20	27,8%
Often (once a week)	3	4,2%
Very often (once a day)	2	2,8%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page? - "Liking" a post

	Respondents	Percent
Never	8	11,1%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	11	15,3%
Average (once a month)	23	31,9%
Often (once a week)	18	25,0%
Very often (once a day)	12	16,7%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page? - Commenting a post

	Respondents	Percent
Never	28	38,9%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	17	23,6%
Average (once a month)	12	16,7%
Often (once a week)	14	19,4%
Very often (once a day)	1	1,4%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page? - Picture interaction

	Respondents	Percent
Never	31	43,1%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	20	27,8%
Average (once a month)	12	16,7%
Often (once a week)	8	11,1%
Very often (once a day)	1	1,4%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page? - Video interaction

	Respondents	Percent
Never	46	63,9%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	8	11,1%
Averagely (once a month)	12	16,7%
Often (once a week)	5	6,9%
Very often (once a day)	1	1,4%
Total	72	100,0%

How often do you use the following activities to interact with a company on their Facebook page? - Participating in a contest interaction

	Respondents	Percent
Never	29	40,3%
Rarely (a couple of times a year)	23	31,9%
Averagely (once a month)	14	19,4%
Often (once a week)	6	8,3%
Very often (once a day)	0	0,0%
Total	72	100,0%

How often have you recommended a brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member?

	Respondents	Percent
Never	32	44,4%
1-3 times	28	38,9%
4-6 times	8	11,1%
7-10 times	4	5,6%
More	0	0,0%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when: - You have "liked the Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Very unlikely	23	31,9%
Unlikely	17	23,6%
Don't know	3	4,2%
Likely	26	36,1%
Very likely	3	4,2%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when: - You have written a post

	Respondents	Percent
Very unlikely	30	41,9%
Unlikely	17	23,3%
Don't know	10	14,0%
Likely	12	16,3%
Very likely	3	4,7%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook

page to a friend or family member when: - You have "liked" a post

	Respondents	Percent
Very unlikely	20	27,8%
Unlikely	18	25,0%
Don't know	5	6,9%
Likely	26	36,1%
Very likely	3	4,2%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when: - You have commented a post

	Respondents	Percent
Very unlikely	19	26,4%
Unlikely	15	20,8%
Don't know	12	16,7%
Likely	20	27,8%
Very likely	6	8,3%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when: - You have "liked", commented or posted a picture

	Respondents	Percent
Very unlikely	28	38,9%
Unlikely	10	13,9%
Don't know	10	13,9%
Likely	21	29,2%
Very likely	3	4,2%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when: - You have "liked", commented or posted a video

	Respondents	Percent
Very unlikely	28	38,9%
Unlikely	15	20,8%
Don't know	14	19,4%
Likely	10	13,9%
Very likely	5	6,9%
Total	72	100,0%

How likely would it be that you recommended a company's or brand's Facebook page to a friend or family member when: - You have participated in a contest

	Respondents	Percent
--	-------------	---------

Very unlikely	20	27,8%
Unlikely	22	30,6%
Don't know	10	13,9%
Likely	18	25,0%
Very likely	2	2,8%
Total	72	100,0%

How important do you think it is for a company or brand to have an active Facebook page in in order to be viewed as a leading brand?

	Respondents	Percent
Not important at all	8	11,6%
Less important	5	7,0%
Neutral	10	14,0%
Important	32	44,2%
Very important	17	23,3%
Total	72	100,0%

Do you have a more positive attitude towards companies with an active Facebook page over competitors without an active Facebook page?

	Respondents	Percent
Yes	35	48,6%
No	35	48,6%
Don't know	2	2,8%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - "Liked" a Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	15	20,8%
A little	16	22,2%
Much	18	25,0%
Very much	11	15,3%
Don't know	12	16,7%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - Written a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	9	12,5%
A little	9	12,5%
Much	25	34,7%
Very much	15	20,8%
Don't know	14	19,4%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - "Liked" a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	19	26,4%
A little	17	23,6%
Much	14	19,4%

Very much	9	12,5%
Don't know	13	18,1%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - Commented a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	10	14,5%
A little	12	16,4%
Much	21	29,0%
Very much	13	18,5%
Don't know	16	21,6%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - "Liked", commented or posted a picture

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	10	13,9%
A little	13	18,1%
Much	20	27,8%
Very much	13	18,1%
Don't know	16	22,2%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - "Liked", commented or posted a video

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	8	11,1%
A little	12	16,7%
Much	19	26,4%
Very much	13	18,1%
Don't know	20	27,8%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend would you say that you have a more positive attitude towards a brand after you hav: - Participated in a contest

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	13	18,1%
A little	14	19,4%
Much	19	26,4%
Very much	11	15,3%
Don't know	15	20,8%
Total	72	100,0%

How important is it that companies' or brand's posts and other communication on Facebook are serious and trustworthy?

	Respondents	Percent
Not important at all	2	2,3%

Less important	5	7,0%
Neutral	3	4,7%
Important	28	39,5%
Very important	34	46,5%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You "like" a Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	13	18,1%
A little	28	38,9%
Much	13	18,1%
Very much	13	18,1%
Don't know	5	6,9%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You write a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	15	16,7%
A little	20	27,8%
Much	12	18,1%
Very much	12	23,6%
Don't know	13	13,8%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You "like" a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	14	19,4%
A little	33	45,8%
Much	15	20,8%
Very much	8	11,1%
Don't know	2	2,8%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You comment a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	12	16,7%
A little	23	31,9%
Much	10	13,9%
Very much	17	23,6%
Don't know	10	13,9%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You "like", comment or post a picture

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	16	22,2%
A little	20	27,8%

Much	13	18,1%
Very much	9	12,5%
Don't know	14	19,4%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You "like", comment or post a video

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	15	20,8%
A little	20	27,8%
Much	10	13,9%
Very much	15	20,8%
Don't know	12	16,7%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you identify yourself with a company or brand when: - You participate in a contest

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	18	25,0%
A little	34	47,2%
Much	5	6,9%
Very much	7	9,7%
Don't know	8	11,1%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you remember a company or brand after you have: - "Liked" a Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	8	11,6%
A little	32	44,2%
Much	20	27,9%
Very much	7	9,3%
Don't know	5	7,0%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you remember a company or brand after you have: - Written a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	13	18,1%
A little	8	11,1%
Much	23	31,9%
Very much	13	18,1%
Don't know	15	20,8%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you remember a company or brand after you have: - "Liked" a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	13	18,6%
A little	25	34,9%
Much	21	27,9%

Very much	5	7,0%
Don't know	8	11,6%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend do you remember a company or brand after you have: -
Commented a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	17	23,6%
A little	7	9,7%
Much	22	30,6%
Very much	12	16,7%
Don't know	14	19,4%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend do you remember a company or brand after you have: - "Liked",
commented or posted a picture

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	13	18,1%
A little	12	16,7%
Much	18	25,0%
Very much	12	16,7%
Don't know	17	23,6%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend do you remember a company or brand after you have: - "Liked",
commented or posted a video

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	10	13,9%
A little	13	18,1%
Much	16	22,2%
Very much	13	18,1%
Don't know	20	27,8%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extend do you remember a company or brand after you have: - Participated
in a contest

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	15	20,8%
A little	22	30,6%
Much	12	16,7%
Very much	10	13,9%
Don't know	13	18,1%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - "Liked" a
Facebook page

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	18	25,0%
A little	12	16,7%
Much	20	27,8%
Very much	10	13,9%

Don't know	12	16,7%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - Written a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	10	13,9%
A little	13	18,1%
Much	20	27,8%
Very much	13	18,1%
Don't know	16	22,2%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - "Liked" a post

	Respondents	Percent
Not at all	19	26,4%
A little	15	20,8%
Much	16	22,2%
Very much	9	12,5%
Don't know	13	18,1%
Total	72	100,0%

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - Commented a post

	Respondenter	Procent
Not at all	9	12,5%
A little	10	13,9%
Much	23	31,9%
Very much	17	23,6%
Don't know	13	18,1%
I alt	72	100,0%

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - "Liked", commented or posted a picture

	Respondenter	Procent
Not at all	12	16,7%
A little	13	18,1%
Much	18	25,0%
Very much	12	16,7%
Don't know	17	23,6%
I alt	72	100,0%

To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - "Liked", commented or posted a video

	Respondenter	Procent
Not at all	9	12,5%
A little	13	18,1%
Much	19	26,4%
Very much	12	16,7%
Don't know	19	26,4%

I alt	72	100,0%
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To what extent do you feel more connected to a brand after you have: - Participated in a contest

	Respondenter	Procent
Not at all	8	11,1%
A little	11	15,3%
Much	17	23,6%
Very much	9	12,5%
Don't know	27	37,5%
I alt	72	100,0%

Appendix 6: In-depth interview questions for testing the survey

- Was the survey difficult to understand?
- Did you find anything that could be improved?
- Was there anything in the survey think was off or misplaced?
- Other comments?

Appendix 7: Survey flaws

- There are no questions regarding if the participants would prefer brands to interact with them in a local or global manner.

How important do you feel it is that a brand is locally present on Facebook compared to globally?

- Not all of the interactive Facebook elements are represented in the survey, which could lead to some bias as the participants does not have the opportunity to choose activities such as, polling, sharing and rating.
- Participants that answered they did not follow brands on Facebook was not allowed to answer the rest of the questions in the survey. Although the participants does not "like" brands on Facebook they could still have valuable opinions on brand-consumer interaction on Facebook.
- The respondents may have difficulties in placing the chosen brand in the right category which can partly explain why that many have chosen the option of other.

Appendix 8: Focus group questions for guiding the interview

Initial considerations - Seek

- Question 1: (After having answered the same six first questions as the survey participants) Why do you “like” brands or companies on Facebook?
- Question 2: To what degree do you feel you are remembering brands you “like” on Facebook?
- Question 3: How important is it for you to be able to interact with brands and companies on Facebook?

Evaluation – Involve

- Question 1: Do you agree in the following statement?
“Brands I interact with on Facebook are a representation of who I am”
- Question 2: Do you think the different interactive Facebook activities help you get a clear indication of the brands identity?
- Question 3: To what degree do you feel more likely to remember a brand when having interacted with them?
- Question 4: Are there any difference between the interactive Facebook activities when remembering a brand?
- Question 5: Do you feel connected to a brand when engaging in the different interactive Facebook activities?
- Question 6: How important do you feel trust is when interacting with brands on Facebook?

Moment of purchase – act

- Question 1: Would you be more likely to buy a car from a company that has an active Facebook presence compared to other car brands who does not? Also if the cars are equally good?
- Question 2: Does your answers change if we were talking about FMCG?
- Question 3: Do you feel that leading brands have to be actively present on Facebook?

Post purchase experience – Share

- Question 1: Do you use Facebook as forum for sharing thoughts and recommendations?

(The questions are not a complete list of the discussion, but merely a guide for starting the discussion.)

Appendix 9: Focus group data and quotes

Participants

Participant 1:

Name: Kasper Jensen

Age: 18

Gender: Man

Residence: Copenhagen

Participant 2:

Name: Julie Ipsen

Age: 21

Gender: Woman

Residence: Northern Sealand

Participant 3:

Name: Jonas Oddermos

Age 25:

Gender: Man

Residence: Copenhagen

Participant 4:

Name: Michelle Schneider

Age: 27

Gender: Woman

Residence: Copenhagen

Participant 5:

Name: Frederik Nikolajsen

Age: 30

Gender: Man

Residence: Northern Jutland

Quotes:

Michelle Schneider, 27:

'I like brands on Facebook in order to find information and try to benefit from, for example contests or by getting special offers or deals'

Julie Ipsen, 21:

'I think that the content is very important as no one wants to "like" or spend time on a Facebook page if the content is shit. But if the content is good and interesting it would make me want to spend more time and interact more often on the Facebook page.'

Frederik Nikolajsen, 30:

'I think that companies need to present content which is highly innovative, extraordinaire and engaging if it is not special offers or deals, if they want to impact their potential customers view of the brand. Especially when buying a car as people do not purchase a car from one day to the next.'

Kasper Jensen, 18:

'I think that people is very opmærksomme on which brands they "like" on Facebook in order to look good and cool in front of your friends. For example if I "liked" or commented on a negatively seen brand's Facebook page (read. among friends) that I loved their close, then my friends would give me all kind of shit and look crooked at me, the next day at school'

Appendix 10: Summary of the finding of the different Facebook brand equity parameters

Loyalty

- All of the interactive Facebook elements have a positive effect on the probability of a Facebook user recommending a brand to others, although the most effective activities are, in order:
- Facebook users utilize recommendation of brands as a way of, maybe subconsciously, expressing and enhancing their personality and identity outwardly.

- Not everyone is comfortable with exposing themselves publicly, by recommending brands to others.
- E-word-of-mouth, despite earlier findings, is an important tool in enhancing loyalty via Facebook.

Perceived Quality

- Information is a very valuable type of content for consumers interacting on Facebook. However the information has to be unique in order to be valuable and is more effective of enhancing perceived quality if presented in an innovative way.
- Perceived quality achieved via Facebook is very dependent of how good and interesting the content is.
- It is important or even very important for brands to have an active Facebook page in order to be considered a leading brand.
- The most effective interactive Facebook element to enhance Perceived quality is that of ???

Associations

- It can be reasoned that most brands a consumers interact with on Facebook are somewhat a representation of the consumers' identity.
- Facebook users choose to interact with brands on Facebook that have a positive effect on their sense of self.
- "Liking" a brand is necessarily not the best indicator of brand personality, because there can be many ulterior motives for "liking" a brand on Facebook
- Writing or commenting posts seems to be the best indicator of how much consumers identify themselves with a brand.
- Contrastingly, participating in a contest seems to be the least impacting interactive Facebook element, in terms of associations.
- The concept of trust is very important to consumers when interacting and sharing information with brands on Facebook. This is mainly motivated by the fear of "misbrug along with other primal needs in a tribal setting such as the example of Facebook.

Awareness

- The survey data shows a generally positive attitude towards brand awareness when using most of the interactive Facebook elements. However, the focus group is a little more skeptical, as they do not recall any of the interactive Facebook elements having a real impact of their brand awareness other than when they “like” a brand on Facebook.
- “Liking” and commenting has the greatest impact of remembering a brand the day after, while contest participating has the lowest impact.
- Again the focus group emphasises the importance of great and unique content in order to remembering the brand.

Online Experience

- Facebook users generally want a deeper sense of connection, which shows the importance in creating emotional engagement with the consumer.
- Emotional connections are best evoked by appealing to strong emotions or by provoking. This is best obtained by the activities of commenting, video interaction and picture interaction. While the respondents of the survey and focus group agree that contest participation are the activity which has the lowest impact on emotional connection.
- The sub-parameters of responsiveness and interaction are also important in order to create a feel of a good online experience for Facebook users.
- Brands and companies need to focus on two-way dialogue in order to create a sustainable feel of responsiveness and interaction, in the eyes of the Facebook user.

Appendix 11: Example of current marketing material

