

# CSR on social media

A study of how CSR can affect brand equity in the furniture industry



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## **Resumé**

### **CSR på sociale medier**

*En undersøgelse af hvordan CSR kan have indflydelse på møbelbrands' værdiopfattelse.*

I takt med at et stigende antal brands og privatpersoner benytter sociale medier, har det udviklet sig til at blive et værktøj til markedsføring. Dog kan man ikke nødvendigvis overføre traditionelle markedsføringsmetoder direkte til sociale medier, da forbrugerne på disse platforme forventer en anden interaktion med brands. Samtidig bliver forbrugere præsenteret for mange brands, mens de er på sociale medier. Denne kandidatafhandling undersøger blandt andet hvordan danske møbelbrands kan differentiere sig på de sociale medier og derved få forbrugerens opmærksomhed. Fordi det i nutidens samfund er muligt at fremstille produkter, der ligner konkurrenternes, er det vanskeligt for møbelbrands at differentiere sig på baggrund af særlige produktegenskaber, hvilket har fremtvunget et fokus på brands emotionelle egenskaber i markedsføring. Sociale medier gør det muligt for brands at styrke associationer hos forbrugerne og således fremme forståelsen af de emotionelle egenskaber. Denne afhandling ser på corporate social responsibility (CSR) som en emotionel egenskab, og undersøger hvordan møbelbrands kan udnytte CSR til at skabe værdi for forbrugere på de sociale medier, Facebook og Instagram, og dermed styrke værdiopfattelsen af brandet.

Med Aaker's brand equity teori som udgangspunkt vil denne kandidatafhandling, gennem en analyse, sammenligne et teoretisk grundlag med empiriske observationer (Aaker, 1991). I forlængelse af Aaker, består det teoretiske grundlag af tre hovedtemaer (forbrugeradfærd, CSR og sociale medier) som danner ramme om forståelsen af problemfeltet. Empirien består af kvalitativ data fra interviews med fire danske møbelbrands, der inkluderer bæredygtighed i deres virksomhedsprofil, samt kvantitativ data fra forbrugere på sociale medier. Målet med denne sammenligning er at undersøge hvorvidt teorien danner et grundlag, der kan bruges i praksis, og om de undersøgte brands handler i overensstemmelse med forbrugernes forventning.

På baggrund af teorien anser vi møbler for at være produkter, der kræver en høj grad af involvering fra forbrugerens side og som indebærer en vis grad af risiko alt afhængigt af prisen og funktionen. Derudover mener vi at ved køb af produkter, der kræver høj involvering, vil beslutningsprocessen være kognitiv og følelsesmæssigt præget. Ved høj forbrugerinvolvering skal markedsførings-kommunikation dermed afhjælpe risici og præge forbrugerens attitude *før* køb. Teorien viser desuden, at CSR kan være en konkurrencemæssig fordel, som brands kan bruge til at differentiere sig med. Derudover er CSR en egenskab, der appellerer til forbrugerens følelser samt behov for

selvaktualisering gennem altruisme. Disse betragtninger er relevante i forhold til at klargøre hvordan markedsføring på sociale medier kan bidrage til værdiopfattelsen af brands. Da brands får mest ud af sociale medier, hvis de formår at skabe værdi for forbrugerne gennem deres content, skal brands være opmærksomme på, hvad der skaber værdi for deres følgere og ønskede segment. For at kunne inddrage CSR på en værdiskabende måde, skal brandet være konsekvent i deres kommunikation for at have indflydelse på hvilke associationer, der bliver skabt.

Empirien viser at forbrugere selv leder efter møbelbrands på sociale medier, og derfor er det nødvendigt for de mindre møbelbrands at bryde igennem støjen på sociale medier for at blive taget i betragtning. Generelt associerer forbrugere bæredygtighed med noget positivt, og de er villige til at gå på kompromis med andre værdier for at købe bæredygtige møbler. Møbelbrands oplever ikke et naturligt behov for bæredygtige møbler, men oplever dog en stor interesse, når de formår at skabe content på sociale medier, der giver forbrugerne yderligere indblik i virksomheden og fortæller en historie. Møbelbrands er dog nødt til at skabe opmærksomhed omkring deres brands på baggrund af andre, mere håndgribelige egenskaber, end bæredygtighed, for at brandet bliver inddraget i forbrugerens beslutningsproces. Et møbelbrands CSR kan have indflydelse på forbrugerens attitude og værdiopfattelse af brandet, hvis det bliver kommunikeret kontinuerligt og sammenkoblet med håndgribelige egenskaber.

På baggrund af en analyse og konklusion, præsenterer afhandlingen en række anbefalinger til hvordan online møbelbrands kan inddrage CSR i deres sociale mediestrategi med henblik på at forhøje værdiopfattelsen af deres brands. På baggrund af afhandlingens analyse og konklusion synes det nødvendigt at brands lægger nogle klare strategiske målsætningerne, så ressourcer på sociale medier bliver brugt optimalt. Dermed er anbefalingen, at disse brands finder frem til det sociale medium som deres målgruppe benytter og som egner sig bedst til den historie, de vil fortælle. For at fortælle historien om deres brand bedst muligt, så det er værdiskabende for forbrugerne, skal brandet identificere sine kerneværdier og kommunikere dem på en håndgribelig måde, der også vil fremme forståelsen af deres CSR. Brandet kan med fordel benytte sig af diverse analyseværktøjer til sociale medier, for at finde frem til deres følgeres adfærd og arbejde ud fra denne. Afhandlingen præsenterer en vejledning samt en model, der skal skabe forståelse af forholdet mellem forbrugere og brands, og hjælpe brands med at identificere hvilke overvejelser, de skal gøre sig for succesfuldt at implementere CSR på sociale medier.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

- ◆ Purpose & research question
  - Problem statement
- ◆ Delimitation

## 1. Introduction

“It took thirty-eight years before 50 million people gained access to radios. It took television thirteen years to earn an audience that size. It took Instagram a year and a half.”  
(Vaynerchuck, 2013) p. 4)

During the later years, CSR has shifted from being a concept used in crisis communication and corporate reports to being a means of marketing communication by which brands can differentiate. Consumers in today’s postmodern society have their basic needs covered, which in accordance with Maslow means that they strive for self-actualization and altruism. This thesis investigates whether brands can appeal to consumers’ needs through CSR. Focusing on the furniture industry, this thesis examines whether implementing a brand’s CSR and sustainability efforts in marketing communication can have a positive effect on consumers. As the number of furniture brands increases, an emerging trend within the furniture industry is to implement some degree of sustainability in the branding efforts in order to compete and meet consumers’ needs.

Currently, social media are popular platforms for marketing communication and branding. The social media scene is rapidly expanding, and this development has affected the use and users, as it offers new opportunities for brands and consumers alike. It challenges the power structure between brands and consumers, as the previous touch points between brand and consumer was one-way communication, such as advertisement, leaving companies with the primary control of communication revolving their brand. Branding on social media is however marked by two-way communication, enabling consumers to express their needs and opinions. This can be positive and negative, as brands can be updated on trends and therefore create content that appeals to consumers, and consumers’ opinions can tarnish or enhance a brand’s reputation. Additionally, this changes the existing branding practices because communication via social media can reach vast amounts of consumers across segment and demographic faster than traditional branding. Consumers are constantly exposed to large amounts of information and are directly in contact with multiple brands through official communication from the brand, as well as word-of-mouth regarding the brand. Social media platforms enable brands of all sorts and sizes to come in contact with consumers. Consequently, the competition for consumer attention is intense as the quantity of brands adds to the social media “noise”. For these reasons, brands need to evaluate their ability to differentiate and highlight their competitive advantage. This thesis focuses how furniture brands differentiate by using CSR in their social media communication, to see how it influences brand equity.

## **1.1 Purpose and research question**

The purpose of our thesis is to examine how implementing CSR in online branding influences consumer perception of brands. The scope of research is limited to focusing on SMEs in the furniture industry, as we find this industry particularly interesting with regards to CSR initiatives as a competitive element. Since CSR is being integrated in most industries, and as it is trending for interior bloggers, and Facebook and Instagram users to share photographs of their homes and furniture, we find it interesting whether sustainability and CSR are values that can help generate brand equity.

Today, consumers, as well as the furniture industry, have a thoughtful approach to purchasing and production of furniture in relations to the environment (Meier, 2015), (Vöge, 2015), (The Nielsen Company, 2014). This indicates that consumers, particularly in Denmark, show increased interest in quality furniture rather than cheap, easily replaceable, mass-produced furniture. Consumers thus seem increasingly aware of the social and environmental consequences of consumerism that appeal to their need for self-actualization and altruism.

On the basis of these initial viewpoints, this thesis explores the following research questions:

- ◆ How do consumers comprehend CSR in relations to furniture?
- ◆ How are brands implementing CSR in their social media efforts?
- ◆ How can CSR and sustainability improve consumers' perception of brands?
- ◆ Can CSR be considered a sufficient factor in and of itself in order to affect brand equity?
- ◆ How should a brand communicate CSR on social media in order to affect consumers' perception of their brand?

By investigating the relationship between CSR and consumer-based brand equity on social media, this thesis aims at answering the following problem statement:

*How can an active CSR strategy on social media affect brand equity in the furniture industry?*

## 1.2 Delimitation

In order to answer these questions, we have chosen to focus on the furniture industry, because we wish to investigate the issues with regards to products that hold a symbolic as well as a functional value. Moreover, the focus will be on Danish online brands of small and medium sized enterprises (SME's). The criteria by which we have selected the case companies that would fit our scope of research are:

- ◆ They have no physical stores, only occasional or permanent showrooms.
- ◆ They have included some aspects of CSR in their company profile.
- ◆ They are focused on curated, designer furniture.
- ◆ They are active on at least one of the social media we focus on.

The following thesis will focus on preliminary CSR initiatives with emphasis on sustainability, and the case companies' definition of this. In addition, we wish to examine if and how CSR has an impact on consumer-based brand equity. In accordance to Aaker's theory, we perceive financially based brand equity to be an outcome of consumer-based brand equity and will therefore not look at the financial aspects of our case companies. Subsequently, the thesis will not look at consumer behavior in the sense of purchasing but rather consumer attitude. Thus, our findings will not necessarily illustrate how our respondents act but rather their intentions.

This thesis will focus on expressive social media platforms, exclusively Facebook and Instagram, as these are the relevant media mostly used on a daily basis by the Danish population (Thaarup & Gretlund, 2015) Thus, the term social media in this thesis refers to Instagram and Facebook. The thesis refrains from explaining and analyzing the technical details of the two platforms as this is redundant because the objective is not to demonstrate the practical use of social media but rather to clarify if incorporating CSR in a social media strategy can generate brand equity.

# Chapter 2

## Methodological and theoretical approach

- ◆ Ontological standpoint
- ◆ Methodological approach
- ◆ Theory
- ◆ Empirical data
- ◆ Assessment of methodological approach
- ◆ Thesis structure

## **2. Methodological and theoretical approach**

The following section will present the scientific standpoint and methodological approach through which we have acquired, organized, and produced knowledge for this thesis. This clarification aims at offering transparency that helps validate this knowledge (Rasmussen, Østergaard, & Beckmann, 2006). Based on the scientific standpoint, this chapter establishes an overview of the underlying methodological and theoretical reflections made in order to answer the research questions and answer the problem statement. Furthermore, this chapter will include a technical element, which briefly explains the research design and reflections hereon. Lastly, this section will present a guide to how the thesis should be read.

### **2.1 Ontological standpoint**

Our perception of reality, and thus our perception of the themes explored in this thesis, takes point of departure in social constructivism. Social constructivism revolves around the notion that there is no such thing as reality beyond the realm of our social world. Everything is thus constructed through social interaction and language games between interpreters (Holm, 2013). When referring to brands in the thesis, it is acknowledged that brands only have meaning because society gives them meaning. Consequently, brand equity refers to the value society gives these brands, and hence it is a concept that only exists within certain frames of reference. How brand equity is derived is thus not something this thesis aims at proving or state as a fact. Accordingly, CSR is perceived to be a socially constructed value. It is a concept that only holds value as long as there is an agreement as to what it entails. Research that is rooted in ontological social constructivism thus acknowledges that there is no real truth to be found, but only social relations and phenomena to be explored (*ibid.*). For the reasons mentioned above, it is necessary to establish and clarify the frame of reference within which we operate. In this thesis, the theoretical framework fills this role. The theoretical body of this thesis is anchored in Aaker's brand equity theory, and this will thus be the underlying theme throughout the thesis (Aaker, 1991). The remaining theoretical framework explains consumer behavior theory, CSR theory, and social media in relations to this thesis.

### **2.2 Methodological approaches**

The underlying topic in this thesis is marketing communication, which means the thesis operates in the overlap between the humanities and social sciences as illustrated in figure 2.1 below. Consequently, our methodological approach to this thesis is rooted in hermeneutics.

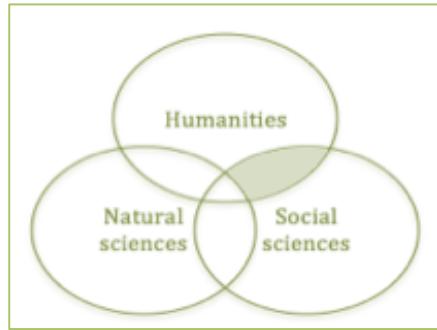


Fig. 2.1 The three sciences. Inspired by (Rasmussen, *et al.*, 2006)

According to philosophical hermeneutic understanding is a process, and the aim is to gain an understanding of a phenomenon, in opposition to i.e. positivism's goal that is to explain a phenomenon on the basis of an objective truth (Fredslund, 2013). The purpose of this thesis is thus not to reach any objective, conclusive truth about the concepts explored, nor to explain *what* brand equity and CSR are, but *why* and *how* CSR can influence consumers and brand equity. In line with hermeneutic traditions, we do not perceive ourselves as objective researchers, and hence our research is influenced by our pre-understanding and preliminary frame of reference (*ibid.*).

As the hermeneutical spiral illustrates in figure 2.2, our pre-understanding forms the basis of our interpretation, and our interpretations provide us with new pre-understandings. The hermeneutical spiral additionally illustrates what is stated above: research is a process, not a result. The purpose of research is thus to move one's horizon of understanding, and thus expand the frame of reference (P. 82, *ibid.*).

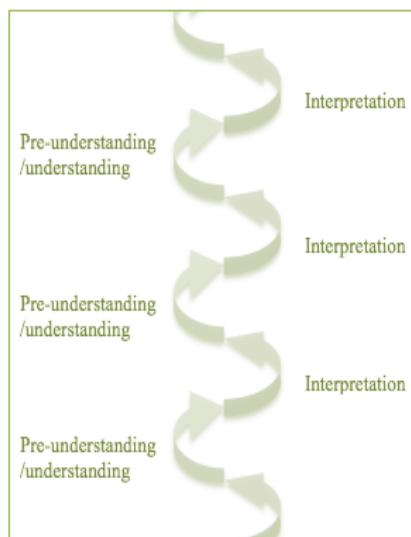


Fig. 2.2 The hermeneutic spiral. Personal contribution inspired by Fredslund, 2012)

Chapter 3, “Current state of affairs”, aims at clarifying our pre-understanding with which we interpret the theoretical and conceptual body. Subsequently, the theoretical hypothesis aims at clarifying a new pre-understanding, which forms the basis of the analysis of the empirical data. Finally, the recommendations in chapter 14 aim at concretizing the concluding findings and results. However, with the hermeneutic epistemology as our methodological device, our results cannot be translated into a standardized, normative answer, and is thus not a hypothesis or theory that can explain the truth about CSR’s effect on brand equity. Rather the purpose is to provide a new horizon of knowledge to the specific field of study, and the recommendations should thus be considered inspiration for practical implementation.

### 2.3 Theoretical data

As mentioned, the thesis explores CSR and consumers in relations to brand equity, as Aaker’s definition of brand equity is the main theory in the thesis (Aaker, 1991). In order to answer the problem statement and contribute with applicable knowledge, it is necessary to include the three main areas illustrated below.

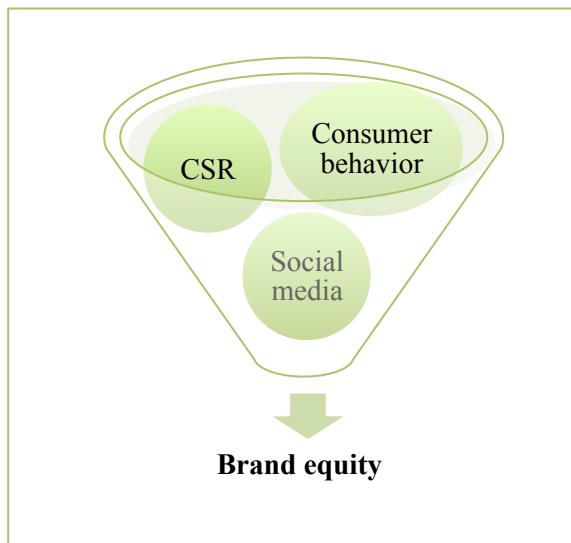


Fig. 2.3 Concept cone. Personal contribution.

First of all, the thesis explores consumer behavior (Chapter 5), to gain an understanding of how branding on social media affect consumers, and how consumers relate to CSR. In order to establish a basic understanding of consumer behavior, we explore theories about the main paradigms within consumer behavior (Foxall, 1986), (Skinner, 1985). However, our main approach to consumer behavior is pragmatic and aims at explaining how marketing communication affect consumers (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). In order to gain an understanding of what CSR encompasses and

how companies can gain a competitive advantage, the thesis has explored a cross-section of prevailing theories on the subject (Porter & Kramer, 2011), (Kramer & Porter, 2006), (Carroll, 2015). We explore CSR, consumer behavior, and social media in relation to each other, in order to gain a nuanced perspective on how these contribute to brand equity. From the theoretical and conceptual framework we establish a theoretical hypothesis to which we can relate our empirical findings.

## 2.4 Empirical data

In order to answer our problem statement, we deem it necessary to test the theoretical hypothesis through empirical data. The empirical data is retrieved through quantitative consumer surveys as well as qualitative interviews that is analyzed and result in a data conclusion that is compared with the theoretical hypothesis. The purpose of the empirical data is to acquire knowledge about a) consumers' perception of brand communication and CSR, and b) how brands incorporate CSR in their branding strategies. Below is a brief description of how the data is retrieved.

### 2.4.1 Quantitative consumer survey

The purpose of quantitative research is to collect large amounts of data that can be comprised and subsequently explain a phenomenon or a tendency (Holm, 2013). The quantitative research method is derived from positivism, and requires that the observer is neutral and objective (*ibid.*). As the model below illustrates, positivistic research method is inductive and aims to collect data, organize it, and establish a theory based on this data.



Fig. 2.4 The positivistic research model. Personal contribution.

As mentioned, this thesis does not aim at establishing a theory, but the research method applied in relations to consumer survey does, in parts, reflect a positivistic approach. In order to be the objective and neutral observers, we made sure to share the survey with respondents to whom we have no relations. We wanted to retrieve data from a segment that already shows interest in

furniture and home decoration and who are active on social media. Hence we joined a variety of interior groups on Facebook where we posted a link to our survey. Due to the established purpose of our paper, we have analyzed the results using the hermeneutics and thus we have not fully followed the inductive research illustrated above.

#### **2.4.2 Qualitative interview with case companies**

Qualitative interviews have the ability to offer in-depth information and using this will provide much data from a limited number of respondents, in contrary to a quantitative research (Holm, 2013). We chose four brands and interviewed a representative about the brands' strategies and experiences with branding on social media. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing the respondents to elaborate on their answers and enable the interviews to evolve in accordance with the conversation. Simultaneously, the semi-structured interviews gives us answers based on the interviewees' reflections and interpretations, which provide a nuanced impression of the tasks involved with using CSR as a part of a brand on social media.

### **2.7 Assessment of methodological approach**

As stated, the hermeneutic methodological approach does not work towards a normative theory. The lack of quantitative, tangible results makes it impossible to fully test and assure our findings. Thus, the reliability and validity of this research cannot be assessed in accordance with traditional scientific manner (Fredslund, 2013). In the traditional sense of scientific research, results are "contaminated" when working within the hermeneutics due to the researchers' subjective positions. Simultaneously, the line between our pre-understandings, level of perception, and interpretation is blurred, which ultimately affects our understanding and results (*ibid.*). We find it highly relevant to provide readers with the following evaluation of the reliability and validity of this study in order to clarify how we have produced knowledge and answered the problem statement.

#### **2.7.1 Reliability**

The reliability of a research study is evaluated by whether the study can be replicated and still have the same outcome. As our research is based in a hermeneutical approach, this method of evaluation should be understood as an expression of the trustworthiness of our research (Fredslund, 2013). In the case of our thesis, it is relevant to highlight which considerations influence our approach to the consumer survey and case company interviews. We are aware that our pre-understanding influences our questionnaire and interview questions, however we wish to accumulate answers that represent the respondents' and interviewees' personal understanding of CSR. Thus, we have made sure not to provide our definition of CSR or pre-understanding of the topics we want to investigate.

Furthermore, we want our survey respondents to be unbiased and without a personal attachment to us. Thus, the survey has been shared in interior groups as elaborated in the survey description.

### 2.7.2 Validity

Validity refers to whether the research is valid and hence whether it actually investigates what it sets out to investigate, and whether the empirical data and results derived thereof are valid (Andersen I. , 2013). As mentioned, evaluating the validity of a study when there are no tangible results can be difficult, hence puts forth two quality requirements from which it is possible to ensure that a hermeneutic study is valid (Fredslund, 2013). This foregoing chapter aims at fulfilling both of these requirements. First of all, as the lines between subject and object are blurred in a hermeneutical study, we -as researchers- must make our pre-understanding explicit. Secondly, the researcher needs to account and argue for every step of the research process, which we do when introducing each section (*ibid.*).

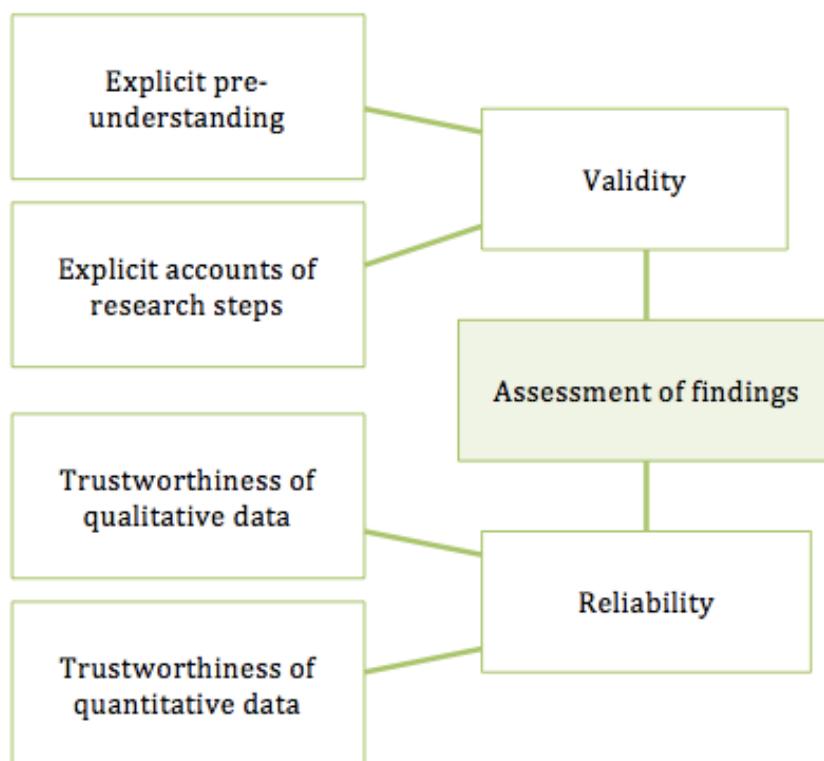


Fig. 2.5 Hermeneutical validity and reliability. Personal contribution.

## 2.10 Thesis structure

### Section one

- Chapter 1** Introduction
- Chapter 2** Methodological and theoretical approach
- Chapter 3** Current state of affairs

The initial three chapters constitute our pre-understanding and initial observation, including the scientific standpoint of the paper from which our research is conducted. These are intended to provide the reader with necessary background information to fully comprehend why the research is relevant and our motivation for the problem statement.

### Section two

- Chapter 4** Brand equity
- Chapter 5** Consumer behavior
- Chapter 6** CSR
- Chapter 7** Social media
- Chapter 8** Theoretical hypothesis

The theoretical framework clarifies the concepts and theory applied throughout the paper, and aims at contributing to the understanding of the analysis. Furthermore, the theoretical framework is a part of our new pre-understanding arising from our research, which the theoretical hypothesis serves to illustrate.

### Section three

- Chapter 9** Presentation empirical data
- Chapter 10** Analysis
- Chapter 11** Data conclusion

The empirical data is fundamental for our paper as it assists us in answering our problem statement. The presentation of the empirical data serves to present the reader with the relevant information, and give insights in our survey and case companies, and what our underlying considerations have been. The analysis explores the empirical data and analyzes it with support from the theoretical framework. The aim of our analysis is to answer the problem statement in a transparent manner.

### Section four

- Chapter 12** Case example
- Chapter 13** Final conclusion
- Chapter 14** Recommendations
- Chapter 15** Discussion

The chapters in the final section serve to juxtapose the theoretical hypothesis and data conclusion, thus answering the research questions and problem statement. Furthermore, this section illustrates the findings through a case example and concretizes the final conclusion through recommendations. Finally, the thesis will present a discussion of the findings and further research.

# Chapter 3

## Current state of affairs

- ◆ The digital age
- ◆ The age of social
- ◆ Branding and CSR
- ◆ CSR in the furniture industry

### **3. Current state of affairs**

The amount of brands within almost every product category has proliferated today, causing increased competition as all brands compete for the consumers' attention (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). The increased competition has been further amplified due to the number of touchpoints between consumers and brands that have occurred with new wave of technology. Previously, communication between consumers and brands was primarily through advertisements and commercials from the brands or when consumers came to a physical store where the brand was sold (Aaker, 1991) (Kotler, *et al.* 2010). Today, consumers are constantly exposed to advertisements through almost every media channel they are in contact with and this means that brands need to stand out in order to reach consumers through the constant noise from competing brands. Likewise, consumers meet brands far more often than before due to the greater variety of channels including various Internet advertisement, sponsored material on blogs, and advertisement on mobile phone applications. We believe, that the plethora of touchpoints has an impact on competition both to a positive and negative degree. One positive aspect observed, is that social media enables smaller companies to communicate and advertise without a significant marketing budget. It is possible for these companies to create brand awareness without necessarily having to pay large amounts of money for advertisement. However, we have observed that the negative aspect lies in the noise it causes when so many brands can communicate and advertise easier. Suddenly, there are even more brands competing to enter consumers' mindset and consequently the noise barrier is harder to break (Vaynerchuck, 2013).

#### **3.1 The Digital Age**

In more recent times, there has been a new wave of technology (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). Consumers can now buy computers, mobile phones, and access the Internet at cheap prices (*ibid.*). This technological advance has allowed people to connect with each other and gain access to information and news in a matter of seconds. Likewise, people can also spread, create and share information. This brings forth opportunities for businesses of all sizes. E-commerce is accepted as a common way to shop, and the number of online shoppers in Denmark is increasing each year (Danmarks Statistik, 2015). The Internet enables consumers to purchase their products and goods online, thus removing the need to go to a physical store and sometimes completely cutting out a retailer, allowing consumers to purchase directly from the producing brand. According to Statistics Denmark, 3.4 million Danish citizens have purchased goods or services via the Internet in 2015 and there has been an increase of approx. 100.000 purchases since 2014 (Danmarks Statistik, 2015).

This increased tendency of online purchasing caused us to draw our attention towards online brands. The development within e-commerce, indicates that Danish consumers feel safe with purchasing from both Danish and International online shops, which additionally increases competition (Foreningen for Dansk Internet Handel, 2016).

### 3.2 The age of social

The growth of social media during the later years makes “[t]he fastest growing marketing sector getting people’s attention[...]” (p. 4, Vaynerchuck, 2013), (p. 211, Close, 2012). This is testimony to the changes within marketing communications that undoubtedly disrupts business as usual.

Equivalent to online shops, social media offers an inexpensive, easy, and effective tool for marketing communication. As most social media is free, it is possible for even the smallest company to establish a presence online, and come in contact with consumers. Additionally, consumers can easily access information about products, brands, and companies. Social media makes it possible for consumers to share their knowledge and experiences regarding brands and companies, thus “[Consumers] are no longer unaware, but informed [...]”, which provides them with increased leverage compared to traditional marketing communication (p.11, Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). Through social media, consumers “[...] are no longer passive but are active in giving useful feedback to companies” (p. 11, Kotler, *et al.*, 2010) Social media have generated transparency because consumers are able to challenge, ask questions, and develop a truer picture of the brand. Consumers are no longer only told one story through advertisement from the brand, but can see conversations or complaints from others that might influence their perception of certain brands (Rowles, 2014). As a result companies are not expected to talk *to* consumers, but *with* consumers. Consumers are able to share their opinions as quickly as companies are able to share their content. Content on social media can encourage immediate response in terms of call-for-action, or encourage engagements in terms of interaction through likes, shares, and comments. Companies should consider that this could be perceived as a cause for vulnerability, but at the same time companies are able to react quickly with the opportunity to do damage control before their reputation is tarnished. This is especially relevant to CSR, which will be returned to in chapter 6. The distance between consumer and brand is thus shorter due to the use of social media. The relationship is more than ever signified by the social dimension that has occurred with the advance of social media. As the table 3.1 shows, 42 percent of the Danish population had an active profile on some online social media platform in 2009, while in 2015 the number had increased to 65

percent of the Danish population (Danmarks Statistik, April, 2011) (Danmarks Statistik, December, 2015).

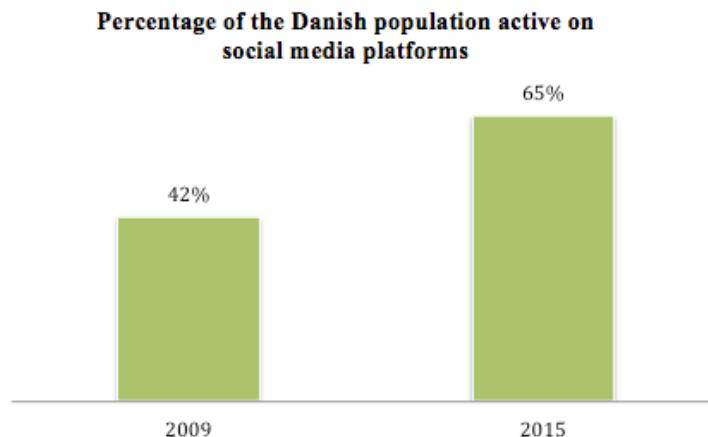


Table 3.1 Activity on social media. Based on numbers from Statistics Denmark.

Table 3.2 illustrates that there has been an increase in the daily use of Facebook and Instagram among the Danish population only looking at the numbers from 2014 to 2015 (Thaarup & Gretlund, 2015).

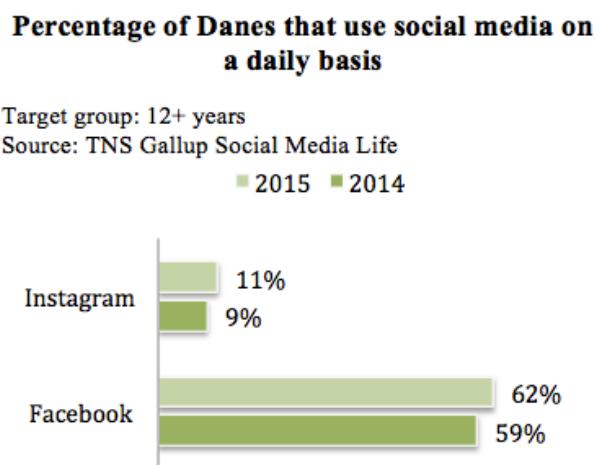


Table 3.2 Daily activities on social media. Numbers from DR Medieforskning and TNS Gallup.

### 3.3 Branding and CSR

The term CSR, in its modern formulation, came about after WWII (Carroll, 2015). In the 1960's consumers became more socially conscious with regards to issues such as civil rights, women's rights, and the environment. The growing attention to these issues also enhanced the inspection of

companies' behavior and practices. Today, we still see that stakeholders, especially consumers, express concerns for social and environmental issues. Stakeholders voice their concerns and expectations for companies to do more than be profitable and conform to the law (*ibid.*). Furthermore, partly due to globalization, more companies have outsourced their production causing stakeholders, such as NGO's, to pressure them to take responsibility for their actions and production (Andersen & Skjoett-Larsen, 2009) (Perez-Aleman & Sandilands, 2008).

Before consumerism had its breakthrough, products were differentiable on the basis of their functional attributes, thus unique selling propositions (USP), such as "highest quality material" or "longest lifecycle" were sufficiently compelling. As the number of products increased within each category, companies were forced to brand their products in order to stand out, and thus the notion of branding occurred (Hansen, 2012). Due to this development, consumers no longer buy products on the basis of what they *can* but on the basis of what they *are* and hence what they represent. Branding is concerned with emotional selling propositions (ESP), appealing to consumers' emotions and ego. Throughout this thesis, CSR is considered an emotional selling proposition that appeals to consumers' self-actualization. CSR initially prevailed as a way of managing risks and reputation (Porter & Kramer, 2011). However, we have observed that the perception of CSR has changed within certain industries. As some companies still emphasize their philanthropic deeds, others implement CSR in their core business strategy and in their brand (Esty & Winston, 2006). Theory indicates that CSR as a competitive advantage from a consumer perspective is not about *doing good* but about *being good*. Consumers are increasingly aware of how they and their consumption affect society (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). This thesis is based on the belief that this development will continue, and consumers will be increasingly occupied with brands that reflect this sentiment (Meier, 2015) (The Nielsen Company, 2014). In the age of social, CSR can be perceived as a way of sharing value between corporations and society, but also between brands and consumers through ESPs.

To sum up, as a consequence of the aforementioned new technological wave and the increased transparency, information is spread quicker and can be targeted to a larger audience. As consumers are increasingly interested in CSR, and social media is gaining impetus, brands might use this as an ESP that consumers will value on social media.

### 3.4 CSR in the furniture industry

We chose to focus on the furniture industry because we find that furniture, like food and housing, is a constant need for consumers in the western society. Unlike some industries that produce goods that there may no longer be a market for, furniture poses a market that will most likely exist forever. As previously mentioned, competition has increased, and even though there will always be a market for furniture, the trends and consumer preferences will change. Currently, we see a trend for CSR and sustainability that has influenced almost all industries including the furniture industry. A recent survey conducted by Voxmeter for the Dutch bed manufacturer, Auping, shows that 19 % of the Danish population consciously looks for sustainable products when they buy furniture (Meier, 2015). In continuation of the above, we have observed a tendency on social media, especially Facebook, Instagram, and various Blogs, where people share photographs of their home, furniture, and newly purchased items with an explicit reference to the brands. The aforementioned trends in relations to CSR and social media spurred our initial interest, and encouraged us to look at how companies integrated this into their strategy and branding activities.

### 3.5 Theoretical framework

Based on the above, this thesis revolves around the concepts as illustrate in figure 3.3 below. Upon researching the theoretical scope within marketing communication we find that there is no universal agreement as to *how* and *why* marketing communication works, whether it is through offline or online channels. Marketing communication through social media is a rather new field, which scholars and professionals are still investigating and trying to conceptualize in order to establish a theoretical framework that makes it possible to analyze the effect of social media. We additionally find that the same lack of theoretical consensus is evident pertaining to how CSR affects consumers. For these reasons we find it necessary to present and establish the theoretical framework that represents our understating of marketing communication, social media interaction between brands and consumers, and the relevance of CSR in relation to brand equity. In the following, we will explain the concepts and terminology that we will use to investigate our research question.



Fig. 3.3 Theoretical framework. Personal contribution.

# Chapter 4

## Brand equity

- ◆ Managing brand equity
- ◆ Brand equity factors
- ◆ How brand equity affects companies

## 4. Managing brand equity

The term brand equity, which emerged in the 1980's, indicates a brand's monetary value (H. Hansen). However, several definitions covered the term at the time. One of the reasons for this is that brand equity refers to a financial aspect as well as a consumer-based aspect. Aaker's defines brand equity as "[...] a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers." (p. 15, Aaker, 1991). We agree with this definition, yet this thesis focuses on consumer-based brand equity and perceive financial-based brand equity as a result thereof.

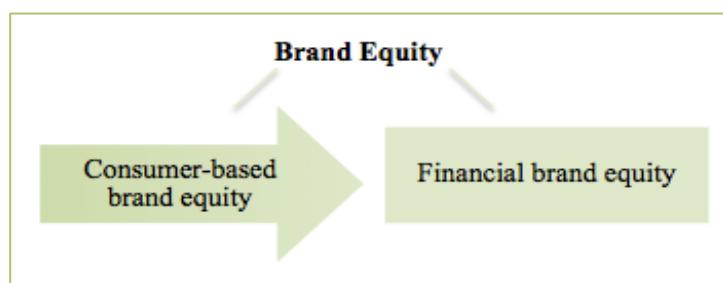
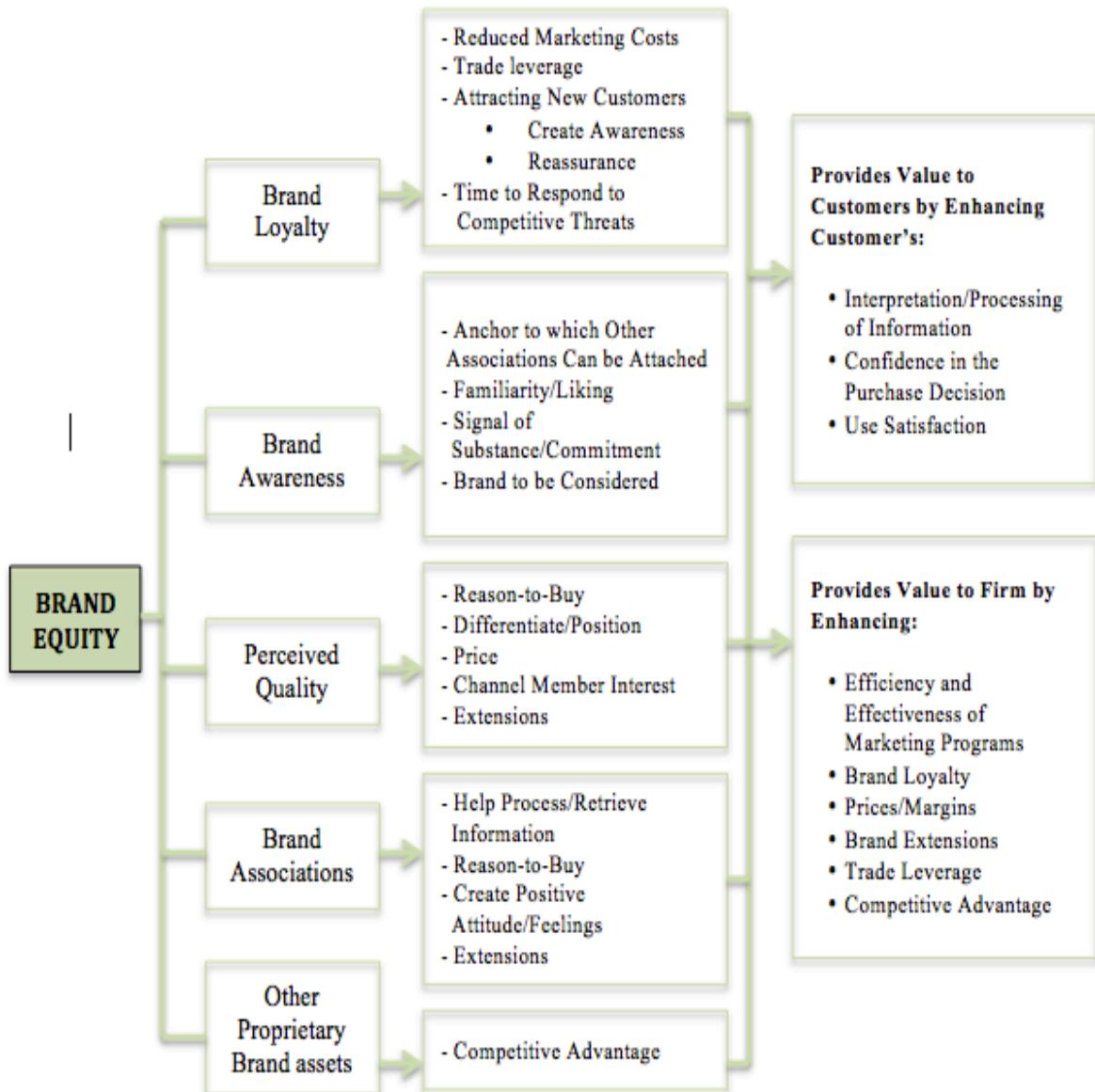


Fig. 4.1 Consumer-based and financial brand equity. Personal contribution.

As such, brand equity refers to the economic value of a brand in relation to the consumers' behavior towards the brand and the consumers' perception of the brand. However, the value-assessment is never fully measurable since the brand and its worth is only constructed in the mind of the consumer, and is the consumers' sense of added value. Consumers' interest in and attitude towards the brand thus reflect on brand equity and thus brand value (p. 369, Hansen, 2012) (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). For these reasons it is vital to be aware of how consumer-based brand equity is generated and maintained as this determines the overall financial value of the brand.

Managing brand equity means managing the assets and skills of the company. Aaker distinguishes between assets and skills and states that managing these can provide a competitive advantage under the right circumstances (Aaker, 1991). An asset is characteristic to the company and refers to something the company has i.e. a brand name or retail location that is different from competitors. For instance, within the furniture industry assets could be Danish design combined with low-cost manufacturing. These assets provide possible competitive advantages for companies like the online Danish couch brand Sofakompagniet, who are explicit about their Danish design, yet produce in Vietnam. Skills refer to what a company *does* differently from its competitors such as advertising or customer service. Using the companies' skills right could lead to brand awareness or positive brand

perceptions. However, it is important to identify the key assets and skills and use them in the right way, since “The right assets and skills [...] allow the competitive advantage to persist over time and thus lead to long-term profits.” (p. 13, Aaker, 1991)



4.2 Aaker's Brand Equity model (Aaker, 1991)

## 4.1. Brand equity factors

As the above model illustrates, brand equity consists of a set of factors:

- ◆ Brand loyalty
- ◆ Brand awareness
- ◆ Perceived quality
- ◆ Brand associations
- ◆ Other proprietary brand assets.

Each of these factors generate certain values, such as positive attitude, familiarity, and ‘reason-to-buy’ (*first column*). These then provide customer and companies with additional values like satisfaction and competitive advantage (*second column*).

### 4.1.1 Brand loyalty

According to Aaker, a loyal customer base will reduce the vulnerability to competitive action. High brand loyalty means greater trade leverage, and existing customers can provide brand exposure and reassurance to new customers. The other factors of brand equity all influence and possibly help generate brand loyalty. Brand loyalty is often referred to as an expression of genuine loyalty, meaning that the consumer consciously chooses one brand above others. However, other theories define brand loyalty as an expression of subconscious frequent purchase of a certain brand. Although consumers are able to articulate preference, this theory suggests that consumer’s choices are rooted in heuristics and rules that are supposed to govern certain aspects of behavior, so consumers do not have to make a decision about everything all the time. As something becomes routine, consumers’ decision-making process is on autopilot (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015).

### 4.1.2 Brand awareness

“Brand recognition is the basic first step in the communication task. [...]” (p. 63, Aaker, 1991) and creates brand awareness. Brand awareness refers to the ability to recognize or recall a brand and identify it as a part of a certain product category (Aaker, 1991). When a consumer is aware of a brand, it is more likely to be preferred when a purchase decision is made. For instance, when consumers recognize the brand IKEA, they know that the product category is home furnishing, and thus there is an automatic link between product category and brand. The brand then is linked in memory to situations in which such a product is needed (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). Aaker’s

brand equity model illustrates how brand awareness affects the consumer and thus creates value in at least four ways, which are defined below.

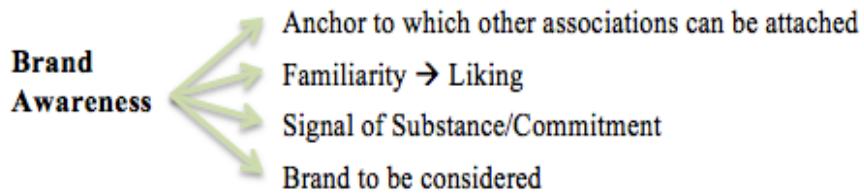


Fig. 4.3 The value of brand awareness (p. 63, Aaker, 1991)

- ⇒ **Anchor to which associations can be attached:** Once a brand name is established in the consumer's mind, the company can attempt to communicate brand attributes, which are intended to be associated with the brand name. Brand attributes could for instance be up-cycling, or re-used wood, which the consumer may associate with sustainability.
- ⇒ **Familiarity/linking:** Recognition and awareness provides consumers with a sense of familiarity, which consumers generally tend to like (Aaker, 1991), (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). However, this is mostly based on studies of low-involvement product, which is not the focus of our paper. Nevertheless, it is relevant to take into consideration that Aaker (1991) refers to external studies that indicate that exposure to a brand can affect the consumers' likeability of a product. As mentioned, low-involvement purchases of low perceived risk are likely to occur when consumers have a sense of familiarity towards the brand. Familiarity can change in the consumers' perception and become confidence and trust, which are necessary for purchases with higher perceived risk and increased consumer involvement. Furthermore, consumers are more likely to remember familiar brands.
- ⇒ **Substance/Commitment:** There are certain assumptions amongst consumers that if a brand name is known and familiar it has either advertised frequently, been in business for a long time, or is overall successful (Aaker, 1991). This assumption will reflect positively in consumers' preference. However, if a brand name is unknown consumers tend to be suspicious about whether the brand is substantial or that the company behind is not sufficiently committed, which will render negative results in relation to consumer preference.

⇒ **Brands to consider:** There is a certain ‘consideration set’, which entails the brands that are considered by the consumer before a purchase. The first brands that are recalled or recognized will have a competitive advantage.

Brand awareness is of high importance as consumers are more comfortable with brands they deem familiar, and will often find familiarity reliable and consider familiar brands to be of reasonable quality (*ibid.*).

#### 4.1.3 Perceived quality

Perceived quality is the consumer’s perception of the overall quality of a product with respect to its intended purpose (*ibid.*). Aaker (1991) notes that it is important to differentiate perceived quality from actual and objective quality, as quality is subjective and consumers differ sharply in their needs and preferences. Also it is important to differentiate the concept from satisfaction because the level of satisfaction is based on the initial level of expectation. Thus, a consumer can be satisfied with a product of low quality if he or she had low expectations. On the other hand, high-perceived quality is not consistent with low expectations. It is relevant to clarify these expectations to quality as this thesis sets out to examine customer’s perceptions of brands, and a part of the following analysis is to look into customer’s expectations to quality, performance, price, and appearance of furniture.

Moreover, Aaker (1991) states, that consumers can have a positive attitude about a brand because a product is of high quality and at the same time find it inexpensive. On the contrary, consumers may have a negative attitude towards a brand with high-quality products that they deem to be overpriced. The model below illustrates how consumer satisfaction is influenced by their perception of quality.

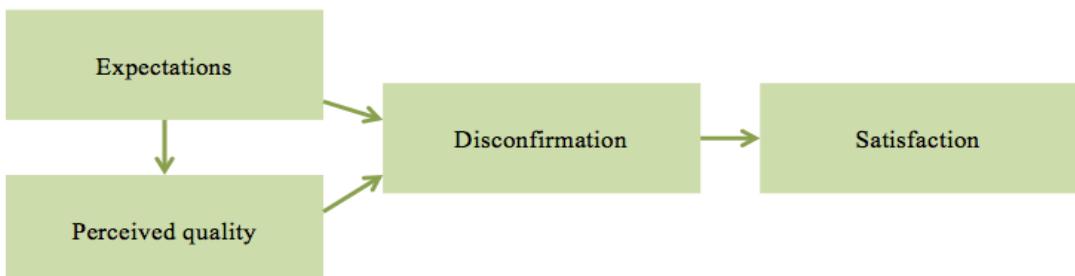


Fig. 4.4 Expectancy disconfirmation model (p. 11, Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015)

Perceived quality is the single most important factor affecting a business unit’s performance relative to its competitors as it affects market share and price (p. 88, *ibid*). However, achieving high quality

is not enough; the high quality of a product must be translated into perceived quality in the consumer's mind. One way to achieve perceived quality is to ensure that a key feature of the product is visible, for instance real leather may indicate quality to the consumer. Research has shown that in many product classes a key feature that is visible can influence the perception of other, more intangible features (*ibid.*). There are two kinds of cues that may influence brand associations and thus perceived quality: Intrinsic, which are the products features, and extrinsic such as brand name and advertisement (*ibid.*). For instance, customers may rely on price as a quality cue if there are no other visible cues. The use of price as a cue will vary from consumer to consumer. Some may view high price as a cue for high quality, but others may view a high price as a "rip-off" or simply not be of the belief that high price is necessarily equal to high quality. Furthermore, the connection between price and quality also varies from product category.

#### 4.1.4 Brand associations

Brand associations are "The underlying value of a brand name[...]" and hence they indicate the brands' "[...]" meaning to people" (p. 110, *ibid.*). Aaker (1991) defines brand associations as anything linked in memory to a brand. These associations can create a positive attitude or feeling, provide credibility, and 'reason-to-buy', or to the contrary, have a negative effect. The more exposure and experience consumers have with brands, for instance through communication, the stronger a certain link will be, according to Aaker (1991). In this thesis, it is relevant because the focus is on social media platforms as a communicative device exposing consumers to the brands. The focus furthermore extends to whether the case companies associate their brands with CSR and sustainability or not. Aaker (1991) presents eleven types of brand associations as shown below.



Fig. 4.5 Brand associations (p. 115Aaker, 1991)

As not all the associations are applicable to the case companies, this thesis revolves around product attributes, customer benefits, lifestyle/personality, and country/geographic area.

⇒ *Product attributes* are the associations most often used. Often product attributes are chosen to position the brand, and the main problem obtaining these, with regard to brand positioning, is to find an attribute that is important to the target segment, that can give a competitive advantage, and is not already claimed by a competitor. For instance, we associate IKEA with *self-assembly furniture*.

⇒ *Customer benefits* are also often used as brand associations. For instance the association of high quality translates into the customer benefit of resilient, long lasting products that do not need replacement within the near future. However, Aaker distinguishes between the terms *rational customer benefits* and *psychological customer benefits*, which correspond to Rosenbaum-Elliott's definition of symbolic and functional value presented in chapter 5.

Like functional values, rational benefits are a part of the consumer's rational decision-making process, and psychological benefits are related to symbolic values as they are linked to the feelings generated with the consumer when buying or using a certain brand.

The following table 4.6 is inspired by Aaker's model with examples that illustrate how the two types of benefits can be present within furniture as a product category (p. 120, ibid.).

<b>Product</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Rational benefit/ functional value</b>	<b>Psychological benefit/ symbolic value</b>
<b>Table</b>	Made from bamboo	Hardwearing and environmentally friendly.	Confidence in the quality and fulfill altruistic need of doing something good for the environment.
<b>Bookshelf</b>	Customized design	Will fit individual homes in size and colors.	Assurance that the furniture will suit one's home. Uniqueness of the furniture bolster consumers' ego.

Table 4.6 Benefits and values

- ⇒ Consumers can instill brands with a number of human-like *personalities and lifestyle characteristics*, such as being friendly or innovative. For instance, we associate the furniture company Sofakompagniet with being stylish, and the company JYSK with being trustworthy and down-to-earth.
- ⇒ A *country or geographic area* can be a strong symbol because consumers often connect the country with certain materials or capabilities. These associations can thus be exploited by associating a brand with the particular country or area. Linking a brand to a geographical area may be relevant in terms of place of production i.e. by creating positive associations to something that is locally produced. It may also relate to certain design traditions. For instance, we associate HAY with Nordic design and Nordic style.

#### **4.1.5 Other proprietary brand assets**

The last factor in Aaker's (1991) definition of brand equity is other proprietary brand assets. These are assets such as patents, trademarks, and channel relationships. For obvious reasons these are important for a company's operations and management, and can for instance help generate a competitive advantage. We find that these are irrelevant to our research, as the thesis focuses on marketing communication.

#### **4.2 How companies can thrive from brand equity**

The interrelationship between the different brand equity factors is relevant to consider. For instance, brand awareness could influence perceived quality, because when consumers recognize brand names, they tend believe that the product is of decent quality. Moreover, brand associations can influence perceived quality, as exemplified above. Most importantly, perceived quality will directly influence brand loyalty and not least purchase decisions (p. 19, *ibid.*).

The purpose of successful marketing communication is to elevate brand equity through the factors we have mentioned. When the brand actively puts efforts into managing brand awareness, associations, and quality, brand equity can attract new customers, retain existing customers, and recapture old ones (*ibid.*). Thus, as mentioned previously, if a company manages to identify their key skills and assets and maintains these properly, they can create a competitive advantage. In conclusion, if a brand achieves to create value for consumers through their marketing communication, the consumer-based brand equity will increase and thus the financially based brand equity is expected to increase as well. Moreover, previous research recognizes the positive

influence of brand equity on consumer preference and purchase intention, consumer perception of product quality, and even market share (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016).

# Chapter 5

## Consumer behavior

- ◆ Approaches to consumer behavior
- ◆ Modern approaches to consumer behavior
- ◆ USP to ESP

## 5. Approaches to consumer behavior

Behavioral psychology is an interdisciplinary field to which many scholars and professionals have given their contribution. Our understanding of consumer behavior takes point of departure in a modern approach to consumer behavior (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). However, we find it necessary to elaborate on the two main consumer behavior theories, cognitive and behavioral. In order to relate consumer behavior to brand equity, it is essential to give a nuanced presentation the main frameworks.

### 5.1 Behavioral approach

Behaviorism is based on the idea that consumer behavior is a response to the consumer's surroundings, and behavior is based on a principle of reward vs. punishment. If our behavior triggers a rewarding response, the pattern will show a repetitive behavior. The behavioristic approach is thus based on the notion of reinforcement strategies that happen on a subconscious level (Foxall, 1986). In contrast to cognitivist theories, explained in section 5.2, behaviorism assumes that experience with a brand subconsciously will foster an attitude that will determine consumers' behavior. Rational behaviorism dismisses the cognitive, internal processes, and suggests that the distance between stimulus and response is short as seen in the model below (*ibid.*). Effective marketing seen from a behavioral perspective would be focused on the quantity rather than the quality, and assume that a high level of exposure will correspond to a high level of awareness that is sufficient for the consumer to make a purchase. Upon purchase, they will either be left with a positive or a negative impression, which will then reward them or punish them. For example, when a consumer buys a chair that correlates with the consumer's expectations to quality, this will manifest itself as a positive experience and will result in reinforcement and thus the consumer will be likely to consider the brand yet again.



Fig. 5.1 Behavioral stimulus and response. Personal contribution. Inspired by (Foxall, 1986) (Skinner, 1985)

### 5.2 Cognitive approach

Cognition is a term that covers the internal, mental processes related to i.e. judgment, evaluation and perception. The cognitive theory assumes that consumers are rational beings, and the choices consumers make are rooted in rational, evaluative behavior. Accordingly, consumers think *before* they do, and they do *because* they think. Consumer choice is, according to the cognitive approach,

rooted in internal processes. Consumers' behavior reflects the associations and attitudes that have been formed through experience (*ibid*). Roughly, this means that effective marketing based on a cognitive approach would be focused on the quality of advertisement and other marketing communication. Theory indicates that consumers would pay attention to the content of the message a brand wishes to deliver, and thus base their decision upon their acquired knowledge of the brand or product (Skinner, 1985). As the model below illustrates, cognition assumes that after an initial stimulus, consumers form an attitude that will render a response.



Fig. 5.2 Cognitive stimulus and response Inspired by (Foxall, 1986) (Skinner, 1985)

### 5.3 Modern approach to consumer behavior

Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) suggests that the dichotomy between the behavioral and cognitive approach is not clear. The traditional cognitive approach is an idealized model, and the assumption that consumer behavior is controlled and conscious does not fully encompass and explain consumer's behavior. In familiar environments, consumers develop habitual behavior that to some extent resembles the behavioral theory (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.* 2015). For instance, consumers are presented with a vast number of choices everyday, and if they are presented with the same choices a number of times, they will act out of habit.

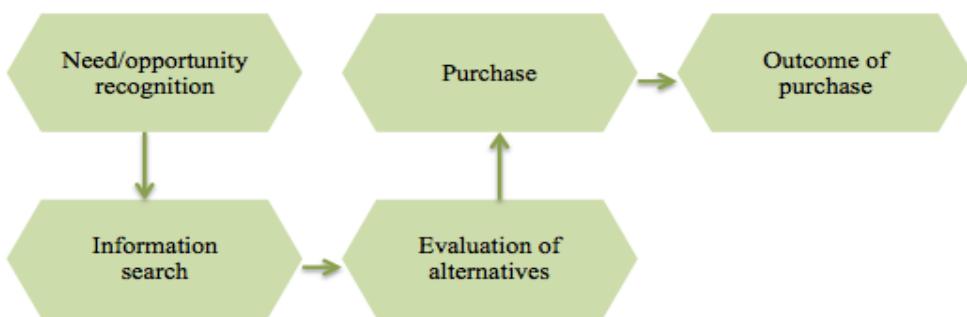


Fig. 5.3 decision-making process p. 68 (Fill, 2011)

The entire decision-making process as presented above takes point of departure in cognitive psychology and the presumption that our decisions are caused by internal, conscious, cognitive processes. Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) presents an alternate interpretation of the classical decision-making model, in which the notion of the subconscious has been taken into account. Our

understanding of consumer behavior takes point of departure in this representation; hence our approach throughout the thesis is based on the following points.

- ◆ **Need/opportunity recognition** is in many cases based in a subconscious curiosity or a need to emulate other people.
- ◆ **Information search** is an internal process, through which information is retrieved in memory. Awareness alone may be sufficient to elicit a choice.
- ◆ **Evaluation of alternatives** is performed on the basis of evaluation criteria that are concerned with product attributes, and decision rules that the consumer subconsciously develops. Instead of utilizing cognitive effort, consumers make choices based on heuristics.
  - ⇒ **Compensatory** decision rules allow one attribute to overcome for the lack of others.
  - ⇒ **Non-compensatory** decision rules allows one attribute or single standard to be accepted and alternatives that do not live up to this are eliminated. These decision rules are developed in memory on the basis of past experience.
- ◆ **Purchase** is often performed impulsively on the basis of a range of factors. Between a formed purchase intention and the actual purchase these factors will intervene which consequently mean that a conscious purchase decision is seldom formed prior to the actual purchase act.
- ◆ **Outcome of Purchase** is determined by prior expectations. The experience and evaluation thereof will thus be determined on the basis of an interpretation of these, as the model shows.

### 5.3.1 Emotions

Apart from a subconscious, habitual level, Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) also suggests that the classical cognitive model fails to take emotions into account, although they play an important role in marketing and consumer behavior. The understanding of how emotions and behavior are linked is imperative in order to understand how consumers receive, interpret, and react to marketing communication. Knowing how to affect consumers on an emotional level makes it possible to create content that affects the consumers subconsciously but effectively. Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) distinguishes between primary and secondary emotions. The primary are intrinsic to human beings and arise upon emotional stimuli. These are for instance joy, fear, and disgust. The secondary emotions are taught through culture and learned experience, and can be verbally express. These are for instance shame or love. What is important to recognize is that the secondary emotions are representations of the primary emotions, and are as such constructed through social interaction. This social interaction subsequently leads to an understanding of accepted behavior and value patterns.

In the same way that cultural and social variations exist in the *representation* of secondary emotions, these variations are also visible in the way consumers express, experience, and regulate such emotions (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy, & Pervan, 2015). This is an important point to keep in mind in relations to marketing communication. An understanding of sociocultural environment in which a brand is marketed is important in order to be able to create content that elicits the intended response in the form of brand attitude and brand associations. Communication thus has to be developed with attention to the sociocultural environment and context in which it is executed.

Furthermore, Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) presents four laws of emotional response that are crucially important to understanding the consumer. It is necessary to summarize the four laws, as this thesis takes point of departure in the notion that consumers' perception and interpretation of marketing content concerning CSR is linked to emotional responses, and that these responses thus are important in relation to brand equity.

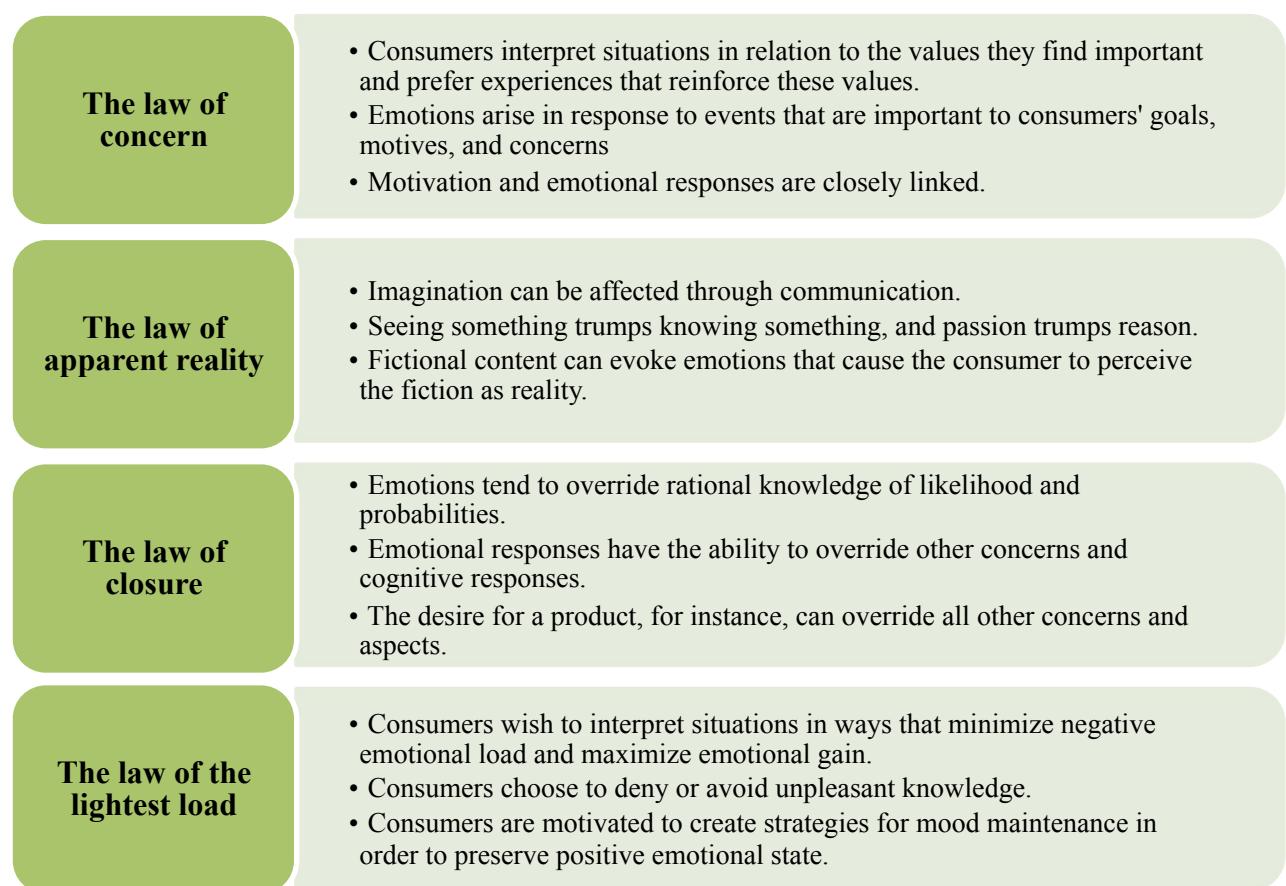


Fig. 5.4 Laws of emotional response (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015)

The emotional responses are, as mentioned, important to take into account when creating content that is supposed to have significant impact on consumers. Additionally, the understanding of emotions also emphasizes the argument that consumers are not one hundred percent in control of their behavior (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy, & Pervan, 2015).

### 5.3.2 Perceived risk

In every purchase decision, the consumer evaluates the risks pertaining to the purchase consciously or subconsciously. The perceived risk arises because a consumer has none or limited certainty of the product's performance, and the evaluation will thus help the consumer to make up his or her mind about whether the benefits of the products are worth the risk.

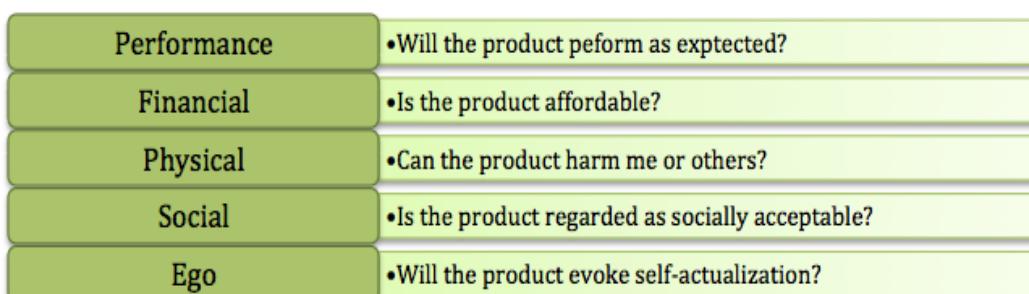


Fig. 5.5 Perception of risk (p. 70, Fill, 2011)

As shown in model 5.5, perceived risk can be related to different aspects of the product, and the level of risk pertaining to each aspect is different. Simultaneously, not all products are evaluated on the basis of all risk criteria. As seen in figure 5.5 a product may be evaluated in relation to its' functional value or its' symbolic value. For instance, when consumers buy products where there is high-perceived risk concerning the safety, i.e. a baby changing table, marketing communication should aim at assuring the consumers by reducing the physical perceived risk. This could be by highlighting the solid construction and positive customer feedback. However, consumers buy products for the social and ego-related aspects, marketing communication should highlight the symbolic values. The perceived risk is always evaluated in a context, and will thus vary depending on the consumer and the specific situation (Fill, 2011), (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015).

As mentioned, consumers' purchase decisions are based on prior experience and expectations for the future. The perceived risk is thus not static in the mind of the consumer, but can be altered through the consumer's direct or indirect experience with the brand. Through direct contact, the perceived risk will be altered on the basis of the consumer's post-purchase evaluation, as shown in

figure 4.4, p. 25. Perceptions of risk can be altered through indirect contact such as word-of-mouth or marketing communication directly from the brand as exemplified above. One objective of marketing communication is thus to reduce the perceived risk that the consumer associates with the brand, either by convincing the consumer of the performance of a product, alleviate financial insecurity, assure the consumer's safety, or appeal to the consumer's need to be socially accepted and gain self-esteem. Through positive direct or indirect experience, the level of trust will increase, which will result in a reduced perceived risk. In accordance with Aaker's (1991) brand equity factors, we believe that this will reflect positively on brand perception and thus on brand equity.

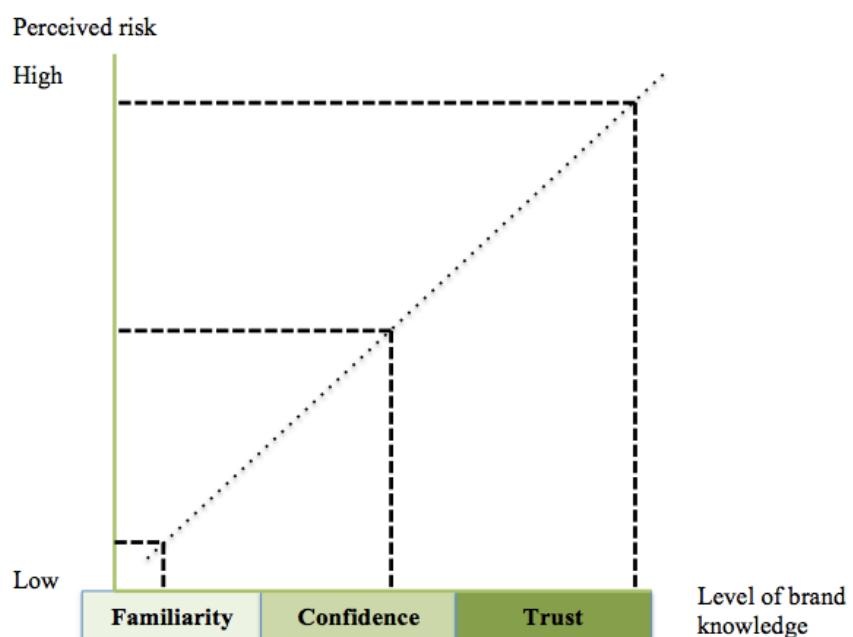


Fig. 5.6 personal contribution

Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) presents three modes through which the consumer asserts expectations about the future that are based on personal experiences and cultural meaning systems. These are familiarity, confidence, and trust as illustrated horizontally in the model. In cases of low perceived risk, the brand or product only needs to evoke a sense of familiarity in order for a purchase to occur as indicated with the diagonal line. If the perceived level of risk increases, the consumer needs to feel confident in the brand or product in order for their wish to purchase to exceed the perceived risk. At high levels of perceived risk the consumer needs to trust the brand or product in order for a purchase to occur. If a product fails to live up to consumer's expectations, the level of trust will not increase. However, if consumers' post-purchase evaluation of a product or brand is positive, the perceived risk will reduce and over time confidence will turn into trust.

### 5.3.3 Involvement

The level of involvement a purchase requires also modifies the level of perceived risk. Since the level of involvement cannot be quantifiably measured, we differentiate between high and low involvement in accordance with Rosenbaum-Elliott. Figure 5.7 below illustrates how involvement relates to frequency and the benefits.

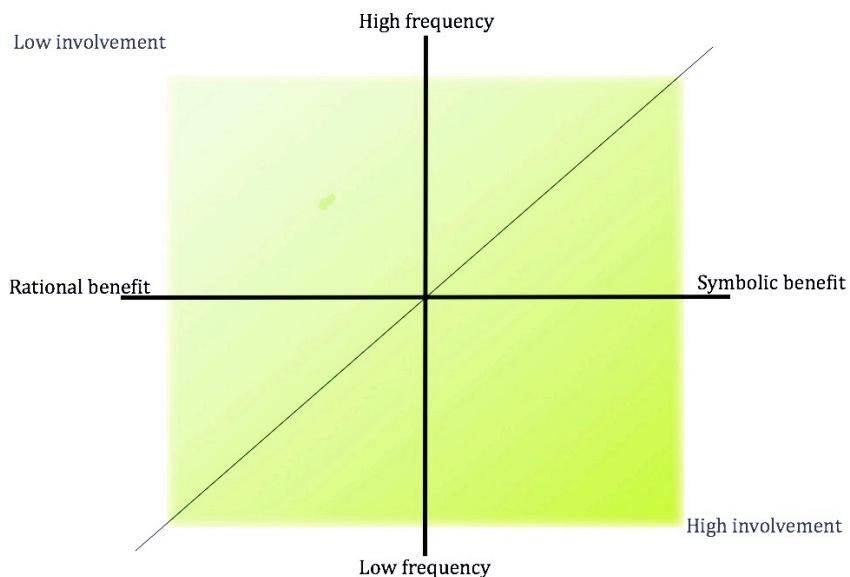


Fig. 5.7 Level of involvement. Personal contribution.

**High involvement** state of mind is required when consumers perceive a purchase to be of high risk and high personal relevance. As mentioned, risk may be perceived in relation to several factors as seen in figure 5.5, (p. 34). In accordance with Aaker (1991) and Rosenbaum-Elliott's (2015) theories, we believe that products or brands bought rarely require higher involvement as the consumer has limited previous direct experience with the brand or product. Products that would be perceived as constituting high risk and require high involvement state of mind need to be branded with focus on confidence and trust. Branding an expensive designer table would require content that reduces the financial risk and emphasizes the design to appeal to consumers' social and ego-related aspects. Marketing communication should focus on forming consumers' attitude in order to elicit a behavior. Thus awareness should focus on high level of information and rational messages (Fill, 2011).

**Low involvement** state of mind occurs when a purchase does not constitute any perceived threats to the consumer, and the consumer does not detect and perceive any high risk (Fill, 2011). As

mentioned, in purchase decisions where low involvement occurs, familiarity is sufficient in order for a purchase to occur. These situations are often related to purchases performed frequently, such as purchasing fast moving consumer goods. This constitutes low risk, and the cognitive process is low as many purchase-decisions are not planned actions. The purchase is not a demanding task, and as the purchase occurs more frequently, consumers will act instinctively and use self-invented heuristics to make a choice, based on past experience. Consequently, marketing communication related to purchases that will constitute low risk and low involvement needs to be focused on evoking familiarity.

	<b>Awareness</b>	<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Long run behavior</b>
<b>Marketing communications where there is low involvement</b>	High information Low frequency Word-of-mouth Website Rational messages	Sales promotions Website	Product purchase Word-of-mouth Website	Advertising Sale promotions
<b>Marketing communications where there is high involvement</b>	<b>Awareness</b>  High information Low frequency Word-of-mouth Website Rational messages	<b>Attitude</b>  Website Literature Word-of-mouth	<b>Behavior</b>  Promise/benefit Expectation Website Promotions	<b>Long run behavior</b>  Promise fulfillment Corporate responsibility

Fig. 5.8 Marketing communication and involvement (p. 74, Fill, 2011)

The notion of involvement is important to understand the consumer's decision-making process, and how they process information. The level of involvement determines this process, thus a brand's communication strategy needs to consider and address factors that influence involvement. In addition to reducing risk, marketing communication needs to be adjusted to the level of involvement and thus consider which approach to take as the figure below illustrates.

### 5.3.3 Symbolic meaning and functional attributes

Consumers buy *products* on the basis of their functional attributes, but they buy *brands* based on their symbolic value. When consumers buy products with focus on functional attributes, it is the physical and factual elements of the product that matter. For instance, a table is expected to have a plane, leveled surface, on which you can place other items. Furthermore, it is expected to be of a certain height and be built in a way that makes it robust enough to remain erected, even though you place items on top of it. All these characteristics are physical, factual, and objective. However, a

table from Hay has all the same characteristics but there are certain connotations to the *name* of the brand. It *signifies* something, and the meaning of this is subjective, constructed, and purely based on perceptions (Fill, 2011), (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). Of course it is possible to argue whether the quality of products from a certain brand is better or worse than non-branded products, however this equality might as well be perceived, as we will come back to later. The symbolic values of brands are social constructs that only exist in the mind of consumers, and because there is a social, collective agreement about the connotations of the brand, as mentioned. The meaning of brands only has value because others agree to this value.

#### 5.4 Moving from USP to ESP

As mentioned, branding practices previously focused on *Unique Selling Propositions* (USP), which meant that a brand had to live up to the basic, functional requirements and fulfill the expectations of functionality from consumers. Yet, it was beneficial to have the best product within your category. Marketing communication would thus focus on these attributes of products. Over time, more brands have emerged and thus competition has increased. Additionally, the basic needs in Maslow's pyramid of needs (see fig. 6.3) are fulfilled for consumers in the western part of the world, and consumers buy products according to their social and self-actualization needs. We will return to this point in chapter 6. The world of branding is in constant expansion and today, we believe, it is unlikely for a product to be *one of a kind* based on its functional attributes. Consequently, promotion through USP is no longer adequate. Thus, marketing communication is now more concerned with *Emotional Selling Propositions* (ESP), as millions of brands fight for shelf space and –more importantly- mind space (Hansen, 2012).

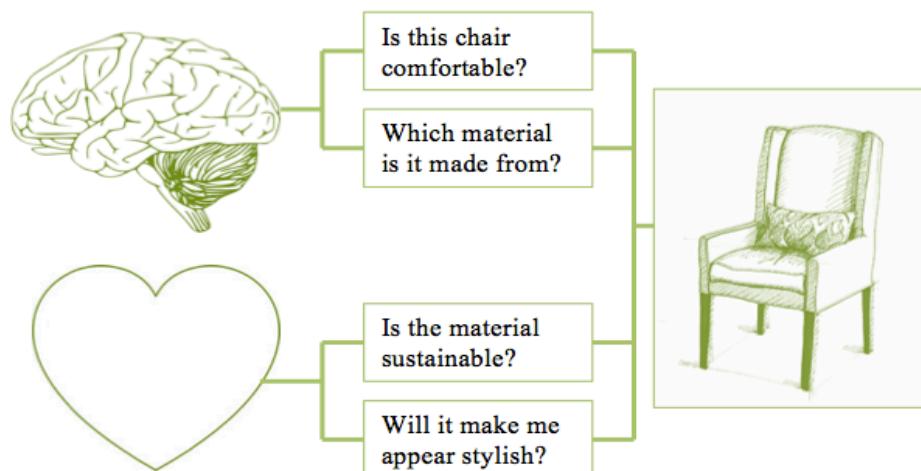


Fig. 5.9 USP and ESP. Personal contribution.

# Chapter 6

## CSR

- ◆ Defining CSR
- ◆ Increasing awareness
- ◆ Creating shared value
- ◆ The eco-advantage
- ◆ Consumers and CSR
- ◆ CSR as a competitive advantage

## 6. CSR

“If you think the economy is more important than the environment, try holding your breath while counting your money.”

— Professor Guy McPherson

One value-adding selling proposition that has emerged during the later years is CSR. CSR has the possibility to function as an ESP that can separate a brand from others, as consumers are increasingly more concerned with the ethical standpoint of the brands they buy (Hansen, 2012). CSR aims at adding symbolic meaning to a brand. CSR in this sense is a social construction; hence the added value a brand can achieve through CSR is only existent in the consumers' perception. CSR is a concept that emerged during the nineteen hundreds as a reaction to globalization and growing concern for the environment (Kramer & Porter, 2006), (Carroll, 2015). The much-debated term denotes the company's social and environmental responsibility (*ibid.*). However, there is no mutual agreement as to what this responsibility encompasses and how far the concept reaches (Carroll, 2015). CSR continues to gain increased attention in the corporate world as consumer awareness and expectations have risen (*ibid.*). Through the technological advance allowing easier and faster access to information, consumers have become well informed and knowledgeable, which has partly resulted in increased concerns about transparency especially with regards to social and environmental issues (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010).

The following chapter presents the definitions of CSR that is applied when the case companies' efforts are analyzed. On the basis of a cross-section of prevailing theories, the thesis looks into how CSR successfully affects consumers and brand equity in a positive direction.

### 6.1 Defining CSR

CSR is a widely discussed concept, with no clear definition attached. According to Carroll (2015), the concept arose after the Second World War and has gained impetus since. The concept is built on the notion that companies have a responsibility to do more than make a profit; they need to take responsibility for their ethical, environmental, and social behavior. The expectations to these responsibilities initially come from pressure from external stakeholders, such as consumers, government, and non-governmental organizations (Esty & Winston, 2006). Furthermore, there has been an increased pressure from within the market. As globalization has affected the business world, competition has increased and thus corporate reputation has become more important in terms

of achieving competitive advantage (Carroll, 2015). For companies, CSR is an effort to differentiate but also gain positive attention on the basis of for instance CSR-reports and philanthropic efforts. Since CSR has been defined in a variety of ways, it is a concept that is hard to clearly define and the framework that surrounds can be difficult to work within (*ibid.*). CSR has been competing with other frameworks including business ethics, stakeholder management, corporate citizenship, and sustainability, with the purpose of representing the relationship between business and society (*ibid.*). These concepts overlap on several areas and are thus sometimes used interchangeably. We, however, agree with Carroll that CSR will remain the most popular, as it is already widely acknowledged and accepted by business as well as society (*ibid.*). The changes within the framework are visible within companies and will thus be perceived as a strategic instrument rather than just an opportunity for displaying good deeds (*ibid.*). Throughout our paper, we define CSR as a measure of environmental as well as social responsibility. We perceive CSR to be an expression of the company's active engagement in creating a sustainable future for society, the environment and the business. In this sense, we define CSR as something that is incorporated in the business. In our empirical data we have used the terms sustainability and CSR interchangeably, but we do not refer to Carroll's conceptualization of sustainability. This is a conscious choice, as our case companies had observed that consumers are not always aware of what the term CSR entails.

## **6.2 Rising awareness of the environment**

In addition to consumers being more aware, natural forces such as global warming and deforestation influence the changes within the market (Esty & Winston, 2006). First of all, there has been a massive reduction in natural resources, which means that companies are forced to think about how they impact these negative processes due to consumer awareness and the scarcity of resources. Within the furniture industry, it is especially relevant to consider how resources such as wood and water are used in order for the industry to persist. Secondly, sustainability and environmental issues are important to several external stakeholder groups other than consumers, and issues such as overconsumption, pollution, and climate changes are increasingly emphasized. This means that governments adjust rules and regulations in order to control the negative impact on the environment. NGO's such as WWF or Green Peace can turn the public's attention towards companies that neglect their responsibilities and harm nature and the environment (Kong, *et al.*, 2002). Lastly, science contributes to the added awareness of the environment and the notion of CSR. Today it is easier to quantifiably measure and keep track of how companies contribute to negative changes in the environment, and thus their digressions are widely visible to internal and

external stakeholders. Science also means that there is a broader and deeper understanding and knowledge of how modern life and capitalism has affected the environment (Esty & Winston, 2006).

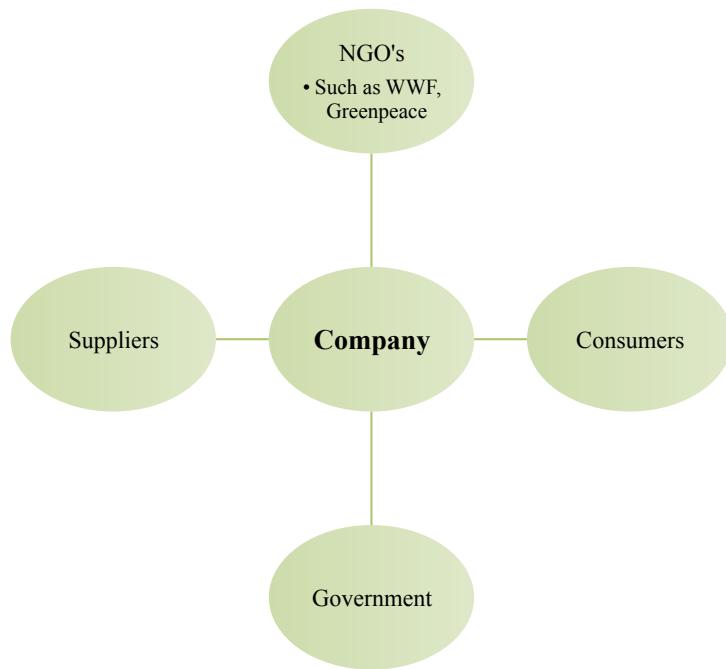


Fig. 6.1 External stakeholders

### 6.3 Creating Shared Value

Porter and Kramer agree with the notion that public and official concern from external stakeholders has pressured companies to do more with respect to their CSR agenda. However, the difficulty of defining CSR is the reason why many companies fail to achieve any significant competitive advantage through their CSR initiatives (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Many companies conduct responsive CSR, through which they respond to pressure in an attempt to satisfy the external stakeholders by incorporating the good CSR deeds into the annual report, and through public relations and media campaigns that reveal the company's philanthropy. Porter and Kramer refer to this phenomenon as "cosmetic CSR" and note that these efforts neglect to "[...]offer a coherent framework for CSR activities, let alone a strategic one." (P. 2, Kramer & Porter, 2006)

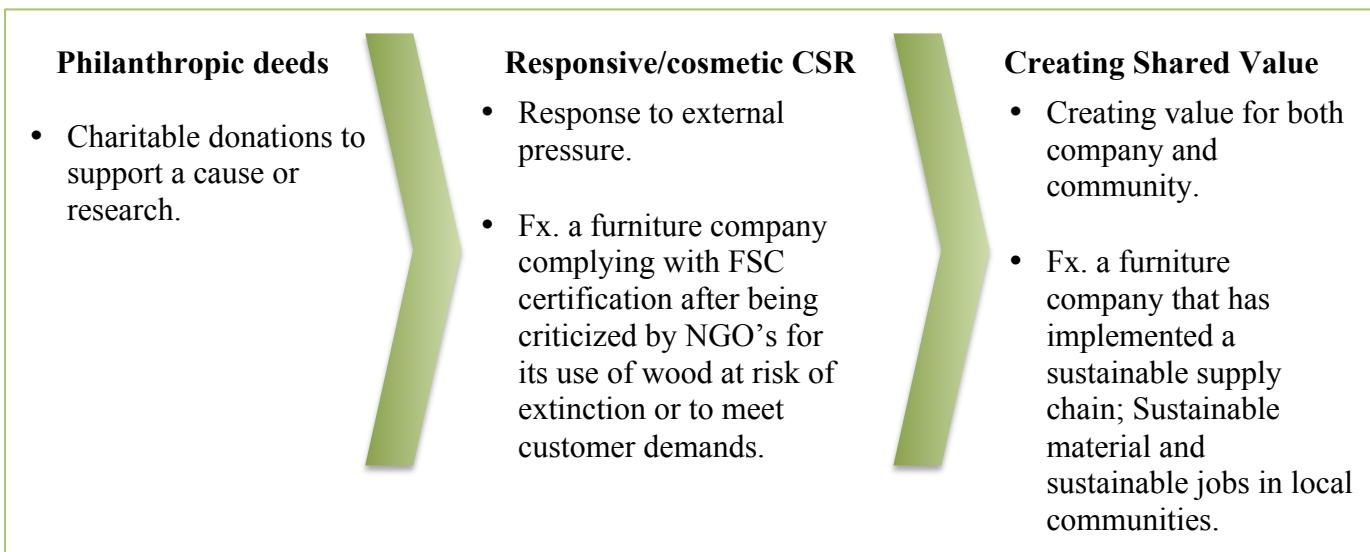


Fig. 6.2 CSR paradigms. Personal contribution.

The focus of CSR has changed from a line of good deeds to a useful and important strategic tool. Companies need to change their perception of CSR. Instead of thinking about CSR only as good deeds that are costly and constraining, the companies should perceive it as an opportunity to rethink business, innovation, and competition. The relationship between business and society is, as Carroll notes, intertwined. Competing frameworks focus on the tension between business and society, rather than their interdependence and the opportunities that arise from it (Porter & Kramer, 2011), (Carroll, 2015). The point is that one does not have to suffer for the other one to thrive; there can be a shared value. In fact, if companies think of CSR as a strategic tool, it will become an asset and it will be possible to secure economic performance while protecting and improving society (Porter & Kramer, 2011). When CSR activities are dealt with as fragments, and something the businesses do *next to* their daily operations, it will not succeed in making any significant social impact nor will they create any economic benefits for the company (Esty & Winston, 2006), (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Through responsive CSR the company fails to see the interdependence of business and society, and efforts will only render short-term solutions that might satisfy the external stakeholders to some degree, but will not have a strategic goal (*ibid.*). Nor will it cement the relationship between a company and the society in which it operates, since it deals with business and society as two separate entities instead of two pieces of a whole. Companies need to identify the social issues that are relevant to their business in order to make any significant social changes and achieve a competitive advantage and thus a shared value for society and business (*ibid.*). Thus, companies need to think about adding a social dimension to their business that complements the business strategy that is also relevant to the company's business agenda. This way, the company will create shared value through their CSR initiatives (*ibid.*). The notion of creating shared value is built on the

idea of thinking about the long-term benefits instead of the short-term benefits. The cost-benefit analysis needs to be focusing on the social changes in the long run, and thus the financial gains for the company. By creating societal value, the company will create a competitive advantage. In order to create shared value, the company must incorporate CSR into its business strategy and focus on how the company does business, rather than what efforts they do next to their business as is the case with cosmetic and responsive CSR (*ibid.*).

#### 6.4 How CSR can appeal to consumers

In accordance with Maslow's pyramid of needs, consumers in the western part of the world have their basic needs, such as shelter and food, met and are now more focused on their self-actualization. Previously, self-actualization was at the top of the pyramid, because it was the need that came last in consumer's consciousness, as the other needs were perhaps not fully met.

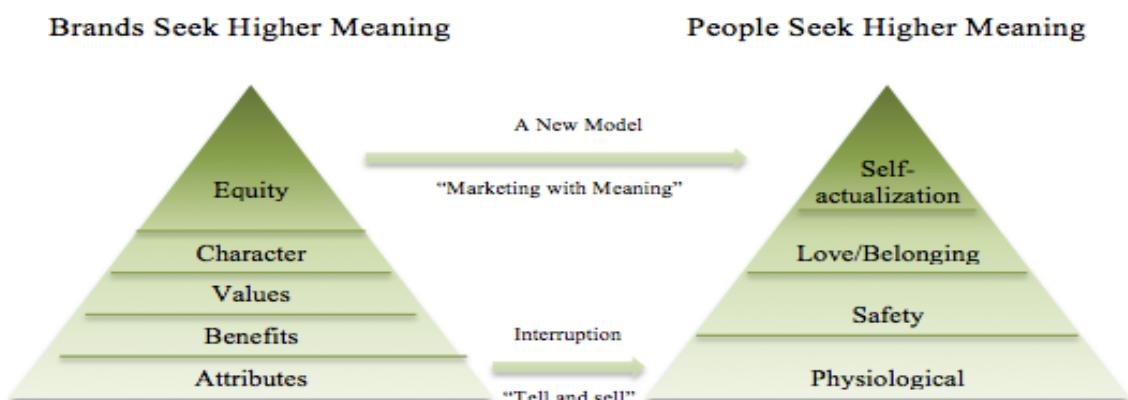


Fig. 6.3 Both brands and people seek a higher meaning (p. 46, Gilbreath, 2010)

In figure 6.3 above, it is illustrated how self-actualization is at the bottom of the pyramid and thus of greater importance than previously. Self-actualization involves consumer's altruistic needs, which CSR is known to appeal to as it evokes a feeling of being able to make a difference by supporting a social or environmental cause. Fulfilling the altruistic need can be achieved through offering donations or by purchasing a product or service that supports a certain cause or activity that aims to improve an industry. Figure 6.3 illustrates how brands seek to fulfill the altruistic needs of higher meaning for consumers. This indicates that as consumers seek out products and services that fulfill and are intact with their altruistic needs, brands aim at fulfilling and meeting these needs. For instance, if consumers express concern for forest erosion and increased interest in sustainable wood for furniture and other products, many furniture brands may ensure that their wood is FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified, aiming to fulfill the consumer's needs. As previously mentioned,

products are no longer purely sold and marketed based upon their functional features and benefits. Today, it is the brand's value; what it stands for in the heart and mind of consumers and what the brand is associated with that matters, which we have described above as a part of brand equity (Gilbreath, 2010). However, the CSR approach to marketing communication also poses a threat to consumers. In line with Aaker (1991) and Rosenbaum-Elliot (2015), through ads and other forms of marketing communication, companies and brands can appeal to consumers who are conscious of their social and environmental impact by using effects that are normally associated to green profiles. Unfortunately, companies are able to manipulate consumers into thinking that they execute a form of CSR even though this is not the case. Companies neglect to inform of less responsible –or even irresponsible- corporate behavior as it is not appealing to consumers, and instead they highlight the parts in their business that make them “green” and sustainable. These companies and brands thus “greenwash” their image in order to appeal to consumers, even though they do not live up to any green agenda or sustainable business plan. We have observed that consumers are often trusting, and quickly buy in to the story they are introduced to, without doing any background checks. This correlates with the law of apparent reality and the law of concern (Fig. 5.4). Greenwashing is not a profitable strategy as the company will most likely be able to save more money if they actually convert to a sustainable business plan (Porter & Kramer, 2011) (Esty & Winston, 2006) (Greenwashing Index).

## **6.5 Looking through the environmental lens: The eco-advantage**

As Porter and Kramer emphasize how adding a social dimension to one's business can create a competitive advantage, Esty and Winston's focus on how an environmental agenda can add value and influence competitive advantage. They argue that the environmental agenda is far more concrete and “[...] the business case for taking up the social agenda is much harder to establish.” (p. 41, Esty & Winston, 2006). For the reasons mentioned above, companies can simply not afford to ignore the environmental aspects of running a business (p. 18, ibid.). This is especially noticeable as big and prominent companies publicly show an interest in their environmental impact and steer the wheel towards a greener future for their business, which has disrupted “business as usual” and thus created a force of competition (Esty & Winston, 2006).

The benefits businesses can gain from integrating an environmental agenda lie in both the tangible and intangible values. Firstly, innovating and rethinking the main business operations and the supply chain in accordance with a sustainable agenda may lead to lower operational costs and result

in higher revenue (Esty & Winston, 2006). Additionally, communicating the sustainable changes and agenda is likely to create more brand trust, brand value, and credibility in the minds of the consumers (Ali, Jiménez-Zarco, & Bicho, 2015).

Differentiating one's brand based on an eco-advantage requires a holistic approach to the business. In accordance with figure 6.2, a company cannot be considered to be isolated from the rest of the market, as suppliers and additional links in the value chain can reflect negatively on the company. Every link in the value chain should be involved in the company's environmental profile in order for a trustworthy and resilient eco-advantage (Esty & Winston, 2006). For instance, if a furniture company claims to be environmentally and sustainably responsible, it would be contradictory if their suppliers were responsible for deforestation or a threat to endangered species. A company is forced to think about how they can do things differently when implementing CSR, which renders them with the opportunity to rethink and redesign. An eco-advantage may thus disrupt the market in terms of competition. However, the business case for the environment and the business case for a specific product need to be compatible as consumers are still a strong force in the equation, as they "[...] need other reasons to buy. Price, quality, and service will remain core concerns for most of them." (p. 129, Esty & Winston, 2006)

## 6.6 CSR as a competitive advantage

Based on the above, we believe that when implementing CSR the focus should be on long-term benefits and, in accordance with Aaker, the immeasurable values, which may add to brand equity. CSR can prove to be a competitive advantage, if applied and perceived correctly by companies. Companies should perceive CSR as a strategic instrument and incorporate it into their general business strategy. As mentioned, government regulation and pressure from external stakeholders is increasing as the world is changing. Rather than perceiving this as a constraint, companies should think about the opportunities that arise from these changes. The opportunity to innovate and rethink their business strategy may change the course of business, and thus change competition. Instead of following an agenda based on responsive or cosmetic CSR, companies should take the initial steps towards a business agenda that creates shared value, and thus ensures economic performance, protects the environment and improves society (Esty & Winston, 2006).

We find that the effects of an active CSR strategy on brand equity rely on marketing communication. Research indicates that communicating CSR reflects positively on consumer perception of brands, and communication strategies can succeed in creating awareness, positive associations, and affect purchase intentions (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, & Murphy, 2013). In this thesis, we refer to an active CSR strategy as one that is a part of the company's DNA in terms of core values that are consistently communicated to consumers. We believe that an active CSR strategy needs to be present in the marketing communication in order to become a part of the consumers' decision-making process as illustrated below.

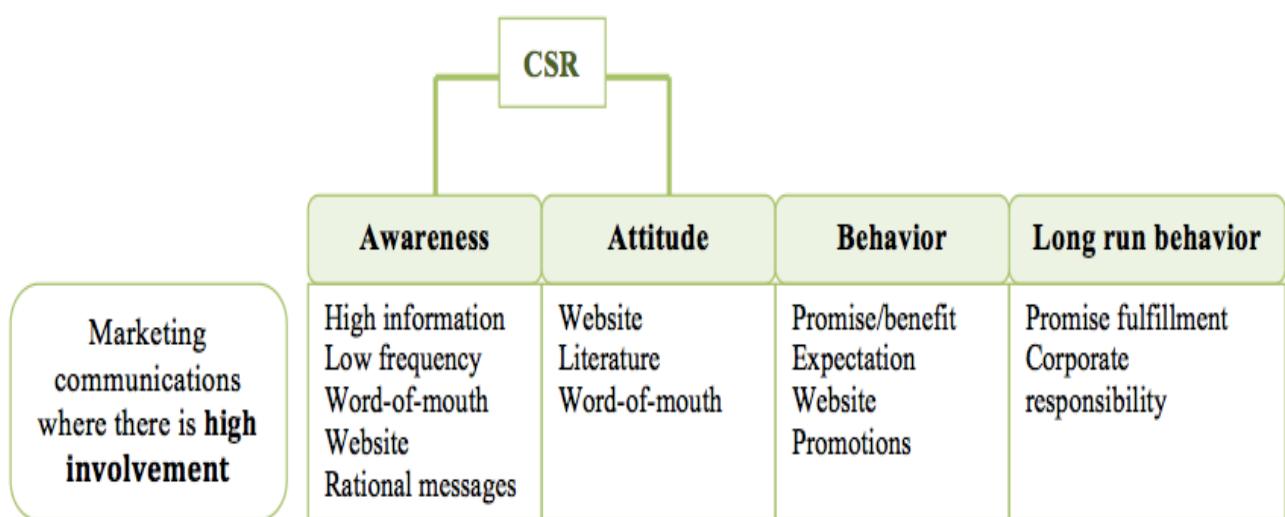


Fig. 6.4 CSR in marketing communications. Personal contribution.

# Chapter 7

## Social media

- ◆ Branding and social media
- ◆ Creating value through content
- ◆ Consumers in control

## 7. Social media

One of the main catalysts to changes within marketing communication is the technological advance, particularly the advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web in the 1990's, which has revolutionized many industries and brought forth new possibilities and challenges (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). The original version of the Internet is broadly known as Web 1.0. Web 1.0 was static, which only made it possible to visit and read websites, and computer programmers were the primary creators of content (Klastrup, 2016). By 2004, web 1.0 had evolved into web 2.0 that is the dynamic and interactive Internet we know today with multiple communication platforms where it is possible for everyone to create and share content. Social media is an example of how the Internet has developed into a communication platform where everyone contributes, as opposed to the prior one-way communication of web 1.0. The Internet has brought forth new platforms for communication between brands and consumers.

Social media are generally referred to as online communication platforms (Klastrup, 2016). However, this definition is too wide to differentiate social media from other social platforms while other attempt to define social media have been too narrow (Carr & Hayes, 2015). A new definition that is robust and narrow enough to cover the current social media, but elastic enough to entail new social media that may arise in the future has been suggested (Carr & Hayes, 2015). This definition corresponds to our reflections and understanding of social media: "Social media are Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others" (p. 50, Carr & Hayes, 2015).

Social media platforms can be accessed on technological devices such as a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone. A relevant point of social media is that accessing it does not require the use of a browser, since it is possible to use apps through smartphones and tablets (Carr & Hayes, 2015). Hence, these transportable devices have enabled consumers to use social media easier and quicker than previously. In continuation of the fact that consumers today are informed, they are also no longer passive in the process of receiving information from brands and marketers. Social media enable consumers to be active and give feedback or comments to companies and brands (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010). Furthermore, "[m]essages can be personalized and may have a much wider reach and impact [...]" than traditional communication methods (p. 293, Tench & Jones, 2015). Thus, marketing communication is not one-way communication where brands are senders

and consumers are passive receivers. With this technological proliferation, communication is a two-way process, which allows consumers and brands to have symmetrical dialogues (Hallam, 2013). Furthermore, user-generated content makes it possible for consumers to communicate with each other *about* the brand without directly communicating *with* the brand. This enables consumers “[...] to challenge, ask questions and develop a truer picture of the brand” (p. 8, Rowles, 2014). Consequently, consumers can use social media to understand the “true” personality of a brand, and use that understanding to help guide them in their decision-making process (Rowles, 2014).

## **7.1 The effects of social media for brands and consumers**

We argue that the abovementioned development has had certain effects on companies, brands, and consumers. The interactive and social aspect of social media may for instance affect how a brand is managed. Traditionally, brands have been managed by the company or external agencies, which meant that the company was in control of communicating the brand image and identity, through for instance advertisement. Thus, marketers controlled the predominant touchpoints between consumers and brands (Rowles, 2014). Now, consumers increasingly influence the brand image and -identity as social media has rendered consumers with the ability to negotiate the meaning of brands through shared user-created content and conversations about the brand (Close, 2012). In the following section, we highlight the positive and negative effects that social media can have on consumers and brands.

### **7.1.1 Big data**

Through social media, users leave digital footprints, which make it possible to gain access into personal information. This could be demographic information such as age and location, but can also be information about search history or “likes”, and knowledge about their daily usage of the platform. This information can be gathered to acquire knowledge about user behavior and is also known as big data (Klastrup, 2016). Big data can be sold to companies who wish to get detailed knowledge about their target audience, in order to optimize and personalize their marketing communication on social media. We argue that this is a relevant point, as e.g. our case companies could use the information about consumers’ interests and preferred brands to get an insight into if CSR attracts attention.

### **7.1.2 Brand awareness through social media**

Companies can gain exposure and get increased visibility through social media. A strong presence on social media will raise brand awareness and as we have mentioned, this is expected to reflect positively on brand salience and thus brand equity (Weinberg, 2009). At the same time, social

media and the Internet in general gives consumers access to and information about a larger amount of brands as they themselves can search for them easier and quicker. In fact "... one in four people say they use social media sites to inform their purchasing decisions" (Vaynerchuck, 2013). Furthermore, creating brand awareness today can also help a company in the future. In accordance with Aaker's theory, customers are more likely to remember and seek out a brand if they have previously become aware of it, thus brands that make an impression early on will likely reap the benefits in the long term (Weinberg, 2009).

### 7.1.3 Adding value through content

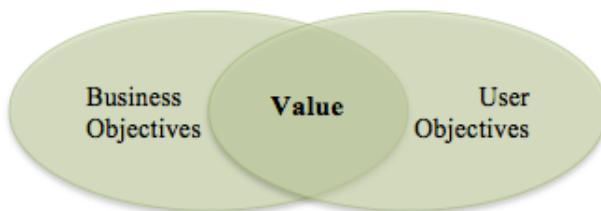


Fig. 7.1 Value for consumers. Personal contribution.

"Social media has potential to help create, generate, grow, add, and realize value" for brands as well as consumers (p. 292, Tench & Jones, 2015). Value is generated when a brand's and its target audience's objectives overlap (Rowles, 2014). Thus when brands offer value through content to consumers, consumers can offer value to brands in terms of word-of-mouth and potential purchase. In order to engage the target audience and initiate a dialogue, brands need to create content that gives the consumers an incentive to share, like, or give feedback, for instance by communicating corporate values such as CSR (Rowles, 2014). The content needs to provide value by presenting substance that is outside the realm of what the company does and sells (Rowles, 2014). For instance rather than creating content that intends to promote the product and generate sales (short-term benefits), a brand should engage with consumers through content that either provides them with unique knowledge or entertainment (long-term benefits) thus providing value beyond the brand's direct product offering (Rowles, 2014).

#### **7.1.4 Bring traffic to a company website**

One of the advantages for brands on “[...] social media is that friends recommend links, websites, and products to their peers” and as soon as an active user engages with or shares content, word-of-mouth commences (p. 5, Weinberg, 2009). This word-of-mouth process will carry the companies’ content, or content mentioning the company. Research indicates that user-generated content has a positive influence on brand equity, including brand attitude and purchase intentions (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Thus content on social media may lead consumers to visit the brand’s website and convert them into future customers.

#### **7.1.5 Consumers in control**

Due to two-way communication, consumers have an increased impact on the market in terms of uttering the lack of products or services and brands need to be responsive to what the consumer wants in order to compete. Consequently, the market now adapts to the consumer rather than the consumer adapting to the market (Rosenbaum-Elliott, *et al.*, 2015). As mentioned above, consumer word-of-mouth can travel rapidly and influence brand equity, but not only in a positive way. Consumers can easily spread negative opinions through content, which can influence their social network. In relations to CSR, “[i]t has become easier for corporate social irresponsibility to be reported and commented on with all the consequences this brings [...]” (p. 294, Tench & Jones, 2015) This illustrates the companies’ potential loss of control with social media, which can have negative implications on the brand’s reputation and in the end brand equity (Tench & Jones, 2015). In addition, brands help establish and maintain consumers’ self-identity and thus the meaning of the brand is derived from consumers’ perception (Close, 2012). Through social media, a brand’s identity is largely expressed through content, “[...] that we [as consumers] can share with our peers to make ourselves perceived in the way we would like to be perceived” (Rowles, 2014). Based on the above, we assume that CSR can be a beneficial element of a brand’s identity within the furniture industry, because this might improve consumers’ self-presentation on social media and brands can avoid negative publicity.

# Chapter 8

## Theoretical hypothesis

- ◆ Branding and social media
- ◆ Creating value through content
- ◆ Consumers in control

## 8. Theoretical hypothesis

The following is a theoretical hypothesis based upon this theoretical framework and our reflections. The theoretical hypothesis intends to sum up the aspects we will apply throughout the thesis and compare with the findings in our empirical data.

### 8.1 Influencing brand equity

As previously mentioned, consumer based brand equity is comprised of several intangible constituents, and relies on consumers' attitude towards the brand. If consumers are not aware of a brand or have none or negative opinions about a brand, it will reflect poorly on brand equity. However, consumers' positive brand perception will add value to the brand and thus influence brand equity in a positive direction. Aaker's brand equity factors are intertwined and influence each other, but we perceive brand loyalty to be an outcome of the other brand equity factors and thus we have chosen not to focus on this element. In our opinion brand awareness is fundamental in creating brand equity and one of the factors we believe social media mostly help generate. In order for brand awareness to be effective, brands must have a clear identity that makes it possible for consumers to attach specific associations. Sustaining brand awareness can help the brand reach consumers and enter their consideration set prior to purchase. On social media, brands can achieve brand awareness through advertising, promotion, or campaigns. Through social media, brands can furthermore emphasize the associations they wish for consumers to have about their brands and thus create positive feelings and attitudes.



Fig. 8.1 Brand equity factors process. Personal contribution.

Since consumers tend to believe that the quality of a heavily branded product is higher than of a less branded product, brand awareness and brand associations may help influence consumers' perception of quality as showed above in figure 8.1. Additionally, the brand may differentiate and position itself by communicating certain features that may indicate high quality, such as unique choice of material or handmade design. Rooted in the brand identity, marketing communication needs to emphasize the brand attributes and values that preferably should be linked to the brand in the consumer's mind. To sum up, the objective of marketing communication is to help consumers make a choice when navigating through the brand world. Successful marketing communication will

thus ensure that consumers are aware of brands within a certain category and ensure that the brand is top-of-mind. On the basis of this, we hypothesize that consumer-based brand equity is a result of successful marketing communication that focuses on creating awareness, forming valuable associations, and enhancing perceived quality.

## 8.2 Generating value through CSR

The notion of creating shared value is based on creating profit for the company through implementing CSR that helps develop sustainable solutions to societal issues. As we have explained, CSR is a framework that has been widely discussed and debated for several years. CSR have been perceived as a risk management tool, that companies have adopted in order to respond to public expectation, and thus maintain a positive image. However, this perception of CSR has resulted in fragmented initiatives, involving philanthropic deeds that do not directly involve the company. Conducting CSR in this manner may result in responsive or cosmetic CSR in which the company is not fully committed and thus neither the company nor society will truly benefit. Taking point of departure in the theoretical framework, it is necessary for companies to perceive the company as an integrated part of society and CSR as an integrated part of the business. Using CSR as a competitive advantage means rethinking, redesigning, and innovating business as usual. This may influence and change production methods, supply chain, or even the product itself. In the furniture industry, these three criteria can be valuable to look at in thinking about CSR initiatives that may create value for consumers and company alike. As the furniture industry is a heavy user of natural resources, such as wood and water, changing the production method and material might reduce the cost of production and furthermore innovate the product category. This may appeal to certain segments of consumers who are focused on their self-actualization. Nevertheless, internal changes in the business are not solely sufficient in order to have a positive impact on consumer-based brand equity. Brands need to be aware of how they communicate and display their values and efforts in regards to CSR to appeal to consumers. On the basis of our observations, initial viewpoints and research question we believe that CSR has a positive impact on brand equity. However, consumers' engagement in CSR is limited; few of them are interested in strategic CSR and how it is implemented, but rather value the *notion* and perception of sustainability and social responsibility.

### **8.3 Value through social media**

As we have established, social media can be an effective tool for marketing communication. First of all, it does not necessarily require financial resources to create a user-profile or community-site for a brand. This makes it possible to communicate with every user on the chosen medium. Marketing communication can happen across geographical borders in real time, and it is possible to target several audiences at once. Social media is the fastest growing media, with a wide range of demographic and psychographic profiles (p. 4, Vaynerchuck, 2013). Merely inviting people to like or follow can potentially result in a big audience that publicly announce their accept and acknowledgement of the brand. The reach through social media has great potential as a users' interest in a brand profile will be visible to their network e.g. in their news feed, even though a user does not actively express any opinion about the brand through user-generated content. If users choose to mention the brand in a post, invite people to like the brand, or share content on behalf of the brand, the reach is potentially higher. Second of all, paid promotions and advertisement will be featured in the news feed of consumers who have shown interest for similar things as the brand represent. Thus, the social media will target a brand towards a relevant segment using Facebook algorithms (MindJumpers & MarketingLab, 2016). Thirdly, social media offers brands a unique opportunity to directly interact with their audience as opposed to e.g. television commercials or offline advertisement. In the same manner, consumers have the possibility to interact with the brand. Marketing communication through social media is thus a dialogue instead of a monologue. It is furthermore important for brands to consider the power that comes with knowledge such as the one presented in Big data (point 7.1.1) (p. 12, Vaynerchuck, 2013). Knowing the consumers, knowing what is trending on social media and in the world in general, and knowing how the brand's target audience speak to each other enable brands to level with their indented customers and thus meticulously target marketing communication in a specific and controlled direction. This is, of course, a two-way street since the consumers gain power concurrently with the brands; as established, when brands give consumers valuable content, consumers are inclined to give back value to brands in the form of increased brand equity.

We have covered the negative sides of social media, elaborating on how it is difficult to control negative communication about the brand since negative word-of-mouth travels fast on social media. However, it is relevant to consider the positive aspects of this as well. We argue that the brand has a unique opportunity to be aware about what is being said and shared, with whom, from whom, and on what basis. This means that brands can react rapidly to any negative outburst, and the brand will

potentially be able to salvage their reputation in the same rate as consumers can harm it. In conclusion, modern day social media give brands power in some areas, but are also the reason why brands are more vulnerable than before. On the basis of the above, it is our view that a social media strategy is important in order to manage brand equity particularly in the form of brand attitude, - perception, and awareness. A social media strategy in which the brand identity is clearly implemented in a way that appeals to consumers may encourage users to follow, like, and click thus increasing brand awareness and converting users on social media to potential customers. Thus, we hypothesize that social media needs to be focused on creating value for consumers in order to create value for the brand.

In extension of the above-mentioned hypotheses, we anticipate that if brands manage to utilize social media platforms to communicate the *ideas* and *values* that CSR encompasses, they can in fact affect their brand equity in a positive direction. We furthermore anticipate that in high involvement purchase decisions, consumers are interested in the message from brand and they will be inclined to pay active attention to more complicated marketing communication.

# Chapter 9

## Presentation of empirical data

- ◆ Presentation of case companies
- ◆ Presentation of consumer survey

## **9. Presentation of empirical data**

In order to test whether our theoretical hypotheses correlates with what can be observed in practice, we have gathered empirical data from four companies and a segment of consumers.

### **9.1 Presentation of case companies**

All our case companies are brands within the furniture industry, and a common trait for all four of them is that they have implemented a sustainable feature in their business. Two of the brands are retailers (I Love Eco Home and 2Rethink), whereas the two others design and produce furniture (Jesper Holm of Copenhagen and We Do Wood). Furthermore, we have looked at their activities on social media, and conducted interviews with either the owner or a representative of the company to gain insights to their activities and motives behind. The four case companies and the relevant data for our paper are presented below. The presentations are based upon the interview transcriptions and company websites (Appendices 1-4).



#### **9.1.1 I Love Eco Home**

The brand “I Love Eco Home” (ILEH) was established in 2014 when Maria Liokouras and Rasmus Christensen started the company Sustainable Home ApS. ILEH is an online shop that, amongst other things, sells sustainable and ecological furniture and home décor. ILEH collaborates with two other brands called “I Love Eco Essentials”, which is a product line of ecological essentials, and “I Love Eco Hotels”, which is a search engine for sustainable hotel chains and independent hotels. They collaborate with an anonymous hotel chain that facilitates the abovementioned brands. The hotel chain displays some of the furniture that is available on the ILEH web shop. ILEH wants to convey the idea that sustainability and ecological benefits do not only apply to food and essentials, but to all aspects of consumers’ lives. Furthermore, the brand is based on the idea that sustainable and eco-friendly products should be available and easily accessible for everyone. The web shop sells products from 17 brands and products within various categories such as furniture, kitchen supplies, and home décor. The goal is to make it easy for consumers to purchase sustainable and ecological products from a wide range of categories without having to navigate through multiple web shops. As the name indicates, sustainability and eco-friendliness are the core values of I Love Eco Home.

### ***9.1.1.1 CSR defined by I Love Eco Home***

ILEH's definition of sustainability is built on three criteria through which they carefully select products and brands to retail. Their idea of sustainability embraces environmental and socially responsible aspects. First of all, ILEH sets specific criteria to the material the product is made of and the production method. In order to prevent extinction of rare wood species and deforestation they sell products made from FSC-certified wood. Additionally, they sell recycled and up-cycled products as this will ensure less waste and use less resources and raw material. Secondly, the quality of the products sold through ILEH needs to be of a certain standard, to ensure a long life cycle. This criterion is also rooted in the belief that products with short life cycles will be a burden to the environment, due to the large amount of waste it generates. Thirdly, products and suppliers need to be ethically responsible. Every worker involved in the production of an item must work under proper circumstances in terms of proper wage and security.

### ***9.1.1.2 I Love Eco Home on social media***

Facebook and Instagram are the main platforms used to communicate with customers and to create brand awareness. ILEH does not have a clear strategy for any of the medias, and spend their time sporadically between them. On Facebook, they post value-based content, aiming at establishing a relationship with their followers. They attempt to create interest and value by sharing external articles about sustainability, interior, and the combination of the two. Furthermore, ILEH shares posts focusing on promoting products and encouraging sales as illustrated in the photograph below, which was an Instagram post on the brand's Instagram profile.



Fig. 9.1 ILEH Instagram

Some of these posts are also in the form of articles about a specific item on their side or articles in which ILEH has been mentioned directly. Overall, ILEH indicated that Facebook is used mostly for content mainly consisting of text, such as articles, and thus an ideal way to share larger amounts of information. To the contrary, Instagram is intended for pictures and followers are not inclined to read more text than the caption. Thus, on Instagram, ILEH mainly post pictures of their products, and thus aims to promote products and create brand awareness. However, only a limited number of their posts include a “call-for-action” (fig. 9.1), which makes the posts less advertisement-like. Many of the pictures on Instagram are either professional product pictures from their suppliers, or products pictures and set-ups from their customers. There are also “personal” pictures from the founders’ inspirational trips to Bali, which in some sense is an invitation to the customers to take a peek “behind the scenes” of the brand.



**JESPER HOLM**  
DESIGN & MØBELSNEDKERI

### 9.1.2 Jesper Holm of Copenhagen

Jesper Holm of Copenhagen (JHoC) is a Danish furniture company established by Jesper Holm in 1992 that sells furniture directly from the joinery located south of Copenhagen. The company behind the brand produces and sells a broad range of furniture such as bookshelves, tables, lamps, and wardrobes among many others. Furthermore, JHoC offers customized products that are created to fit the customer’s specific needs. Customers can experience JHoC’s products and designs at the joinery or they can see the full product range on the company’s official website. All products are handcrafted at the joinery using a combination of modern production and traditional craftsmanship. We find it relevant to include the corporate mission which is stated on the company website and translated below.

“Well-thought out design is the foundation of a good product. If you buy good products, you partake in using the world’s resources with respect and care. My designs are not meant to draw attention, but rather satisfy the everyday needs. I try to work with a serious take on design and craftsmanship. It is my goal that the furniture does so well that the customers send me a friendly thought everyday. I do not wish to sell the emperor’s new clothes, but rather my goal is to sell good design, craft, and good quality materials.” ([www.Jesper-Holm.dk](http://www.Jesper-Holm.dk))

According to JHoC customers perceive Danish design and the fact that the products are made in Denmark by natural materials to be a value, the brand wishes to obtain.

#### ***9.1.2.1 CSR defined by Jesper Holm of Copenhagen***

The brand defines sustainability as something that can be measured on the basis of a product’s lifespan. A piece of furniture is considered sustainable if it is of high quality and therefore can be passed on or resold once the original customer gets tired of it, thus prolonging its lifespan. JHoC explains how this also reduces the amount of energy spent on transportation, as customers do not have to make the same trip to buy a new product more than once. With reference to social responsibility, JHoC explains how maintaining jobs in Denmark at his joinery add an intangible value for customers because they feel that they support a good cause. This stance with regards to sustainability is implemented by designing high quality furniture that can last for up to one hundred years. Furthermore, JHoC actively puts an effort into making sure the woods they use are not at risk of extinction. The joinery where the furniture is produced is heated exclusively by reusing wood waste so the energy for heating is made from residue materials. As illustrated in the corporate mission above, the attitude towards using sustainable materials, that are not at risk of extinction and are long lasting are important values.

#### ***9.1.2.2 Jesper Holm on social media***

The only social media platform JHoC uses is Facebook. However, the brand is not very active on Facebook, and primarily has a profile for the brand to enable consumers and customers to navigate traffic to the official website. The brand primarily uses Google AdWords as a marketing tool to attract customers to the company website. The brand has experienced that Facebook has not generated any sales, and it has only had one single consumer who found them through the Facebook profile, therefore resources to attract customers are put elsewhere than social media. The social and environmental activities the brand incorporates are not actively promoted on social media as a part

of the brand Jesper Holm of Copenhagen. The corporate website includes an online shop and can be considered the primary medium for communicating values and promoting products.



### 9.1.3 We Do Wood

We Do Wood (WDW) was established in 2011 by cabinetmaker and designer, Sebastian Jørgensen. The idea behind the company and brand WDW came when Sebastian designed and built a children's chair (Lilly's chair) and a table (Geo's table) for his children. Both pieces of furniture were made from bamboo and had multiple purposes. The idea of furniture with multiple purposes was the inspiration from which the brand WDW came to be. The fundamental values of the brand are environmental responsibility, sustainability, and ethical obligations. WDW wants to make sustainable furniture easily accessible, but the brand also wants to build bridges between sustainability and design. In this manner, WDW wants to make sure that people can buy furniture that is environmentally conscious but still of great quality and design. Their furniture is made without the use of chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers. This way, there is no risk of any harmful emissions from the furniture, which means that it does not harm the environment or the people who buy them. Additionally, WDW has a strategy to digitalize all their print material in order to save paper and cement their sustainable profile. WDW's products are sold through retailers, and thus their strategy is not based on having direct contact with their end-users.

#### 9.1.3.1 CSR defined by We Do Wood

WDW's focus is on environmental sustainability in the form of preventing excess Co2 emissions and preventing excess use of natural resources. WDW perceive environmental sustainability as a responsibility and their choice of material and production method reflects this sentiment. WDW's supply chain, sustainability strategy, and branding strategy are intertwined and rooted in responsibility and transparency. On their website, it is disclosed where their material comes from, how it is processed, and where their products are manufactured. This puts great emphasis on their deliberate choice of material and their deliberate choice to outsource the majority of their production process. They buy bamboo from FSC-certified plantations in China, which is then shipped to Italy, where it is processed, and finally transported to Slovenia where it is manufactured. Their choice to focus on bamboo is explained on the company website in relation to bamboo's positive effect on the environment as the picture below exemplifies.



Fig. 9.2 We do wood - Co2 (WeDoWood.dk)

First of all, bamboo is a fast growing grass with a root system that grows continuously, which makes it possible to harvest bamboo and still maintain the root system. Secondly, the bamboo root system prevents soil erosion and water pollution. Thirdly, bamboo absorbs more carbon dioxide and releases less oxygen than wood, as WDW's website explains (WeDoWood.dk). According to WDW, bamboo is the only wood-like material that grows quickly enough to match the high demand and consumption of resources present in modern day culture. Additionally, it is easy to maintain bamboo furniture, which enhances the lifespan of the products. For the same reasons, WDW aims at making furniture with multiple functions with a natural finish. Their furniture is sent in flat-packs to consumers to make sure that the cargo contains as many pieces of furniture as possible, thus reducing the Co2 emissions per product. WDW only makes furniture on demand hence avoiding over-production and overloaded storage spaces. The long-term vision is to implement sustainability in their entire supply chain, and thus packaging should be of organic or recycled material as well.

### ***9.1.3.2 We Do Wood on social media***

WDW uses Facebook, Instagram, and Vimeo. There is not a defined strategy about what to post, where to post it, and who is responsible for social media. The estimated time spent on social media amounts to two - three hours per week including the preparations for each post. Since there is not a clear strategy, the social media efforts are rather sporadic. The designer, Sebastian Jørgensen, administers Instagram, and posts pictures when a new design is on its way or finished. Instagram is used as a online look-book, where there are no real “calls-for-action” and focus is on the pictures, the products, and the design. Facebook is mainly administered by Anders Holme Jensen, and is used as a platform for sharing information and articles, that are aimed at creating value and interests. The articles feature WDW furniture, but also general information on sustainability and

environment, including articles regarding production methods and material used in the furniture industry. WDW has run campaigns on Facebook, but have realized that for campaigns to gain real impetus on Facebook, it is necessary to boost posts financially. Generally, WDW tries to limit expenditures on social media, and thus their efforts regarding campaigns and ads are limited. It is a deliberate choice not to use financial resources on sales promotions as WDW's products are sold and promoted through retailers. The contact they have with consumers through Facebook is thus not directly focused on getting customers, but rather on creating brand awareness. The media that WDW relies mostly on is Vimeo. WDW have an idea that video will gain more attention in the following years as a marketing tool, but they have intentionally chosen *not* to use YouTube, as WDW finds that there are too many ads and general "noise" on this platform. Through Vimeo, WDW wants to take their customers behind-the-scenes and in order to emphasize their sustainable profile WDW uses Vimeo for instruction manuals on how to assemble their furniture. The Vimeo-instruction manuals are muted videos that demonstrate how to assemble and take care of the respectable piece of furniture. This way, WDW does not have to print any manuals and thus saves paper.

## 2RETHINK

### 9.1.4. 2RETHINK

2RETHINK (2RT) is a retail brand selling furniture from a wide variety of Danish and International brands on its online shop. Jens Mathiasen established 2RT in 2009 during Cop15, which was the climate conference held in Copenhagen. The website was initially a blog, which still characterizes the news forum on the website. The goal was to create a sales platform that focused on innovation and sustainability. The company is solely managed and run by the founder and owner Jens Mathiasen, and has both B2B and B2C end users. In collaboration with interior designers, 2RT offers assistance in furnishing and decorating businesses, such as restaurants and hotels, in order to create work environments that the business customer desires where sustainability and innovation are the primary focus areas. In addition, 2RT sells products from a wide variety of sustainable brands to private consumers. Common for all brands available on the website is that they implement a social or environmental aspect in relations to the production and life cycle of the furniture.

#### 9.1.4.1 CSR defined by 2RETHINK

2RT acknowledges the complexity of defining CSR and sustainability, and has chosen to define his sustainable approach by using "To Re-" as shown in the box below.



- To Recycle**
- To Reduce waste**
- To Redesign**
- To Reclaim**
- To Respect craftsmanship**

Fig. 9.3 2Rethink

2RT does not impose a more specific definition of sustainability than the abovementioned that the brands need to conform to for 2RT to sell their products. They have found that this opens the possibility of distributing a wide variety of brands. 2RT tries to find the balance between brands that are sustainable and at the same time can be profitable, and therefore quality and design are also two important factors.

#### **9.1.4.2 2RETHINK on social media**

2RT is active on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, but uses the three platforms differently. When a post is targeted towards the consumer segment rather than the business segment it is posted on Facebook and Instagram, and when content is targeted towards businesses it is shared on LinkedIn. This is in line with our thesis, as we focus on consumers, and Facebook and Instagram.

There is no specific strategy for 2RT's presence on social media, thus it is sporadic and impulsive. 2RT characterized their social media efforts as "one-way communication" in the sense that 2RT does not encourage consumers to interact or engage by, for instance, asking questions or organizing competitions. However, 2RT consciously post value-based and promotional content to show followers recent projects and create brand awareness. Despite not having a clear social media strategy, 2RT clarified that the aim is to create an understanding of the brand, get the followers emotionally involved, and make them acknowledge the advantages of purchasing sustainable furniture.

## **9.2 Survey presentation**

The main purpose of the survey is to find out how consumers perceive sustainability and furniture brands, and furthermore how they interact with brands on social media. In order to retrieve quantifiable results, we have prepared a multiple-choice survey. However, several of the questions allow respondents to choose more than one answer (See app. 5). There are 31 questions in total, however we have only included the questions and answers in our analysis that we found relevant. In line with the methodological approach and as the analysis will reflect our findings are

interpretations of the respondents' answers. We chose to use an online survey form (Typeform) in order to share the survey with users through social media. The survey received 176 responses.

Our criteria for the respondents are that they:

- ◆ Are active on Facebook.
- ◆ Are actively showing an interest in furniture, interior, home, or living.

The survey can be divided into five main parts, as shown below. The first segment of questions establishes a brief demography of the respondents. The second part of the survey revolves around the consumers' perception of quality and values, and is aimed at gaining an understanding of their perception of quality and associations in accordance with brand equity. The third part only consists of one question about whether the respondents actively share pictures of their purchased furniture on social media. In the fourth part of the survey, we wish to gain an understanding of how consumers define and perceive sustainability. The questions in the last section are aimed at gaining an understanding of consumers' expectations to brands on social media. Thus, the fifth section focuses on how consumers gain brand awareness and positive brand associations. We find that these essential in order to make a comparison between consumer expectations and what our case companies do in practice. As consumer-based brand equity depends on the consumers' perception and attitude towards brands, we find this comparison to be particularly important in order to establish how social media efforts affect brand equity. Concurrently, we find that the responses in correlation with the comparison are important for our recommendations in chapter 14.

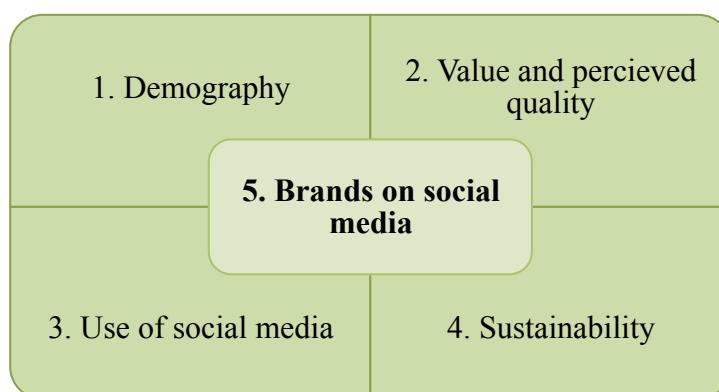


Fig. 9.4 Survey structure

# Chapter 10

## Analysis

- ◆ Brand awareness on social media
- ◆ Consumers' perception of quality
- ◆ Brand associations and CSR

## **10. Analysis**

The following analysis takes its point of departure in the empirical data we have collected through interviews with the case companies and the consumer survey. In the following, we will analyze and interpret our empirical data with particular emphasis on brand awareness, brand associations, and perceived quality. We perceive these elements from Aaker's definition of consumer-based brand equity to be imperative in relations to our problem statement (Aaker, 1991). Subsequently, our analysis revolves around the companies' use of social media and their CSR initiatives, as well as consumers' expectations towards these elements. With our theoretical hypothesis in mind, we compare our empirical observations with the theoretical framework in order to conduct an in-depth analysis that leads to our conclusion.

### **10.1 Achieving brand awareness and engaging followers**

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, social media is a potentially effective tool to raise brand awareness. All of our case companies have profiles on Facebook, and three out of four have profiles on Instagram. The strategies of our case companies on social media differ. For some of our case companies, having a Facebook profile enables online presence that navigates consumers to the official company website or online shop. For others, the strategic choice behind using social media is to create brand awareness or to promote products. Common for our case companies is that they do not base their strategic choices on detailed metrics, thus their strategies are intuitive and lacking concrete goals. None of them allocated specific resources to social media efforts, which is evident in their use of time and their goals.

We observed that when we asked the case companies whether they had a strategy, their answers were vague. However, when we asked them about value-based and promotional oriented content, they recognized their choices and were able to elaborate on them. We found that the two retailers, ILEH and 2RT, choices were coincidental, however they emphasized that their strategies on Facebook are to create value for the followers, thus primarily sharing value-based posts. For ILEH, there is more response and interaction in the form of likes, comments or shares, when the posts include an element about sustainability, or visually showing an organic product in a situation where it is being used. ILEH stated had that they had assessed that on Facebook, articles with news and information about brands and sustainability gained particular interest from followers. However on Instagram, they found that visually creating a story and an atmosphere whilst promoting a certain product appealed to consumers (App. 2, q.3, ll. 38-48). Furthermore, the two retailers state that

storytelling adds value for consumers. 2RT stated that “[...] the most important parameter [...] is to emotionally engage people in why they should choose a product that is made from recycled wood instead of regular wood[...] Therefore, it is partially about telling the story behind the product [...]” (App. 1, q.4, ll. 47-50) ILEH agrees that storytelling gives the products an additional dimension, which is meant to appeal to consumers’ emotions and intrigue them.

The case companies furthermore try to engage their followers and add value by using social media to provide followers with a look behind-the-scenes. For instance, they share videos or photographs from a manufacturer or workshop and share background information about products as the example below illustrates.

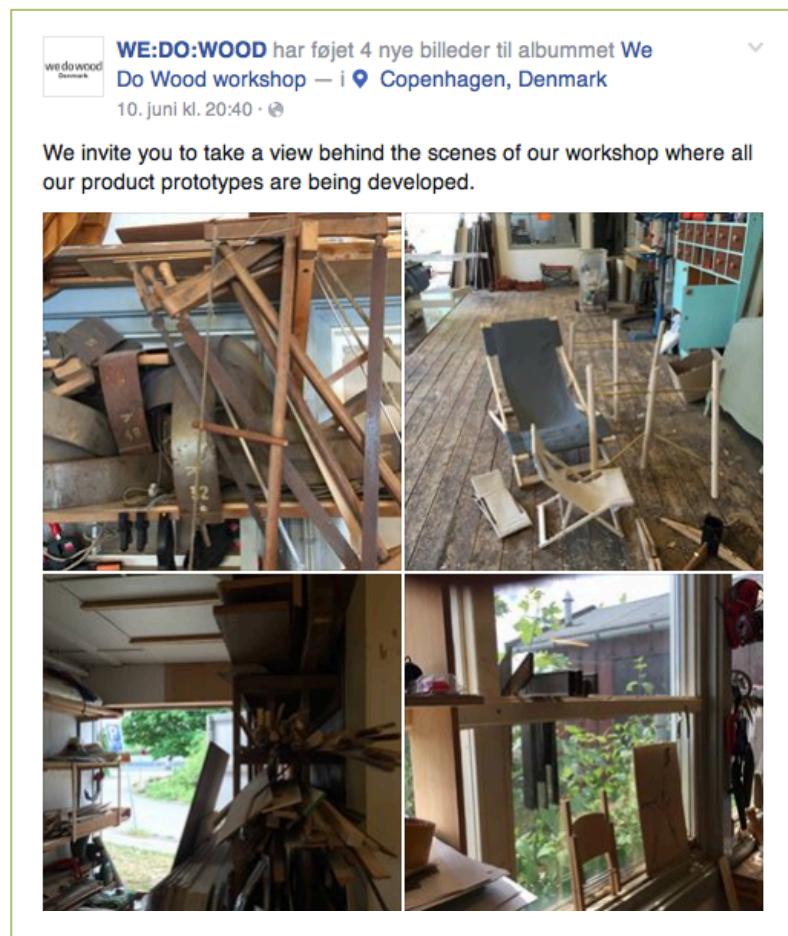


Fig. 10.1 We Do Wood Facebook post

None of the case companies show interest in using paid media to increase brand awareness on social media. The use of and attitude towards paid media varies. ILEH experience that paid media is too expensive compared to the amount of clicks per consumer it generates (App. 2, q.1, ll. 15-17).

WDW have aimed to limit the budget and use the resources elsewhere. We interpret this as an indication of lack of coherence between the outcome they expect and the actual outcome.

In addition to social media, our case companies all say that offline word-of-mouth is how their customers become aware of their brand. ILEH have gained brand awareness through hotel chain (see introduction p. 59). JHoC and ILEH furthermore emphasized that Google Adwords is a beneficial source to attracting customers. An element which WDW highlighted was that they might do more to attract traffic to their website if it included an online shop through which the consumers could purchase WDW's furniture. However, WDW rely on retailers, such as ILEH, to attract consumers and generate sales and therefore their resources and efforts are put elsewhere. Their use of social media revolves around gaining brand awareness and creating positive brand associations, which could explain their attitude towards paid media.

### 10.1.1 Consumers' awareness of brands on social media

In our theoretical hypothesis (chapter 8) and current state of affairs (chapter 3), we assessed that an increasing number people and companies are active on social media, and today social media marketing seems more relevant than ever. We set out to determine if consumers, particularly those who have an interest in interior design, become aware of new furniture brands on social media.

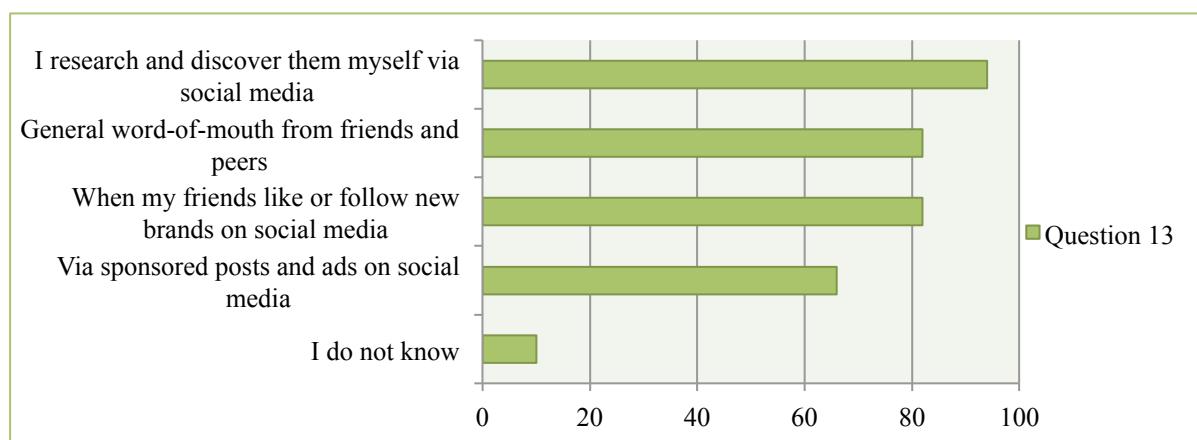


Table 10.2 How consumer become aware of furniture brands

Table 10.2.1 above demonstrates the number of respondents who state that they research and discover new brands on social media, and thus they actively put in efforts to find furniture brands.

The results also indicate that word-of-mouth from friends and peers is still a strong influence, along with online word-of-mouth, such as what friends like and follow on social media.

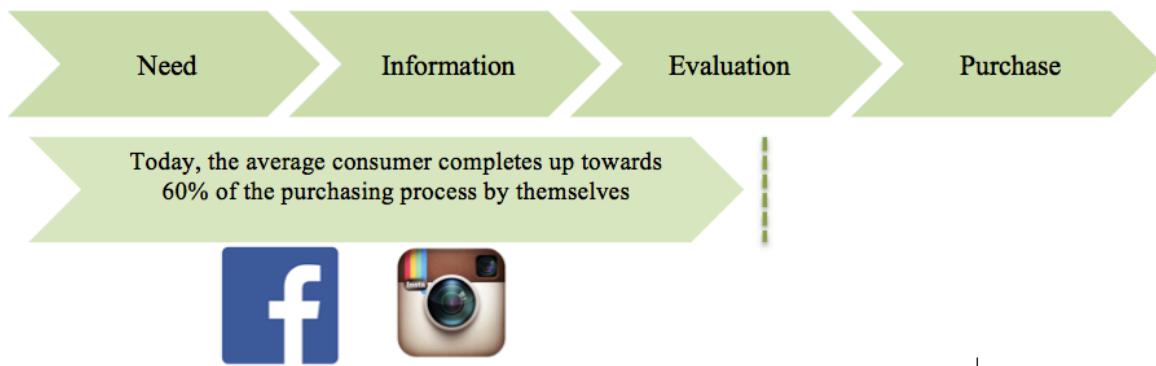


Fig. 10.3 Purchasing process and social media (Inspired by Sachse & Carlsen, 2014)

In agreement with our results, research implies that many consumers involve social media in their purchasing decision to find information and alternative brands and products. According to a study done by Forrester Research, the average consumer today carries out 60 percent of the decision-making process themselves with the help of various social media (Sachse & Carlsen, 2014).

Due to this development, we find it important for brands to be available and present on social media in order to be taken into consideration during the consumers' decision-making process. As highlighted in the theory, brand awareness increases the possibility of the brands entering the consumers' consideration set but it also signals that there is committed company behind the brand. The increased awareness may additionally imbue a sense of familiarity in consumers' minds, which may evolve into trust or confidence. In cases of high involvement purchases, as we believe buying furniture is, familiarity, trust, and confidence are important factors in influencing consumer choice.

### 10.1.2 Consumer engagement with brands on social media

The thesis looks at how furniture brands can increase their brand equity on social media once brand awareness is achieved and consumers interact with the brand by liking or following it. Therefore, we examine which content and posts give consumers a positive perception of the brand and thus might influence brand equity. In the sections below, we go in detail with the other two relevant brand equity factors, perceived quality and brand associations, and thus the only focus of this section is to understand how our respondents' interact with brands once they follow or like it. Furthermore, the following is an analysis of how consumers react to brands' social media efforts and what they expect.

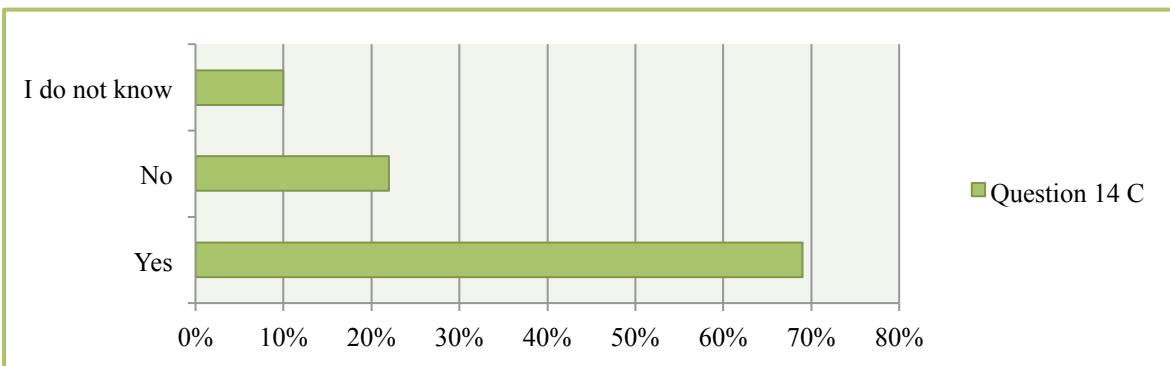


Fig. 10.4 Consumers' perception of brands

Just over half of our respondents (51 percent) answered that their perception of brands is not improved when brands post promotional content intended to increase sales through their social media profiles (Question 14 B, app. 5). However, 69 percent of the respondents perceive a brand more positively when they get an insight into the production process and materials used by a brand (Question 14 C, app. 5). This could indicate that consumers are more interested in the story and process of the product rather than simply being presented with a promotional post on social media. These findings correlate with the experiences of ILEH and what 2RT bases his social media efforts on.

In line with the Aaker's theory about brands' commitment influencing consumers' brand perception, the survey showed that consumers react positively to a high level of activity from brands on social media. However, 23 percent of respondents did not provide a clear answer (Question 14 G, app. 5). These results could be due to the excessive "noise" from various brands on social media. As observed and mentioned previously, brands need to break this noise barrier in order to reach consumers with valuable content. We assume that the respondents' ambiguous answers can be ascribed to the fact that the question does not clearly define what sort of content and activity. In line with question 14B, it can be argued that the *right* kind of content may have a positive influence on consumers' attitudes towards the level of activity. Thus, we deem that there is grounds for brands to analyze their metrics to track which content receives positive interaction (e.g. likes, shares), and see if the frequency of their posts influences consumer engagement.

In the theoretical framework, we established that online word-of-mouth on social media positively influences consumers' attitude towards brands. The information from other consumers in addition

to the intrapersonal, two-way communication from brands furthermore assists consumers in establishing a truer identity of the brand, and consumers' self-narrative. We found that 51 percent of our respondents' perception of a brand was not influenced positively when they only presented with content from the brand itself (Q 14 H, app. 5). Concurrently, 52 percent say their perception is influenced in a positive direction when they see content mentioning the brand from other consumers on social media (Q 14 A, app. 5).

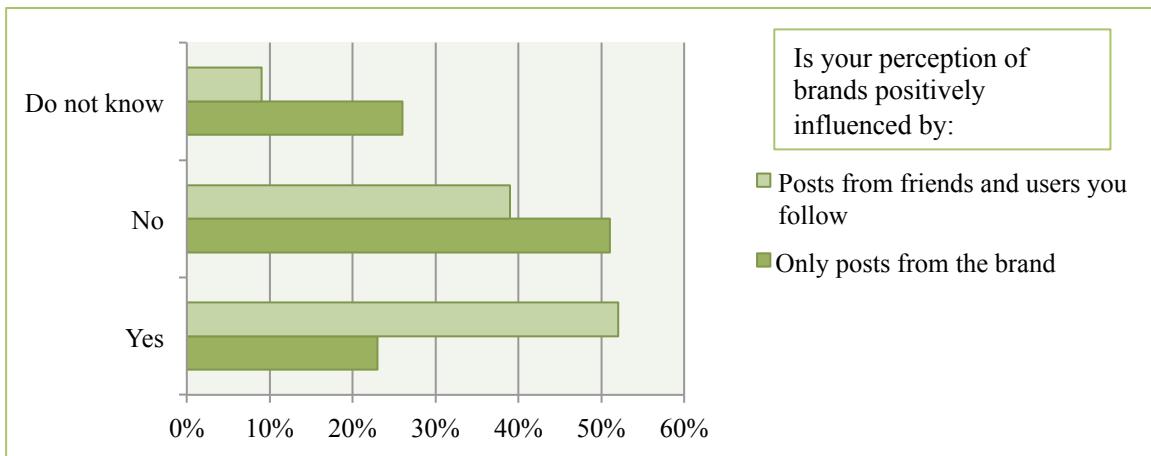


Table 10.5 Survey question 14

On the basis of the above, we argue that engaging followers and consumers is a significant factor in creating brand awareness on social media. Thus far, our observations imply that consumers' engagement and perception is positively influenced when their contact with a brand includes a social dimension, and they are offered more extensive and personal knowledge about the brand, for instance by being virtually invited behind-the-scenes. Furthermore, our respondents react positively to word-of-mouth, which is an advantage for brands as earned media can help create brand awareness and navigate traffic into the brands' profile or official website. Our case companies revealed that their social media efforts were based on their assumption that consumers were interested in value-based content that demonstrated the brands' core values. However, we found that the perception of brands, for a majority of our respondents (74%), improve when a brand *visibly* attaches importance to the *same values* as they do (Q 14 F, app. 5). Thus, we believe that in order to create valuable content, a brand needs to acquire insight into the interests and values of their target audience and harmonize the brands' values with the consumers'. We will return to this point with emphasis on CSR as a value-adding factor in the following sections.

## 10.2 Consumers' perception of quality

Managing brands means managing perceptions and therefore consumers' perception of the quality of a product or a brand is important in order to influence their overall attitude.



Fig. 10.6 Perceived quality. Personal contribution.

The same table, from the same brand, might for instance be perceived in multiple ways, as illustrated above, and different consumers might perceive different values to be signifiers of quality. One might perceive design as quality, whereas others might perceive the longevity or sustainability to determine the quality of this table. This illustrates that one product might have many values that appeal to different consumers and constitute quality for them. Additionally, using the one value that consumers ascribe quality might influence consumers' perception of the overall quality in a positive way, as visibly showing a key feature can influence the perception of other intangible features (Aaker, 1991). In the following section, we wish to illustrate if and how the case companies we have interviewed have taken perceived quality into account in their strategies on social media, and to see if consumers ascribe quality and value to CSR.

### 10.2.1 Strategic approaches to perceived quality

As mentioned above, brands should strive to identify one or more key feature(s) that should influence consumers' perception of quality. Three of our case companies actively communicate sustainability as a key feature to influence their consumers' perception of quality, however this can be a challenge as elaborated on below. Sustainability has many different connotations to it, and thus the assessment of whether it is something that heightens a product's perceived quality or not is subjective. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, there is no consensus surrounding the definitions of CSR and sustainability, which is also evident in consumers' understanding of the concepts.

As the only case company, WDW has thought about the values and associations their brand wishes to communicate in order to influence consumers' perception of quality. They have identified their competitive landscape and pinpointed which values are significant for the competitors' brands and which values WDW are able to compete on.



Fig. 10.7 Competitive landscape

As illustrated above, WDW's competitive advantage is an equal combination of design, price, and eco-advantage (App. 4, q.8, ll. 99-121). WDW's positioning is largely based on their CSR strategy, as they perceive this to be a value to which their customers assign quality. Additionally, the competitive landscape they have laid out is based on their assumption that there are a limited amount of furniture brands who focus on sustainability and CSR, and that furniture and design with a sustainable profile is often much more expensive than other furniture (App. 4, q.8, ll. 114-121). WDW thus believe that the overlap between price, design, and eco-advantage represents a "sweet spot". The reason why WDW wishes to compete on price is that the price should indicate that their products are available for the majority of consumers, as opposed to high-end designer brands, such as Arne Jacobsen, where the price might reflect exclusiveness. Aaker notes that consumer may perceive a price as an indicator of quality, as low cost might equal low quality and high price might equal high quality (Aaker, 1991).

ILEH believes that CSR is a value that lacks in relations to furniture and home décor, and thus their brand is based an organic and sustainable approach to this (App. 2., ll. 3-5). ILEH's goal is to enlighten consumers on the fact that sustainability extends to furniture and home décor as well. In line with Aaker (1991), ILEH emphasize that the price of their products inevitably reflects the

overall quality, but their products should simultaneously be available for the majority of consumers (App. 2, q.8, ll. 110-112) JHoC does not want to highlight his CSR strategies as a value or a selling point because he wants to avoid greenwashing even though the brand includes several CSR initiatives as mentioned (App. 3, q.8, ll. 79-104). From the interview, JHoC expresses that “[...] customers regard our value to be Danish Design, Danish production, and that it is made from natural materials [...]”, but the brand “[...] lacks a value adding factor [...]” in order to persuade consumers who are not existing customers (App. 3, q.7, ll. 73-74) (App. 3, q.12.1, ll. 249-250).

As retail brand 2RT is particularly conscious about CSR as a core value for the brand and considers it to be a niche market. Because the brand aims at selling products that are unique and handpicked, 2RT does not want to compete on low prices and discounts, but as an online shop this can be difficult. The interview reflected the notion that 2RT finds it difficult to use CSR as the one value that should influence consumers perception of quality, as it is challenging to find a common denominator in the individual consumers’ definitions of sustainability and CSR. Due to this complexity the brand has chosen to define CSR with “[...] the terms that rethinking entails – [...] that you are considerate, that you reduce waste, and consume in a sensible manner” (App. 1, q.11, ll. 171-174).

We find that the common feature for our case companies is that they all find CSR and sustainability to be a value adding factor that can influence consumer perception of quality. However, they all find it difficult to implement a strategic approach that communicates and sells the notion of it to consumers, particularly on social media. Our case companies all express that only a very limited amount of consumers who actually research information in-depth in relations to CSR, and it is necessary to convey sustainable values to consumers in the catching and easily digestible manner that social media communication requires. Evidently, CSR and sustainability are not *visible key features* and are furthermore complex intangible features. Due to our observations and the theoretical framework, we find it necessary for brands to tie CSR to tangible key features, in order for these CSR to be perceived as signifying quality or influence the perception of the overall quality of a brand. For instance, WDW focuses on *aesthetics* as a tangible key feature and *ethics* as an intangible feature, and ascribe them equal importance in their branding strategy (WeDoWood.dk). Thus CSR and design are equal constituents that are both meant to influence the perception of quality of their products, and thus their brand

### 10.2.2 Values that influence perceived quality

As established, it may be beneficial for brands to strategically identify a tangible key feature that can help influence the perception of other intangible features. Below, we will present the results of our questionnaire survey to identify which features consumers attach importance to. Furthermore, we will emphasize how sustainability influences consumers' perception of quality.

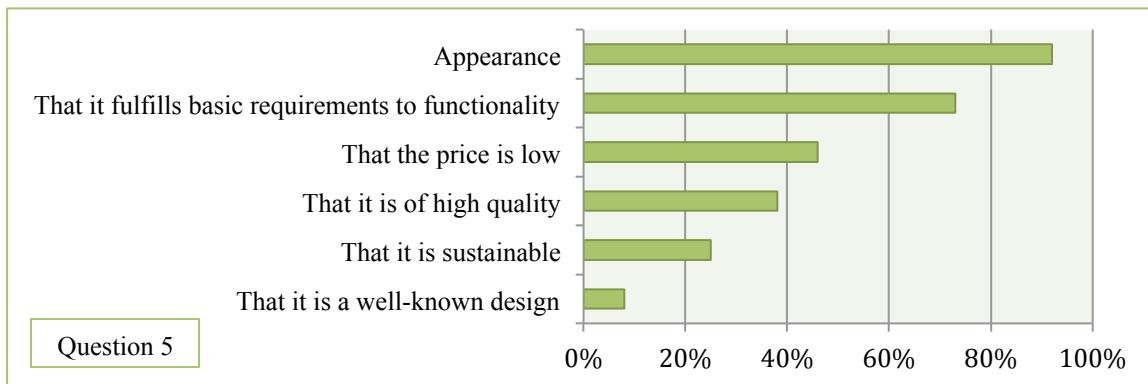
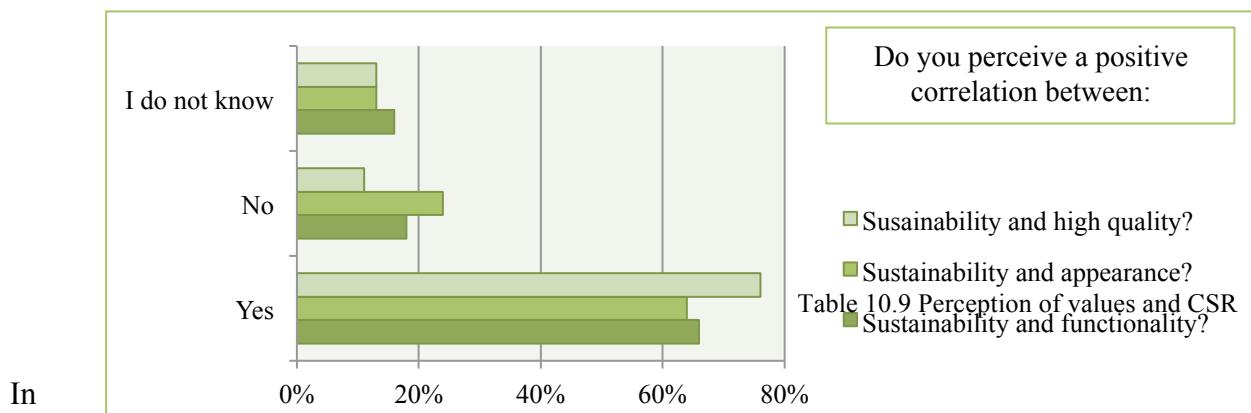


Table 10.8 Values consumers attach importance to

The above illustrates which values our respondents attach importance to when they purchase furniture. As the percentages indicate, the respondents were able to choose multiple answers. The majority prioritizes appearance and functionality as values that are important. Only 25 percent attribute sustainability importance when purchasing furniture, however, when asked to choose which value is *most* important, only 6 respondents chose sustainability, while the majority still chose appearance. From this we assume that sustainability is not necessarily a selling point on its own, nor a value that respondents prioritize. Accordingly, 2RT pointed out that when consumers are presented with the choice between two chairs -one that is sustainable and one that consumers perceive to be more aesthetically appealing- the choice falls on the latter (App. 1, q.10, ll. 151-154).

As our case companies expressed, consumers' interest in sustainability might not be a value that is important enough to solely influence consumers' perception of quality. However, almost half of the respondents are willing to compromise with other values if the product satisfies their definition of sustainability (app. 5, q. 10). Our survey furthermore shows that more than half of our respondents are willing to pay a higher price for a product that satisfies their definition of sustainability (app. 5, q. 11). We had reservations about whether the respondents would be inclined to answer our questionnaire on the basis their good intentions rather than their actual behavior and opinions. For these reasons, we initially attempted to avoid influencing our respondents' attitude towards

sustainability by only revealing that the questionnaire was about furniture brands on social media. In comparison with question 5, table 10.8, we find the answers of question 10 and 11 interesting as only a quarter have initially attached importance to sustainability. This development could indicate that the respondents become aware that we are interested in their attitude towards sustainability and therefore wish to convey that they are concerned with making responsible choices. With reference to Maslow's pyramid of needs, we contemplate whether this reflects their need for self-actualization.



Despite of the abovementioned findings, when asked which values the consumers positively relate to sustainability, we found that the majority find a positive correlation between sustainability and functionality, appearance, and most interestingly, high quality. We interpret these findings as an indication that when the respondents are aware that a product is sustainable, their perception of quality improves. Concurrently, the positive correlation between appearance and sustainability may indicate that the respondents assume that products from sustainable brands are aesthetically appealing. Our findings could indicate that using CSR and sustainability in the marketing communication can affect consumers' perception of overall quality in a positive direction. Theory implies that sustainability and CSR must be tied up to tangible features, but the abovementioned results indicate that the effects can be reversed as well. As a brand equity factor, perceived quality can lead to reason-to-buy and differentiation, and based on the above, communicating sustainability as a value may generate positive perceived quality.

### 10.3 Generating brand associations

We found that the values our case companies' wish to associate their brands with are different, however as previously mentioned, three out of four say that a fundamental value for their brand is sustainability.

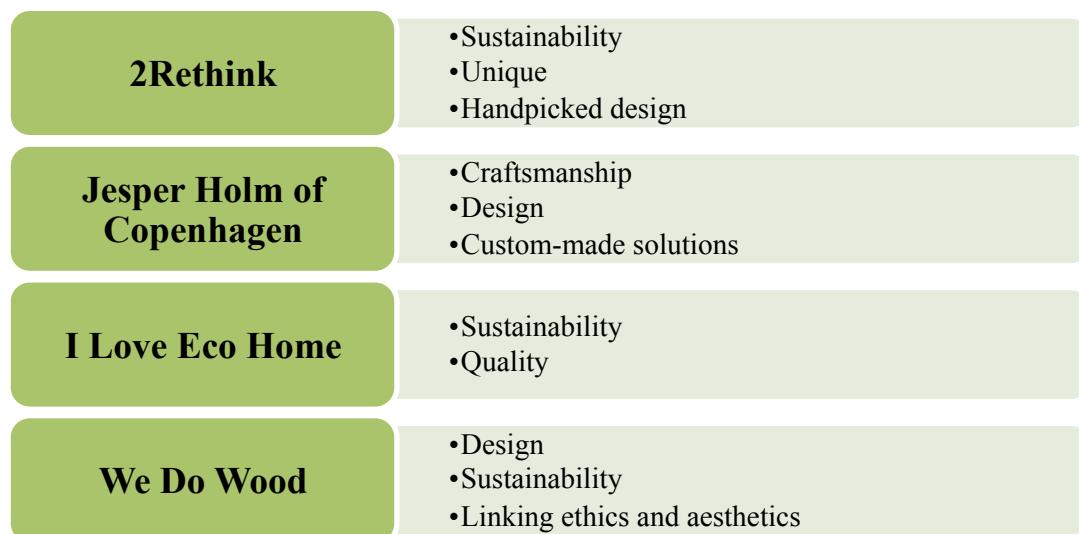


Fig. 10.10 Brand attributes

As the figure above displays, 2RT, ILEH, and WDW associate their brands with sustainability, which is a psychological benefit meant to give symbolic value for customers (see p. 26). JHoC of Copenhagen associates his brand with rational benefits such as craftsmanship and customized solutions that are meant to provide customers with a functional value. Furthermore, the brand name in English is associated with a geographic area, which may help consumers link the brand with the associations surrounding Copenhagen or Denmark, for instance Nordic Design, design traditions, or Scandinavian style which might add trustworthiness to the brand.

#### 10.3.1 Sustainability as a brand association on social media

We found that our case companies have different experiences in using social media as a platform to communicate values that generates brand associations. In the following, we particularly focus on how sustainability can be communicated in order to generate valuable brand associations, which may add to brand equity. Our case companies experience variable degrees of engagement and interaction from their followers and other social media users when sharing content about sustainability. They all interpret this engagement as a representation of their customers' interest.



Fig. 10.11 consumers' interest in sustainability

As the only brand, JHoC does not post any content about sustainability, partly due to the fact that the objective of having a Facebook page is merely to navigate consumers to the company website and past experience shows that his customers are not interested in the company's CSR activities (App. 3, q.10.2, ll. 163-164). Using sustainability as a point of focus in the social media communication has not proved beneficial, and JHoC states that “[...] if people go to my website for the reason that they are sympathetic with the company because we have done something environmentally friendly, I do not believe that these are consumers who are looking to purchase anything.” (App. 3, q. 12, ll. 203-207) Additionally, JHoC finds that there are certain risks, such as greenwashing, pertaining to linking associations of sustainability to the brand.

The remaining three brands all have sustainability as a core value and an intended brand association and we found that a large part of their content helps consumers' associate sustainability with their brand. They stated that they post videos and content that illustrate and tell the story behind a certain product to inform and teach followers about sustainability in their production and materials. WDW, who work with bamboo, try to enlighten their followers on the sustainable advantages of this (app. 4, q.13, ll. 287-291). 2RT also uses social media to enlighten and educate followers on sustainable furniture. However, they both experience that their content receives varying degrees of interest from their followers and social media users. 2RT stated that CSR is not at the top of the private consumers' agenda and that they are not necessarily interested in the detailed facts about sustainability. Generally, they do not respond to information that requires considerable attention, such as articles. 2RT uses cues in the form of hashtags to link content and the brand with sustainability. According to 2RT, “It is about telling the CSR story but in a less corporate manner, for instance by not including all of the underlying brand visions, but rather appealing to the emotions, aesthetics, and the social- rather than the financial” (App. 1. q.13, ll. 210-212).

ILEH stated that because ‘eco’ is a part of their brand name, they are obligated to stay within the sphere of sustainability when they post content on social media. Therefore, “[...] on social media it

is obvious that [ILEH's content includes] "organic" and "sustainable". [...] There is a lot of interaction where [consumers] comment that it is cool [on Facebook, red.]. [...] It is more difficult on Instagram to know whether they simply like the *photograph*. [...] The fact that it is sustainable may just be an extra benefit" (App. 2. q.12, ll. 207-2011).

ILEH experience much interest from consumers when they post content about sustainability, or organic and eco-friendly products and news, which all of their content entails to some extent. As cited above, ILEH finds it easier to track what users are interested in on Facebook because they comment on it. However, on Instagram, users mostly show appreciation by liking and therefore it is more difficult to identify if it is the sustainable element or simply the photograph that they like. This corresponds with what WDW experiences as they also find that on Instagram, the interest in sustainability is difficult to track. WDW have observed online word-of-mouth, as many customers, particularly mothers with small children, use hashtags to link their purchases to WDW. Yet, such posts mentioning WDW do not focus on the sustainable values of bamboo, but rather focus on the design (App. 4, q. 15. ll. 311-321).

### **10.3.2 The influence of CSR and sustainability on consumers**

In the following, we will go in-depth with the answers from our questionnaire pertaining to our respondents' attitude towards sustainability, in order to identify an overlap between this and our case companies' experiences. As previously mentioned, the majority of our respondents stated that their perception of a brand is improved when the brand visibly attaches importance to the same values as them (app. 5 q. 14F) We believe, that these results could indicate that when our case companies experience interest in value adding content, their followers are influenced in a positive direction because the brands they follow share content signaling values that correlate with theirs. We noticed that when sharing content about sustainability and CSR on social media, the case companies were focused on their own definitions and understandings of the concepts. However, in our opinion, in order to create valuable content for consumers it is necessary to gain an understanding of their perception of CSR and sustainability in relations to furniture. We asked the respondents to choose as many different definitions of sustainable furniture as they found applicable.

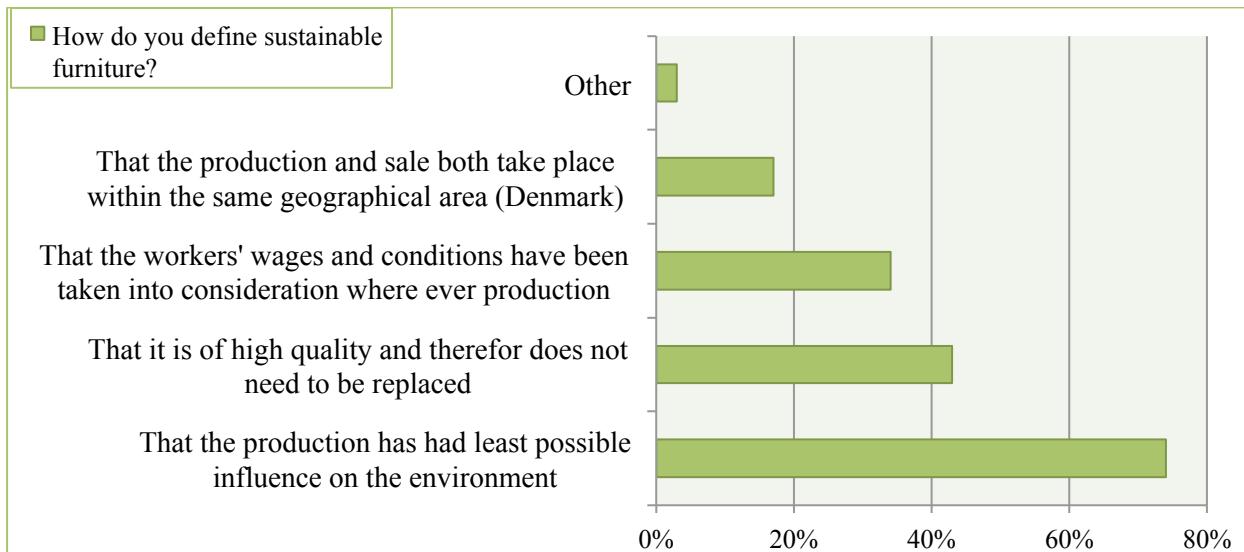


Table. 10.12 Consumers' definition of sustainability

As illustrated in table 10.12, our respondents predominantly define and relate sustainable furniture with having least possible influence on the environment. These results partly correlates with our case companies' definitions and approaches to CSR. Concurrently, a large amount of the respondents believe that sustainable furniture should be of high quality that ensures a long lifecycle. WDW pointed out that their approach to reducing waste and prolonging the lifecycle of their products includes making multipurpose furniture with a natural finish that can be fixed with sandpaper and oil if scratched. (App. 4, q.11, ll. 204-206) The other brands were similarly focused on the quality of their products in order to prevent overconsumption.

2RT observes that consumers are interested in sustainable furniture, but as mentioned before, sustainability does not override appearance. The experience is that consumers are satisfied with only a fragment of sustainability if they prefer the appearance of one product to another. The product they disqualify might be more sustainable, but for the consumers this is not necessarily a determining factor (App. 1. q.10, ll. 154-156). 2RT finds that storytelling influences consumers' perception of sustainability, but sometimes it might not be beneficial to tell the entire story. Consumers are interested in the sustainability of a product, but they also want to interpret the story in ways that matches their views of sustainability. They might ignore certain facts, pertaining to sustainability, and emphasize others in order to create a story about to justify why prefer a less sustainable product to a more sustainable one, correlating with the law of concern highlighted in table 5.4 (p. 33). 2RT feels that the brand cannot be the judge of which sustainability is the "right one" if the product should still remain commercial (App. 1, q. 10, ll. 161-162).

On the contrary, according to JHoC, sustainability is not a concern to his customers. ILEH, 2RT, and WDW all perceive their CSR approaches and sustainability to be a competitive advantage for their brand. We believe that they base these assumptions on the notion that consumers find sustainability interesting and value-adding. According to 2RT, the furniture industry is large and crowded, which is why it is important to differentiate, which 2RT uses sustainability to carve a niche (App. 1, q.6, ll. 84-91).

On the basis of the above, our case companies appear to agree with notion that the business case for social responsibility is harder to establish than the environmental (p. 41, Esty & Winston, 2006). In addition we find that the respondents are inclined to perceive sustainability as an environmental issue rather than social. We believe that the respondents are more inclined to perceive sustainability as an environmental factor, because they might associate furniture with natural material, such as wood. Furthermore, as our case companies expressed, consumers do not go in-depth with information about sustainability on social media. Due to this, consumers might not be aware of the social aspects pertaining to furniture production, and thus they may not link sustainable furniture with sustainable and fair working conditions. In relations to influencing brand equity, we find that WDW, ILEH, and 2RT's approach to sustainability corresponds to the expectations of the respondents. On the basis of this and the abovementioned sections, we believe that if brands use sustainability as an association through social media communication, consumers may link the brand with aesthetically appealing, high quality products that are environmentally friendly.

# Chapter III

## Data conclusion

- ◆ Consumers' perception of CSR on social media
- ◆ Brands' use of CSR on social media

## **11. Using CSR to generate brand equity on social media in practice**

In the above analysis, we have challenged the theoretical framework to see how our case companies generate brand equity, consciously or subconsciously, in practice. Moreover, we have analyzed our survey respondents' answers to clarify if and how these fit the companies' action and the theoretical indications.

We found that our case companies generally have a spontaneous and instinctive approach to their social media with no clear strategy with regards to timing or content. Nevertheless, three out of four brands focus on creating and sharing value adding content, that they have experienced followers and social media users like, in their effort to create brand awareness. Likewise, they engage in storytelling to involve customers in behind-the-scenes activities and on the sustainable front.

Behind-the-scenes content is for instance used to tell the story of a product, which their followers generally react positively towards, in correspondence with the results of question 14 C. As our theoretical framework implies, consumers use social media to create a true and transparent image of a brand, which may be why allowing followers insights to production processes through content is well liked. None of our case companies stated that they use competitions to involve customers, yet some experienced that posts announcing discounts have gained interest. Discounts however, may contradict a brand's perceived value of for instance being exclusive, and 2RT was aware that discounts might conflict with the consumer perception of quality.

We chose to look at perceived quality as this is a brand equity factor that can influence other factors, for instance by generating brand loyalty. All of our case companies see sustainability as a value that represents quality and communicate it to some degree, either on social media or on their website. Our case companies all perceived quality, in relations to furniture, in the sense that it is hardwearing, and therefore may contribute to the process of reducing consumption and waste. Some of the brands have implemented sustainability as a core value in all their social media efforts, while, for instance JHoC, simply states his approach on the company website. As the definitions from our case companies vary, so do the connotations of sustainability that the respondents have. Values and the perception of what constitutes quality are subjective. In the above section, we have identified the similarities between how the respondents perceive sustainability and how it is communicated by the brands, and whether any correlations can influence perceived quality and brand associations. We found that a large amount of our respondents link functionality and quality with sustainability,

which could imply that if sustainability is implemented in marketing communication on social media, consumers will associate the brand with high quality.

Brands cannot be certain that their content on social media evoke the associations they are intended to. As associations are subjective, a feature that one consumer might perceive to be a selling point may be irrelevant to another consumer. Associations may thus induce emotions, and as mentioned in the theoretical framework, emotional response is an important factor in modern day branding (ESP). Sustainability tends to appeal to consumers emotions, and may thus positively influence their decision making process, and correlate with consumers' need for self-actualization. We found that JHoC does not try to communicate sustainability as a brand association because he presumes and observes that there is no interest from his customers. The values that the brand wishes to communicate and be associated with, such as craftsmanship and customized solutions, indicate that his customers are not emotionally influenced by CSR but rather to the rational benefits that his products can be associated with.

2RT stated that the content surrounding sustainability should appeal to the consumers' emotions and be communicated in a less corporate manner than, in for instance, a CSR report. The use of cue words and hashtags in content is an approach to try to create brand associations of sustainability without consumers necessarily having to go in-depth with a text. Hashtags may make it easier for consumers who are not interested in details about sustainability to identify it, and subconsciously it may improve their perception of the brand if it is linked to sustainability, as we have argued in the above sections. Based on the empirical data, sustainability cannot be considered a key feature that will ensure brand awareness. Rather, CSR and sustainability are values that will contribute to improve perceived quality of the brand and that it can generate positive associations. In order for the values to have this positive effect, it is beneficial to use social media for storytelling and behind-the-scenes content that can emotionally involve consumers.

# Chapter 12

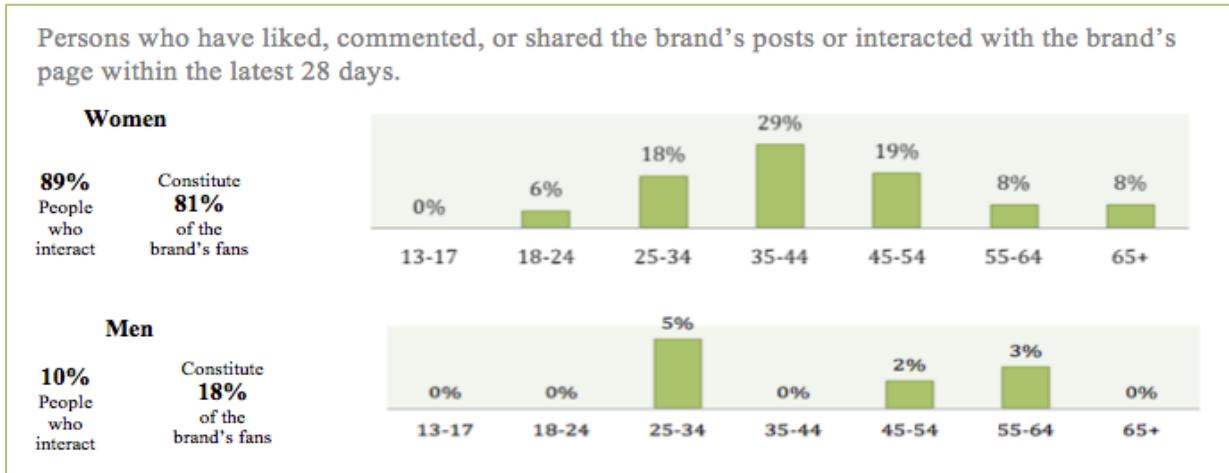
## Case example

- ◆ Brand awareness
- ◆ Perceived quality
- ◆ Brand associations

## 12. Case example

This example serves to demonstrate our understanding of brand equity and how it is achieved through an active CSR approach on social media. In order to substantiate the findings in the analysis, this chapter will present the case company we find to be successful in achieving brand equity. Based on the theoretical framework and the consumer survey, ILEH should be gaining brand equity when measuring from the brand equity factors the thesis focuses on, namely brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations. These factors, along with brand loyalty and the other proprietary brand assets (see chapter 4) all add to the brand's equity and help establish values such as reason-to-buy and brand salience for the consumer, and give a competitive advantage. The choice of ILEH as example is based upon several factors. ILEH was able to provide us with elaborate arguments about what they do on social media, and why they do it. Even though ILEH is not the brand with the highest number of followers on Facebook, they are the company that seems to grasp the benefits of each social media platform and utilize them.

### 12.1 Brand awareness



12.1 ILEH Facebook metrics

ILEH has managed to create brand awareness on social media and gain 1099 followers on Facebook and 4318 followers on Instagram. Apart from obtaining followers, they achieve to create content that encourages interaction. Table 12.1 above shows ILEH's Facebook insights, which illustrate that followers, predominantly women, interact with the brand. The brand creates awareness by, predominantly, sharing value-adding content, using storytelling and behind-the-scenes material as a part of their social media strategy. According to the theoretical framework, ILEH might gain additional awareness due to the interaction from followers, because followers will help share their

content and further influence their friends and followers. This is furthermore backed-up by our respondents' answers (app. 5, q. 13 and q. 14 A). To exploit brand awareness and the possible top-of-mind position, ILEH posts discounts and promotional content that calls for action. According to Vaynerchuck (2013), followers need to be primed with content that adds value for them before the brand can gain positive consumer response on call for action-content (Vaynerchuck, 2013). Furthermore, it is pivotal to know the strengths and weaknesses of each social media platform in order to share content that adds value for consumers (*ibid.*) As previously mentioned, ILEH experience that Instagram is better suited for promotional content and creating an atmosphere that visually appeals to users. On Facebook, the level of interaction is high when ILEH posts articles concerning sustainability and their eco-friendly products, and when a personal aspect is brought forth for instance by showing a product being used. ILEH have attained their followers even though they do not use financial resources to boost posts to gain awareness.

## 12.2 Perceived quality

During our interview, ILEH stated that their thoughts on sustainability revolve around aesthetic and ethical quality (p. 5. l. 20). They expect the products they retail to be of high quality enabling a long lifecycle. Additionally, they expect their products to be socially responsible. Products that fulfill these expectations presumably are of a higher price. As ILEH wants to make sustainability accessible for everyone, they try to balance their expectations to sustainability, and assure fair prices, whilst having commercial products that appeal to a broad segment. Thus, ILEH does not try to signal high quality through higher prices. Rather, ILEH uses social media to link sustainability and high quality to influence consumers' perception of quality. According to our respondents, sustainability has the ability to represent high overall quality. ILEH retails brands that fulfill their requirements in respect to social and environmental responsibility, and high quality.. If these brands have high consumers-based brand equity, retailing them helps generate channel member interest thus influencing the perceived quality of ILEH (Aaker, 1991). The analysis established that users on social media are interested in brands' values (App. 5, q. 14 F+15). Furthermore, the case companies have found that their followers respond positively to behind-the-scenes content and storytelling. As ILEH manages to share content that consumers find valuable, consumers might be inclined to link the brand with sustainability, and the overall perception of quality of ILEH may thus be positively influenced.

### **12.3 Brand associations**

As ILEH's brand is inevitably linked to sustainability, their goal is to make consumers aware of these values and their brand identity. The association to eco-friendliness already exists in their name, which they feel obliges them to stay within the realm. By using hashtags that express their stance, they only post content that reflects their sustainable profile. The brand's values are visible in all their social media efforts and they attentively communicate via social media in ways that invite consumers to interact, thus trying to create associations between their brand and sustainability. This way, as consumers gain brand awareness, they are immediately able to link the intended associations to the brand name. By constantly using sustainability as a visible part of their social media communication, ILEH ensures that consumers are able to link their brand with intangible values that may differentiate ILEH from their competitors. In the analysis it appeared that the respondents associate sustainability with functionality, which is an attribute many attached importance to, and high overall quality. According to the theory, when ILEH's social media communication intends to create strong and continuous brand associations, they might be able to create positive brand attitudes and reason-to-buy for the consumers (Aaker, 1991).

# Chapter 13

## Conclusion

- ◆ Research questions answers
- ◆ Concluding on theoretical hypothesis
- ◆ Concluding on problem statement

### **13. Conclusion**

This thesis has aimed at answering whether CSR has a direct influence on brand equity, and whether this can be aided through marketing communication on social media. In order to clarify our theoretical standpoint and approach, concepts are defined through research articles and prevailing theories, yet the predominant theory used in this thesis is Aaker's brand equity theory (Aaker, 1991). This thesis focuses on the three brand equity factors we deem to be of most relevance to social media communication and consumer-based brand equity; namely brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations. In order to answer the problem statement, this chapter will compare the theoretical framework and the empirical observations presented in the analysis. Even though the following refers to *consumers* and *brands* in general, the conclusion does not reflect a normative study, as this thesis takes point of departure in a limited segment of consumers and furniture brands.

From the empirical observations, it is evident that the majority of the respondents link sustainable furniture with an environmental concern and a long lifecycle for products. As the theoretical framework suggests, the business case for environmental CSR is more tangible and easier to implement for companies. The results from our survey might have been different if respondents were to answer how they generally define sustainability or how they define it with regards to other industries, e.g. labor intensive industries. The perception of sustainability might reflect the associations pertaining to furniture, such as the use of natural resources, and could indicate that consumers are not as aware of social aspects, such as safety at production sites and respect for local communities, of the furniture industry as they might be of e.g. the clothing industry. None of the case companies emphasized the social aspects of CSR in their business approaches. ILEH and WDW mentioned their ethical obligations, yet they assign this social responsibility to FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). The companies do not experience any particular interest in sustainability as a social aspect and our analysis suggests that consumers are not interested in CSR being imposed upon them. Theory implies that the business case for social responsibility is not compelling within the furniture industry, which correlates with the fact that brands do not experience pressure from consumers to implement and communicate social aspects of corporate responsibility, such as fair conditions and wages for workers at production sites. Consumers' comprehension of CSR is thus a result of a two-way process: consumers' perception of sustainability influences what brands find necessary to use in their CSR strategy, and likewise, the CSR approaches that brands communicate influence consumers' perception of sustainability.

By reference to the analysis and the above, the majority of our case companies experience that consumers are interested in environmental sustainability on social media and in the analysis we established that the case companies experience positive feedback when they post value-based content. Three of the case companies implement CSR in their social media efforts with the aim of providing value for their consumers by documenting parts of the production processes through pictures and by posting articles that concern environmental sustainability. Furthermore, the brands post links to articles revolving around sustainability or in which they have been mentioned. None of the brands have clearly defined strategic goals for their efforts, in the sense that they do not know how CSR can affect their brands through a social media strategy. They wish that consumers associate their brands with sustainability in order to differentiate, but they are not aware of how CSR can be an attribute that provides consumers with additional value.

The respondents have a positive attitude towards brands that share content that reflects their personal values. Despite only a quarter of the respondents replying that they value sustainability when purchasing furniture, over half of the respondents are willing to pay a higher price for furniture that is sustainable (app. 5, q. 5) (app. 5, q. 11). This indicates that sustainability is not a feature that is included in the initial steps of the consumers' decision-making process, and thus something only few actively seek. However, if brands achieve to bring awareness to CSR through social media, it can be perceived as a value-adding benefit that can influence the perception of overall quality and associate the brand with quality products. CSR can thus be a competitive advantage when implemented in a brands' social media communication (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, & Murphy, 2013). This positive influence is further aided by the fact that respondents linked sustainability with several positive attributes, such as functionality and appearance. In addition to having CSR as a part of the core values and brand identity, communicating CSR through social media can help consumers generate positive associations about the brand and thus create a positive brand perception.

As seen, CSR can be a valuable brand attribute that serves to differentiate a brand from competitors, and evoke consumer interest. Nevertheless, a brand cannot rely on CSR as the visible key feature. CSR is not an attribute that -in itself- makes a brand enter consumers' mindset. In order to influence consumers' perception of a brand, and their decision-making process, CSR needs to be visibly communicated in a manner that translates it into consumer benefits. Sustainability and CSR does

not overrule other consumer benefits and values; furniture still needs to be visually appealing to consumers and live up to basic functional requirements. CSR can help brands gain awareness and enhance the overall perception and attitude towards the brand as consumers are likely to pay attention and link positive associations to brands that implement sustainability in their marketing communication.

Brands on social media need to provide consumers with value-based content prior to promotional content. In this sense, brands need to prime consumers through content that does not intend to elicit a response from consumers, but rather provide consumers with something valuable. On social media, brands need to establish symmetrical two-way communication that resembles a personal correspondence rather than one-way communication. When the brand has provided consumers with value, it is more likely that consumers will respond as intended towards promotional content that calls for action, such as discounts with direct link to the online shop (Vaynerchuk, 2013), (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010), (Rowles, 2014). By implementing a social media strategy that is based on valuable insights into what appeals to their target audience and how frequent they should post content, the brands are able to apply CSR in a manner that primes the consumers, making it easier to time their promotional content. By implementing a strategic approach to CSR on social media as highlighted above, brands can exploit the consumers' interest in CSR to influence the brand equity factors that will affect consumers' perception of their brands as illustrated below.

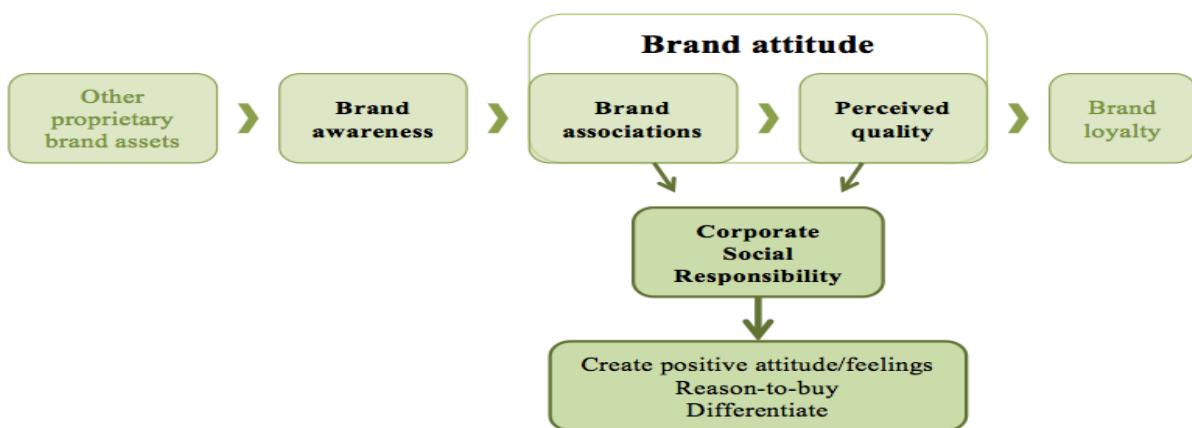


Fig. 13.1 How CSR affects brand equity. Personal contribution.

We find that the empirical observations are compatible with the theoretical framework and that our conclusion reflects what we anticipated in the theoretical hypothesis (chapter 3). In this sense,

implementing CSR in marketing communication needs to focus on the ideas and values consumers' relate to. On social media, consumers are interested in furniture brands' values and messages, and are not satisfied with only receiving promotional content. However, the brands' marketing communication should not be too complicated, as consumers prefer easily digestible content on social media.

In conclusion, environmental CSR can affect consumers' perception of brands in a positive direction. As CSR is an intangible and diffuse concept, brands need to create content with tangible elements that can translate the benefits of sustainability to consumers through social media. Thus, if a furniture brand manages to combine CSR with tangible key features, it can affect consumers' overall perception of the brand and therefore influence consumer-based brand equity in a positive direction.

# Chapter 14

## Recommendations

- ◆ Theoretical background
- ◆ How to use the guide
- ◆ The actual guide
- ◆ Discussion of model

## 14. Recommendations

The purpose of this thesis is, as mentioned, to investigate whether an active CSR strategy on social media can influence consumers' perception of a brand. Thus far we have established a theoretical framework from which we have applied terms and concepts in the analysis of our empirical data, and concluded that an active CSR strategy on social media can in fact influence brand equity in a positive direction. Nevertheless, resources could easily be wasted if the brand fails to recognize the potential of CSR on social media. In order to fully concretize our findings and emphasize how brands can use them in practice, we have constructed a guide that is applicable in establishing, organizing, and executing a social media strategy that takes point of departure in the company's CSR strategy. Hence the guide is derived from the theoretical framework and empirical observations the thesis revolves around, and can be considered the practical body of our results. Since the empirical data supports our theoretical hypothesis to some degree, we believe that it is possible to establish useful recommendations on the basis hereof. In this sense, the guide is a hypothetical illustration of how the results from this thesis can be applied hands-on, and has thus not been tested and substantiated in a practical context. This guide offers recommendations and suggestions to what aspects companies should consider *along* with their existing strategies and business plans. The guide is thus not a strategy on its own and should be implemented with the respectable company in mind.

The target audience for this guide is:

- ⇒ Startups and other small furniture brands, who have online shops
- ⇒ Furniture brands that predominantly use social media for marketing communication
- ⇒ Furniture brands that have incorporated CSR or sustainability in their business plan to some degree

The guide can be used to:

- ⇒ Establish or maintain a presence on social media by using CSR
- ⇒ Use CSR/sustainability as an incorporated value in social media communication
- ⇒ Influence brand equity in a positive direction
- ⇒ Possibly help identify problem areas that stand in the way of brand equity
- ⇒ Define or redefine brand identity, value statements, and branding focuses with emphasis on CSR/sustainability

## 14.1 Theoretical background

Taking point of departure in Aaker's (1991) definition of brand equity, this guide aims at offering recommendations to how brands can explore their branding opportunities on social media with emphasis on CSR (Aaker, 1991). As mentioned, Aaker's consumer-based brand equity is rooted in the assumption that consumers' experiences prior, during, and after purchases is affected by cognitive processing through which the consumer will form an opinion that will determine their behavior (Aaker, 1991). Hence, it is pivotal for brands to gain an understanding of their intended audience in order to influence brand equity. Concurrently, we find it necessary to revisit Rosenbaum-Elliott's concepts regarding consumer involvement, emotions in consumerism, and decision-making processes, as well as Fill's theories regarding traditional marketing communication (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy, & Pervan, 2015) (Fill, 2011). In order to positively influence the consumer, brands need to be aware of the process consumers go through when receiving marketing messages and forming opinions. Moreover, companies need to perform a self-analysis in order to understand the strengths and opportunities of their brand(s). Abovementioned theory and concepts form the basis of step one and two in the model below. Step three is primarily based on our observations in relation to results from our survey about consumers' perception of brands on social media, along with inspiration from Vaynerchuck and Gilbreath (Vaynerchuck, 2013) (Gilbreath, 2010).

## 14.2 How to use this guide and why

The guide consists of three main elements that represent three stages of creating an active CSR strategy on social media. In order to optimally utilize the guide, readers should identify where in the process their brand is and go through the guide from that point on.



Fig. 14.1 Guide structure

The following is a brief explanation of what the main focus of each step is and what their function is.

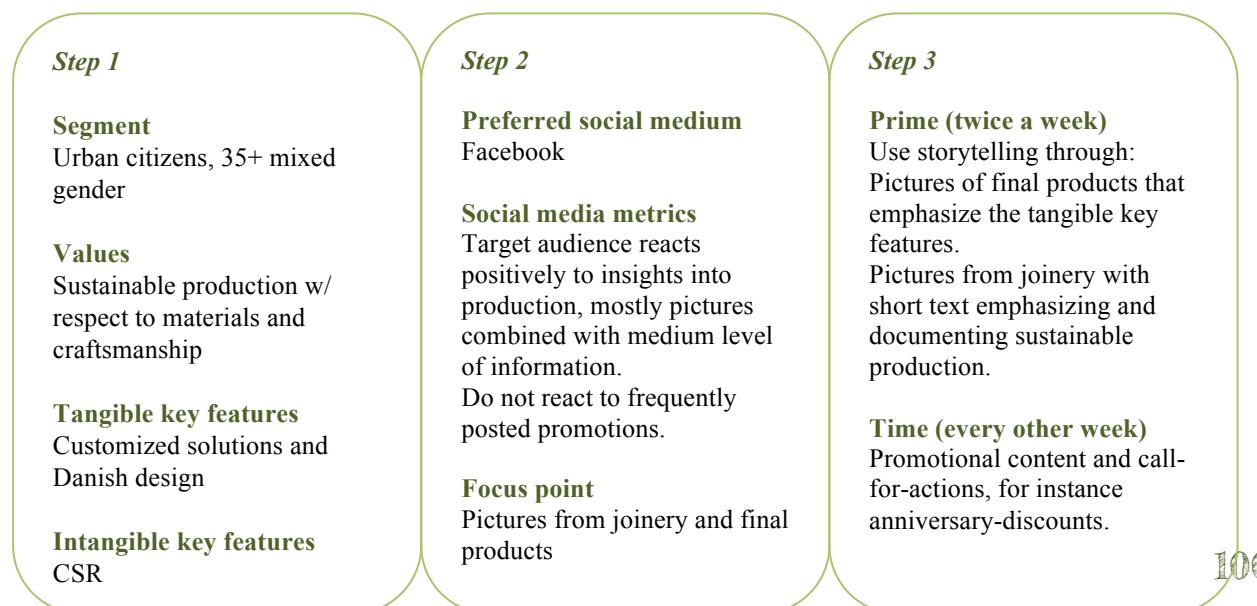
**The primary step** is rooted in how brand equity is derived from branding through associations and perceived quality. Thus the focus of the first step revolves around positioning and consumer behavior. In order to influence brand equity, a brand needs to identify their core values in order to communicate a concrete brand identity to consumers and thus create awareness and familiarity. Within the core values, brands should identify their tangible key feature(s) and examine how these

can be linked to CSR in ways that appeal to consumers. Subsequently, marketing communication additionally needs to influence the consumers' decision-making process by lowering the risk consumers perceive. For these reasons brands should identify their competitive advantages in relations to their core values and know what they want to communicate and why.

**The second step** focuses on which channels the brand should be using in order to reach their intended audience with content that provides value. The brand should examine the social media landscape in order to understand through which platforms their target audience can be reached, and which form of content is best suitable for the purpose or platform. It is necessary to analyze and understand social media metrics, as this will provide brands with insights into what their target audience reacts positively to, when they react, and how they react. Content should revolve around the brand identity and values in order to generate associations between the brand name and the product category. This might help brands enter consumers' mindset and remain top-of-mind when the consumer recognizes a need or opportunity. Insights into what content appeals to the target audience enable brands to strategically communicate CSR as a part of the posts, thus attempting to influence consumers' brand associations. Managing to establish what key features that appeal to consumers and communicate these while implementing CSR will help the brand prime their target audience with value-adding content, and thus time their promotional campaigns.

**The third step** is a combination of step one and two, and focuses on how brands should exercise their strategy in order to make sure that their efforts influence brand equity in a positive direction. This serves to illustrate how brands can use CSR in their social media strategy to create content that adds value to consumers' experiences with the brand. Below is a concrete example of how the steps can be carried out.

Fig. 14.2 Example of strategy



### **14.3 The guide**

The following are concrete recommendations for implementing each step and thus include CSR in the marketing communication on social media in order to influence brand equity.

#### **Strategize**

- Identify your brand's target segment
- Identify the core values of the brand and isolate the most important ones
  - Think about how your core values can be translated into customer benefits
- Identify the tangible key features of your brand and products that could differentiate and constitute a competitive advantage
- Identify how and why your CSR approach is a value for consumers
  - What does CSR mean to your segment?
  - What is their level of perception?

#### **Organize**

- Identify which social media platforms your segment and target audience uses
- Identify how these platforms support your branding purposes
- Identify your current audience's behavior and the performance of current content on social media
  - What do they like, comment, and share?
  - When do they navigate to the company website or purchase as a result of content?
- Use your social media metrics and strategy to identify where and when CSR would be compatible

#### **Exercise**

- Implement the knowledge acquired in the previous steps to adjust your content to your segment and the specific social medium
- Remember to create content that adds value for your audience before you expect them to add value to your business
  - Create personal relations
  - Think of your customers as your “friends” on social media
  - Share background stories, use storytelling, and behind-the-scenes material
- Be careful not to use the platform as a secondary web shop by only posting promotional content
- Find the common ground between the audience's and the brand's values, and make sure your content reflects this

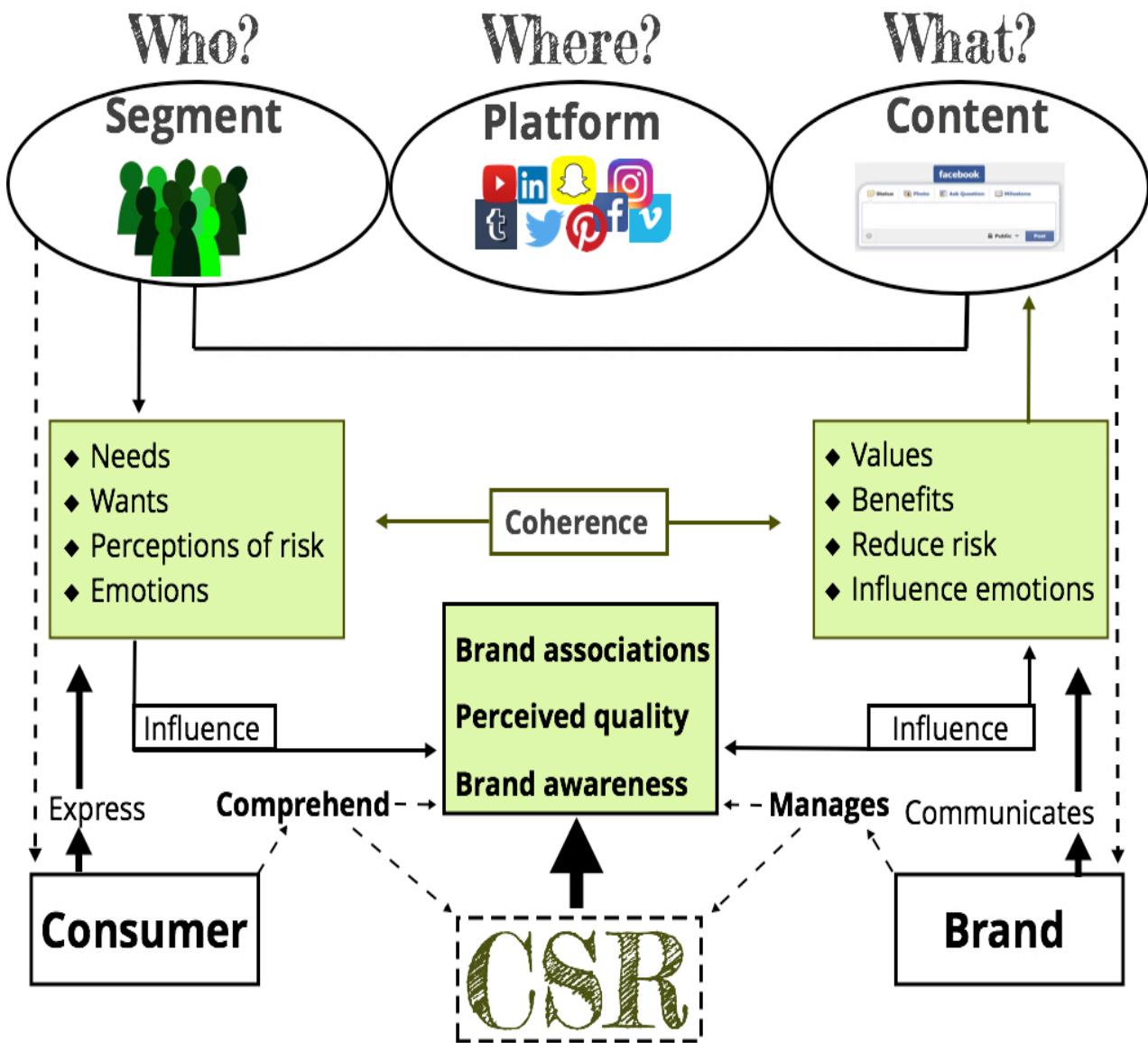


Fig. 14.3 Relations between consumers and brands

Throughout the interviews, the general experience was that the brands had given little thought to their strategic approaches on social media, nor to how marketing communication affects consumers. This model illustrates which elements brands should take into consideration when implementing CSR as a branding feature, and which elements are important to consider in relations to how consumers generate associations and perceptions.

# Chapter 15

## Discussion

- ◆ Alternative approaches
- ◆ Implications throughout the process
- ◆ Further research

## **15. Discussion**

This section presents a discussion of our methodological approach and theoretical framework in relation to our empirical findings. As mentioned, the concepts and theories applied in this thesis are only a narrow fragment of the entire field of research within each area, respectively CSR, branding, and consumer behavior. The choices we have made about what to include have directly impacted our conclusion, thus we find it necessary to discuss alternative theoretical approaches in order to substantiate these choices.

### **15.1 A behavioristic approach**

As mentioned, the theories pertaining to how marketing communication influences consumers and how branding works are rooted in different paradigms and methodological approaches. In this thesis, our approach is largely influenced by Aaker (1991) and Kotler (2010) who we perceive to represent the traditional, cognitive paradigm. We perceive Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) to represent a modern approach that takes behavioral and cognitive paradigms into account and establishes a nuanced view of consumer behavior and marketing communication and thus dissolves the dichotomy between the paradigms. However, we find that the research methods and empirical data Rosenbaum-Elliott (2015) presents are still in the same realm as Kotler (2010) and Aaker (1991).

As opposed to the above, we perceive Byron Sharp (2010) to represent a behavioral approach to consumer behavior and marketing communication. We believe that Sharp's scientifically and empirically evidence-based research approach resembles a positivistic methodological standpoint. Additionally, we find that Sharp appoints most attention to financially based brand equity in the sense of market share and customer volume. Sharp has established a set of laws that aim at explaining how the market really reacts to branding (app. 6). The overall argument is that consumers do not react to the quality of advertising, but rather the quantity. Thus, the purpose of advertisement is for the brand to be recognized and seen as much as possible; therefore Sharp emphasizes the importance of distinctiveness. In contrast to the focus of our thesis, Sharp argues “[r]ather than striving for meaningful, perceived differentiation, marketers should seek meaningless distinctiveness.” (p. 112, Sharp, 2010). Sharp accentuates the importance of the proprietary brand assets, such as logo, name, and colors, that Aaker (1991) also includes in his brand equity model. Through the model below, Sharp illustrates how computer brand users do not perceive their computer brand to be much different nor unique than competing brands. Using similar models,

Sharp argues that “[...] buyers do not spend a great deal of time comparing brands in the same category, and so differentiation is not noticed” (Sharp, 2010).

Users of:	Different (%)	Unique (%)	Associating the brand
<b>HP</b>	4	8	11
<b>Toshiba</b>	11	5	13
<b>Apple</b>	15	25	23
<b>Dell</b>	5	5	5

Fig. 15.1 Computer brand users' perceived differentiation (p. 127, Sharp, 2010)

From Sharp's point of view, effective advertisement should focus on brand awareness that results in brand salience, which cause sales and thus brand growth (*ibid.*). Throughout our thesis, we have assigned differentiation through CSR much value. As we assume that consumer-based brand equity is a prerequisite for financial based equity, we have aimed at understanding how CSR can affect consumer based brand equity through marketing communication. Based on our analysis, we agree with Sharp in the belief that the focus on brand distinctiveness and brand salience is important. We believe that distinctiveness is especially important in marketing communication on social media since the amount of brands and advertising has increased and “[m]uch advertising receives no active attention[...]" (Kotler, *et al.*, 2010). However, as argued in the thesis, we believe that the perceived risk and level of involvement is generally higher within the furniture industry, therefore the message of marketing communication is important after having establish brand awareness. As further argued in the thesis, CSR has become an important part of the consumers' mind and a way for brands to differentiate and fulfill consumers' need for self-actualization. The model below illustrates the comparison between Sharp's 'New world view' and the traditional 'Past world view'.

Past world view	Positioning	Message comprehension	Unique selling propositions	Persuasion	Teaching	Campaign bursts
New world view	Salience	Getting noticed, emotional response	Relevant associations	Refreshing and building memory structures	Reaching	Continuous presence

Fig. 15.2 New advertising model, (p. 181 Sharp, 2010)

We thus find that our thesis lies between the past- and new world view, as we agree with Sharp's viewpoints of creating distinctiveness but we believe that within our area of study (social media and the furniture industry) differentiation is necessary to create brand equity.

One aim of this thesis is to examine how consumers perceive CSR, and not how it directly affects their buying behavior. Furthermore, our scope of research has been limited to SME's. The common denominator for these case companies is that their resources, market share and customer volume are limited and we believe that using Sharp's approach would be misleading. Additionally, Sharp would argue that spending resources on an active CSR approach would be futile as resources should be allocated to creating distinctiveness and brand awareness (Sharp, 2010).

## 15.2 Implications

In addition to the abovementioned, our findings in this thesis have been influenced by certain implications throughout the process of retrieving empirical data. We believe that introducing the readers to these implications will add to a fuller comprehension of the complete thesis and our final conclusion. Whilst exploring potential case companies, we were interested in establishing contact with particularly two brands that we found met our criteria of being respectively sustainable and active on social media, namely Mater and One Funky Furniture. Mater is a furniture company with a very active CSR approach. Their brand is based on design, craftsmanship, and an ethical business strategy, with focus on working methods that support people, local craft tradition, and the environment (Mater Design). During our interviews, even our current case companies emphasized that this brand would be ideal for our research. However, Mater was unable to participate as a case company. Mater has 4145 Facebook followers and 2476 Instagram followers, which indicates an active social media strategy. Likewise, One Funky Furniture is a brand that focuses on custom-made solutions, recycled wood, and collaboration with other sustainable brands (One Funky Furniture). The interest in the brand came about because of their interaction with consumers through social media and the brand cooperates with and gains publicity through online bloggers. However, our appointment was not upheld and we failed to get further response from the company. These brands had been optimal in our empirical data, as it seems that both have social media strategies that influences the number of followers. We believe that we would have been able to retrieve valuable data through interviews with the brands and additionally from their followers through a survey. Especially One Funky Furniture has had success on the social media we investigate, with approximately 15,400 followers on Instagram and 12,880 followers on Facebook. In our initial research process, we participated in courses to support our pre-understanding of the

themes of our thesis: CBS Green Week and a Social Media Marketing course (MindJumpers & MarketingLab, 2016). The course in social media marketing particularly focused on the effect of brands cooperating with blogs and bloggers. Our research did not enable us to find any furniture brands -except from One Funky Furniture- that cooperated with bloggers and simultaneously met our requirements hence we chose to focus on Facebook and Instagram exclusively. We believe that the inclusion of Mater and One Funky Furniture in our empirical data would have enabled us to get a more comprehensive insight into the effects of social media strategies that includes CSR. Furthermore, as these brands, in terms of social media success and brand identity, to a large degree resemble WDW. Using three brands that resemble each other more than our current case companies would have made it easier to make a thorough comparison and thus an analysis that would allow us to gain a more in-depth understanding of how an active social media strategy in relations to CSR can affect brand equity.

### **15.3 Future research**

This section contributes with ideas on how future research may be conducted within the same field of research as the one presented in this thesis. As this thesis investigates areas that are still being discussed by scholars and professionals, it would be interesting to conduct further research in order to gain more tangible and detailed results.

For future research, it would be interesting to look at a larger volume of brands, and additionally select well-established brands with a larger market share. One method would be to select brands with an active CSR strategy as well as brands with no CSR strategy. To get a comprehensive insight into whether communicating CSR affects brand equity, it would be beneficial to get an insight into brand performance in terms of market share and customer volume (in accordance with Sharp's research approach) and compare this with brand performance in terms of consumers' attitude, perception, and intention to buy (in accordance with Aaker's theory) (Aaker, 1991), (Sharp, 2010). It would be necessary to compile empirical data on the basis of market analyses and annual accounts from each brand in addition to consumer surveys and focus groups. From this, it would be possible to compare consumer-based brand equity and financial-based brand equity. We suspect that it would be possible to use these results to determine whether resources should be allocated to creating distinctive and frequent marketing or rather on creating meaningful marketing through CSR. It would furthermore be interesting to test whether these results would be significantly influenced through social media communication.

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and  
appendices

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1   **Interview transcript: 2Rethink**

2

3   **1. [...] [H]vilke andre sociale medier benytter I jer af?**

4   **Jens Mathiasen:** [...] I forhold til den private sektor er det selvfølgelig Facebook. Det er en  
5   lille smule Instagram, det er en lille smule Pinterest. Hjemmesiden som ligesom styrer det  
6   hele, den er lavet i Wordpress – for Wordpress, der kan man ligesom koble op til hvilken af  
7   de sociale medier, som jeg gerne vil have, at det skal skydes ud på. Så det vil sige, at jeg  
8   prøver at skærer, og sige ”jamen det her er kun relevant for den private forbruger”, så bliver  
9   det sendt ud måske via Facebook, og så går den ikke ud til LinkedIn, som for eksempel er  
10   den hvor B2B-delen, den primært bliver arbejdet i.

11

12   **1.1 [...] Det ser også ud som om [...] at der er lidt blog-univers over det?**

13   **Jens Mathiasen:** [...] I omkring 2009, der var der egentlig ikke en virksomhed som sådan,  
14   men der var det egentligt i et blog-univers. Så blog-universet har været det styrende – det er  
15   også derfor det var startet op som en Wordpress.

16   Det fordi, det var en blog-drevet noget, hvor jeg så kunne se at folk faktisk blev  
17   interesseret i og købe tingene.

18   [...]

19

20   **2. Hvor meget tid bruger du så om ugen på 2Rethink på de sociale medier?**

21   **Jens Mathiasen:** [...] Jeg vil sige, der går snildt næsten to timer dagligt med alt hvad der  
22   hedder digital performance. Det vil sige, det er også opdatering af websites, og der går der  
23   mest tid med shoppen. Måske med at lægge nye produkter op og skrive tekster og sådan nogle  
24   ting. [...] Det er one-man show.

25

26   **3. Er der en strategi [...]?**

27   **Jens Mathiasen:** Desværre er den ikke dygtig nok, fordi jeg kommer uden de forudsætninger  
28   for det. Så strategien er hjemmebrygget. Hvad skal man sige, strategien er at få skabt et brand,  
29   men det kommer nogle af de andre spørgsmål ind på. Men der ligger ikke en hel klar strategi  
30   for, hvad skal man sige, præcis hvor meget tid, og hvordan og hvorledes. [...] altså alt hvad

31 der sådan ligesom går ned i dybden, det ligger der ikke en strategi for, desværre. Så det bliver  
32 lidt efter tilfældigheds-princippet for at være helt ærlig. [...]

33

34 **4. Ift. Facebook og Instagram, hvad vil du så sige at du hovedsageligt bruger din tid på**  
35 **[...]? Er det værdiopslag, og noget der ligesom taler til [forbrugerne]?**

36 **Jens Mathiasen:** Ja, det har det ligesom været. Det har ikke været konkurrence og det har  
37 ikke været like eller dele et eller andet, og ”gør sådan her”. Det har mest været et ”show-off”,  
38 [...] branding-agtigt, og ”se mit sidste projekt – ser det ikke fedt ud?”. Og ikke stillet  
39 spørgsmål til det, ikke spurgt folk, og ikke som sådan bedt om interaktion, selvom jeg godt  
40 kan se det fornuftige i det. Det har ligesom været [...] lidt for meget envejs, og været sådan  
41 ”se det her”, og ellers for at give folk et indtryk, og se at de synes, at det ser fedt ud. [...] Det  
42 har sådan været det, der lå i det. Noget som visuelt repræsenterede firmaet i forhold til de  
43 opgaver, der var lavet; en videofilm fra en producent, som fortalte om noget baggrundsinfo  
44 for, hvad det er for et produkt man laver, sådan så folk de forstår det. Så det har været sådan  
45 lidt mere en forståelse, frem for en aktivering.

46 [...]

47 Folk forstår ikke det univers, hvis man siger ”prøv at se den her ting”. Så skal folk jo synes, at  
48 den er smuk og flot for at de gider købe varen. Men det vigtige parameter er selvfølgelig for  
49 mig, også at gøre folk følelsesmæssigt engageret i hvorfor skal man gå ud og vælge et produkt  
50 som er genbrugstræ fremfor almindeligt træ. Hvad er fordelen ved det. Så det handler lidt om  
51 at skulle fortælle historien bagved, men ikke fortærsket sådan så den må ikke overtage for  
52 produktet. Hvis folk ikke kan lide produktet, så kan jeg ikke sælge varen. Jeg kan ikke sælge  
53 en EURO-palle, der er grim og splinter i. Det kan en studerende godt lave på et projekt, men  
54 med en forbruger, der gerne vil bruge 2-3000 kroner på et produkt, så skal det bare være  
55 lækkert – også skal det også fortælle historien. Der er en hårfin balance i mellem de to ting.

56

57 **5. Hvilke analyse værktøjer [...] benytter du dig af for at lære dine kunder at kende?**

58 **Jens Mathiasen:** På den rent digitale side sørger jeg selvfølgelig for at både at webshop-delen  
59 er lavet i Shopify, og der ligger selvfølgelig en del apps og cykler rundt omkring det, men der  
60 ligger også Google Analytics og det ligger der også på erhvervssiden. Så i forhold til de koder  
61 kan jeg jo selvfølgelig se hvad det er folk, de finder mig på. Men ud fra det kan man jo  
62 selvfølgelig sige, at jeg har lavet en hjemmebrygget model. I forhold til at sige hvad er det for

63 nogle ting, jeg gerne vil findes på, altså en rimelig fornuftig måde også at se SEO på, men  
64 hvad er det for nogle 10-12 ord, jeg gerne vil findes fra. For jeg er ikke interesseret i meget  
65 trafik men i den rigtige trafik, der kan bruges til det helt rigtige. Det er en hårfin balance. [...]  
66 Ud fra det prøver jeg også at se, hvad er trendy i tiden, hvad er det folk synes, er spændende,  
67 hvad er det, de søger på, og hvordan kan jeg konvertere det til et eller andet interessant for  
68 dem som et blogindlæg, eller hvordan kan jeg bruge det til at beskrive et produkt bedre. F.eks.  
69 hvis folk interessere sig for genbrugstræ. Hvad er det så for noget de interessere sig for? Er  
70 det for at lave et plankebord, eller er det for at lave et eller andet selv, eller vil de gerne have  
71 færdig-produktet, eller vil de have noget man sådan selv kan lave? Også måske ud fra det sige  
72 ”okay, dem her arbejder med vægpanel, som jo har en fed historie, og det gør super godt i  
73 tredje verdens lande”. Der er ingen historie, der ikke er god nok, men hvordan får jeg den  
74 konverteret ind til brugen, så folk har lyst til at købe to kvadratmeter, de kan sætte op i deres  
75 køkken. Det handler jo også lidt om, for mig, at se de salgsmuligheder, der ligger i noget som  
76 SEO konvertering og fra det til produkter, og det går lidt langsomt fremfor, at sige ”jeg har et  
77 produktkatalog – hvordan kan jeg markedsføre det med de rigtige?”.  
78 [...]  
79

80 **6. Hvad har dine overvejelser været [...] til at du lægger mere vægt på hvordan stolen  
81 er kommet til, end at det er stolen?**

82 **Jens Mathiasen:** [...] Altså, jeg solgte møbler fra 2003 til nu, og før det har jeg også arbejdet  
83 rigtig meget med salg. Så hvad kan man sige, det blev jeg træt af, og dét at gentage sig selv og  
84 sælge det ordinære, og bare sælge på en eller anden prisprakke eller et udbud til en kunde. [...]  
85 Så jeg gik ind der og definerede – der hvor Cup15 også startede – hvad er det egentligt, jeg  
86 gerne vil, og hvad er det, jeg kan bidrage bedst muligt med til det marked, der er. [...] Det er  
87 et oversvømmet marked. Vi er rigeligt producenter bare i Danmark i forhold til det, der bliver  
88 produceret af møbler og inventar, men når man så tillægger det, der kommer fra alle andre  
89 lande, så er vi jo helt vildt oversvømmede. Der er mange, der tror at ”vi er Danmark, vi er jo  
90 et design land, så vi må være en super-interessant målegruppe”. Måske. Men vi er et meget  
91 lille land, så det betyder, at vi er oversvømmede med alle mulige produkter. For ligesom at  
92 adskille sig fra mængden kunne jeg ikke være billigst, jeg kunne ikke være størst, men jeg  
93 bliver nødt til at sige, jeg kan måske være bedst, og jeg kan måske være mest niche, og gøre

94 det med det, jeg føler for, som er omtanke og [...] et fornuftspræg i forhold til det her med at  
95 købe med tanke og tanke for andre.

96

97

### 98 Spørgsmål 7. Hvor vil du positionere dit brand [...]?

99 **Jens Mathiasen:** Det er ikke interessant for mig at sige, at jeg vil være et 'high-end brand'  
100 eller et 'low-end brand', eller noget midt i mellem. [...] Jeg vil gerne være et brand, som alle  
101 kan købe ind i. Forstået på den måde at, det synes jeg nemlig også er bæredygtighed, det  
102 element, at der er noget for alle. Så vil jeg gerne have noget som er sindssygt lækkert. Det  
103 lækreste man overhovedet kan lave, og som der tilnærmedesvis kun er meget få personer, der  
104 kan købe, eller har råd til at bruge. Men jeg vil også gerne have noget, der er en brugt vare,  
105 der er billig, som er noget man nærmest kan smide ud, men som måske kan købes af nogle  
106 andre mennesker. Men som brand, vil jeg selvfølgelig gerne have at det fremstår, at det er  
107 kurateret - at det er udvalgt lækkert – at det ikke er skrald, og at vi er kommet over det stadie,  
108 hvor det ikke er brugbart, men det er også æstetisk godt nok. Så en balance.

109

### 110 Spørgsmål 8. Er der nogle, du ser som dine åbenlyse konkurrenter?

111 **Jens Mathiasen:** Hvis man ser på det at handle møbler med privatpersoner, så kommer  
112 niveauet rigtig højt op. Der er ikke en form for shop, som er konkurrent. Fritz Hansen eller  
113 Hay for eksempel kan lige så godt tage del og være en konkurrent til mig i forhold til, at de  
114 sælger én lille stol i deres kollektion, der er bæredygtig, eller hvor de siger, "lang levetid og  
115 bæredygtig" og så er de også en konkurrent i forhold til bæredygtighed eller CSR. Mange har  
116 en fin CSR profil, så det i sig selv kan ikke stå alene. Så jeg har ikke decideret én  
117 [konkurrent] som sådan. Men man kan sige at jeg piler mod internationale spiller frem for alt.  
118 Jeg piler mod små hollændere, folk i syd landende, hvor de er begyndt at blive lidt mere  
119 kreative. De har haft et dårligt marked, og det vil sige, de har været nødt til at opfinde noget  
120 kreativitet og sige, "hvad kan vi så gøre?" Der kommer nogle nye, interessante niche spillere  
121 frem. Jeg har haft tendens til at arbejde med de små [brands]. fremfor de store, der kan gøre  
122 sig selv kendte, så arbejder jeg fremfor alt med de små, og det vil sige, at konkurrence  
123 situationen den kan jeg slet ikke en gang overskue. Den er helt enorm. Jeg piler ikke til nogle  
124 danske shops eller nogle danskere på den måde.

125

126 **Spørgsmål 9. Hvordan differentiere du [dit brand] fra konkurrenter?**

127 **Jens Mathiasen:** Som sagt, jeg kan ikke overskue det der konkurrent niveau, så jeg kan ikke  
128 bare pege på den eller den. [...] Men det er klart, at jeg bliver nødt til at skabe det her link til,  
129 at det skal være noget unikt. Noget, der har en særlig historie, og noget som folk kan få et  
130 tilhørssforhold til, fremfor at sælge en varer som andre også har. [...]

131 **9.1 Det næste spørgsmål handler egentligt om værdier, og hvor vigtigt det er for dig at  
132 få dem ud, men det har vi været omkring.**

133 **Jens Mathiasen:** Ja, altså der er meget i dag omkring dansk design – det er et hit. Men det er  
134 bare ikke ens betydning med at det er danskproduceret. Jeg har også holdt foredrag på  
135 produktionsskoler, hvor folk siger, der ikke er så mange jobs, som der har været. Flere af de  
136 her traditionelle produktionsvirksomheder går døde i Danmark. Det er jo så hvad det er, kan  
137 man sige. Så må vi være 'Design Danmark', men hvis vi skal producere, bliver vi nødt til at  
138 sige, hvordan fungere det så? Det er fint nok at produktionen ligger i Kina, hvis man kan sikre  
139 sig at det er under fornuftige vilkår. Det er jeg ikke sikker på, at alle de største spillere i  
140 Danmark kan sige helt 'ja' til. [...] Derfor kan jeg rigtig godt lide, hvis der er nogle af de  
141 danske [brands], der producere fornuftigt ude i et i-land. F.eks. Mater Design, som jeg har  
142 arbejdet med, som prøver at arbejde under nogle bæredygtighedsprogrammer, hvor de  
143 ligesom siger, "vi prøver rent faktisk, at gøre noget bedre for det lokale samfund".  
144 WonderWall Studios [...] hele deres produktionsapparat er sat op på, at sige der er mennesker  
145 her som bare har tag over hovedet, som har nogle materialer liggende, som de ikke ved, hvad  
146 de skal gøre med. Når man sætter produktionen op med dem, må man også sikre, at de får  
147 bedre levevilkår, og det er en del af virksomheden, at holde prisen oppe. At man ikke jager  
148 [prisen] helt ned i bund, for så får de ikke en god pris for det derude. Det kan man gøre hvis  
149 man vil lave produktion til hele verden, og vil hedde Hay, og producere billigt i Kina, for så at  
150 skubbe det ud til hele verden; det skal være lavt, for så kan vi få meget ud. Så skal man holde  
151 prisen nede. Men vi kan ikke holde prisen nede, hvis vi vil lave en lille produktion for tyve  
152 mand i Indonesien, som skal prøve også at leve af det. Medmindre [arbejderne] bliver vildt  
153 dårligt betalt, så kan man ikke lave et virkelig billigt produkt, der skal lande i Danmark.  
154

155 **10. Forsøger du at "undervise" dine potentielle kunder om det, og give dem historien?**

156 **Jens Mathiasen:** Ja, det vil jeg rigtig gerne, men der kan jeg bare se at folk, de nok ikke altid  
157 er så interesserede i at høre det. De vil gerne have at der er CSR, og at [varen] er pakket

158 fornuftigt, der ikke er for meget plastik, og at der ikke er børnearbejde, men meget mere end  
159 det er der kun en lille gruppe mennesker, der har det drevet i deres bevidsthed. De fleste vil  
160 altid gå på kompromis. Dvs. hvis der er to varer og de synes, den ene er flottere, federe og  
161 passer bedre til det som de har, men de ved at de skal gå på kompromis med nogle ting, jamen  
162 så vil de måske ikke høre hele historien. Så vælger de at tage den historie - hvert fald den del  
163 som de kender, f.eks. ”den er med fin uld, den kommer fra et bæredygtigt får” – det er fint,  
164 hvis det er den historie man fortæller, men hele historien er ikke nødvendigvis skide god. Det  
165 er ude i den der balance mellem og prøve at gøre sit produkt bedre skråstreg at green washe  
166 det lidt. Og det kan jeg også godt leve i, for jeg prøver så vidt også at gøre det bedst muligt,  
167 men jeg er ikke hellig. Jeg twister det jo også til min definition af, hvad bæredygtighed er, og  
168 får det til at passe ind i noget, der er kommerscielt for mig. Det er en balance mellem at sige,  
169 hvad er det rigtige, og det skal jeg ikke gøre mig til dommer for. Jeg stiller nogle ting op, og  
170 så må folk vælge. Jeg prøver at forklare det så godt som muligt, men det er rigtig svært. Hvis  
171 man [f.eks.] snakker om webshoppen; hvor meget vil folk læse, og hvor meget vil folk dykke  
172 ned i det.

173 [...]

174

### 11. Har du nogle krav til de brands du forhandler ift. din definition af bæredygtighed?

176 **Jens Mathiasen:** Til at starte med definerede jeg det ekstremt grønt – det var lige før man  
177 skulle kunne spise tingene. Definitionen af det ligger omkring begreberne i ’Re’: altså  
178 reducere, respektere, og redesigne så man gør produkterne bedre. Hele definitionen af  
179 bæredygtighed handler for mig om at skabe en bred palette, dvs. hvis jeg siger, man skal  
180 respektere lokal håndværk, så er det ikke nødvendigvis kun ham ude i Indonesien. Det må  
181 også gerne være lokal håndværk i Spanien, men det må også godt være det på Nørrebro. Så  
182 det kunne godt være en lille snedker på Nørrebro, hvor jeg går ind og siger, ”Er han  
183 bæredygtig?”. Skal jeg gå ind og grundigt undersøge hans træ og stål, jamen det har jeg ikke  
184 ressourcer til. Jeg kan ikke låne mig op af sådan noget som en FSC certificering eller alt  
185 muligt andet, fordi hvis vi snakker genbrugstræ så giver det ikke FSC [...] Det bliver meget  
186 komplekst, og derfor har jeg valgt, at sætte det op omkring de begreber, der ligger i rethinking  
187 – altså at man tænker sig om, man bruger omtanke, man reducere skrald og man bruger  
188 fornuftigt. Det prøver jeg at vælge, når jeg går ud og vælger dem, jeg skal samarbejde med.  
189 Dem, jeg samarbejder meget med, går meget op i det, men der er også nogle gange, hvor jeg

190 går på kompromis. Dvs. folk de siger, ”jeg kunne godt tænke mig den her stol”. Så siger jeg,  
191 ”jamen den er virkelig dårlig egnet til formålet, du skal hellere vælge det her produkt”. Så  
192 svarer de ”ja, men det er ikke ligeså godt bæredygtig som det der”. Nej, men om et halvt år så  
193 er stolen død, fordi du kan ikke bruge den mere. Så kan vi smide den ud. Hvor bæredygtigt er  
194 det? Så det handler også om levetid og om det passer til formålet.

195 [...]

196

197

### 198 **12. I forhold til sociale medier, gør du noget aktivt for at promovere bæredygtighed?**

199 **Jens Mathiasen:** Jeg prøver selvfølgelig at lade folk forstå historien. [...] Især sådan noget  
200 som videoer så folk får baggrunds historierne. Rent faktuelt kan jeg se, at der ikke er så  
201 mange, der rent faktisk læser det og kigger sådan rigtigt. Så det bliver måske mere i forhold til  
202 nogle små stikord som folk kan huske såsom Hashtags. Det med et eller andet, der går igen så  
203 folk kan søge på det senere hen. [...]

204 Jeg synes, det er en rigtig, rigtig bred palette, så hvis man snakker om at søge og finde frem  
205 til det, så synes jeg, det må være sindssygt svært for forbrugeren at finde de rigtige ting.

206

### 207 **13. Har du en fornemmelse af om kunderne vægter denne bæredygtige del?**

208 **Jens Mathiasen:** Det der med hvor langt i dybden [forbrugerne] går, altså hvis man vil se om  
209 de vægter CSR som sådan, så er CSR for mig for meget noget, man har stående i en stor  
210 virksomhed i en rapport, eller noget man producere ud fra og man tager ind i alle mulige  
211 andre produktionssammenhænge; logistik, ansvar osv. Men når man snakker med den enkelte  
212 forbruger, så er det ikke det øjemedet, hvis de siger, at de skal ud og have nyt spisebord og  
213 nye stole til sin stue, så står CSR ikke øverst på deres agenda. Der står en æstetik eller en  
214 fornemmelse for farver, og en fornemmelse for hvordan det skal se ud. Også kan det godt  
215 være når de står nede, det rigtige sted i en butik, og der står to varer, og de ser begge to  
216 købsagtige ud, at de vil gerne have dem begge to. Så hvis CSR er der, eller den rigtig gode  
217 historie [...], så er det klart, så vejer den op, og vinder ind over. Men ikke til rigtig meget  
218 mere pris. [...] Det handler om at få fortalt CSR historien, men måske knap så corporate-  
219 agtigt, så måske ikke alle visionerne bagved, men måske mere ved at tale ind til følelserne og  
220 æstetikken og den sociale del fremfor den mere økonomiske del.

221 [...]

222 Hvis man har en Webshop, så er der i hvert fald en tendens til, at det bliver ”prisbaskeren” der  
223 skal til. Det skal være kampagner, det skal være rabatter, og det skal være konkurrence, hvor  
224 man får en hel masse gratis. [...] Den boldgade, [...] det er i hvert fald ’en, som jeg synes, er  
225 svær at gøre attraktiv, selvom jeg gerne ville, men jeg kan bare ikke gå ud og rabattere et eller  
226 andet helt vildt så folk synes, at det er spændende. [...]

227 Min erfaring er, at hvis man kigger på de sociale medier, så er det, der fanger folk jo noget  
228 som, hvad skal man sige, hvis de står i en eller anden købsbeslutning, så er det lige det sidste,  
229 der gør at man gør noget fremfor noget andet. Men det er jo klart, at hvis der er nogle, der lige  
230 kan gå ind og give noget slagtilbud på noget, så er det jo interessant. Og det må jeg jo forstå –  
231 så selvom jeg siger, jeg har noget unikum af et eller andet, så sige; jamen så har jeg noget  
232 unikum på tyve styks af et eller andet. Så mindsker jeg måske min avance, også kan jeg give  
233 en lidt mere attraktiv ydelse.

1   **Interview transcript: I Love Eco Home**

2

3   **Maria Liokouras:** Vi fik den her idé til en webshop, [...] med økologiske og bæredygtige  
4   produkter, fordi vi synes, der lidt manglede noget til hjemmet. [...] Der er meget fokus på  
5   tekstil og det mad, vi indtager, men ikke rigtigt indenfor hjemmet, så det var lidt sådan dét,  
6   det startede med.

7

8   **1. Hvilke sociale medier benytter I jer af?**

9   **Maria Liokouras:** Vi benytter os primært af Facebook og Instagram rigtig meget. Facebook  
10   virkede i starten for os ret godt, især fordi man kunne tracke direkte jo, øh, køb inde fra  
11   Google Analytics. Så kunne vi se de kom direkte inde fra Facebook. Det er lidt sværere med  
12   Instagram –der kan vi jo ikke på samme måde se en direkte indflydelse. Men det virker... Vi  
13   har, synes jeg da selv, fået bygget en ret god profil op derinde, og det er den vi mest satser på  
14   fordi Facebook også altså selekterer så meget i.. Man skal op og betaler mange penge for det  
15   før rigtig mange ser det, og så videre. Instagram er ikke.. Det er jo ikke nået helt der til endnu  
16   i hvert fald. Så.

17   **Rasmus Christensen:** Generelt betaler vi rigtig mange penge pr. Klik på Facebook. Vi har  
18   valgt ikke at bruge så mange penge på betalt trafik. Det kan være godt og skidt. Men det har  
19   vi i hvert fald valgt. Facebook er for dyrt.

20   **Maria Liokouras:** Det er de to medier. Vi er også på LinkedIn. Der må vi nok indrømme at  
21   vi har været lidt slow i det her på det sidste. Det er begrænset hvad vi har fået op at stå der.  
22   Rasmus Christensen: Vi har også Pinterest. Men der er også langt henne ad vejen også for at  
23   låse navnene. De bliver ikke brugt aktivt.

24

25   **2. Hvor meget tid bruger I om ugen på de sociale medier (inklusiv forarbejde som at  
26   tage billeder, style, etc.)?**

27   **Maria Liokouras:** Altså det afhænger jo lidt af vores tid. Vi prøver sådan lidt at fordele det.  
28   Jeg vil sige at man bruger tid på det hver anden dag. [...] Jeg forsøger i hvert fald at få noget  
29   op, og poste hist og pist. [...] Man skal lige tænke over, hvad kan man lige poste og hvad skal  
30   lige være budskabet i dag, eller sådan. Og så er det også meget. Nu er vi lige blevet nævnt i en  
31   artikel, og så poster man jo det et eller andet sted. Så på den måde.

32

33 **2.1 Tiden er så hovedsageligt fordelt på Instagram?**

34 **Maria Liokouras:** Ja. Det er den.

35 **Rasmus Christensen:** Sådan 70/30-agtigt.

36

37

38

39 **3. Er der en strategi for, hvordan I bruger tiden?**

40 **Maria Liokouras:** [...] Ingen har vi vurderet på Facebook at det er meget personligt og det er  
41 meget artikel. Altså link til økologi og bæredygtighed. Altså det er ikke så meget produkt.  
42 Altså branding af produkterne. Der kommer i hvert fald ikke så stor interaktion som hvis der  
43 kommer et person (refererende til personligt). Altså hvor jeg har tøjet på. Måske har det også  
44 noget at gøre med at man har mange, der kender én, der følger. Så på den måde. Men det er  
45 også som om at det der personlighed, skinner ret godt igennem på Facebook, og det ved jeg  
46 virker også for andre jo. Det er altid en vigtig del at have med. Hvor på Instagram der har vi  
47 rigtig mange flotte billeder fra vores leverandører, så der bliver det meget ren promovering af  
48 produkter. Så når vi er på inspirationsrejse på Bali, så bliver der taget en masse flotte billeder.  
49 Altså det er jo meget billeder og en stemning og historie man skal skabe derinde. Så det er  
50 meget forskelligt. Altså Instagram er meget produktbranding og det andet er noget helt andet.

51 **Rasmus Christensen:** Facebook er langt hen ad vejen at dele. Nyheder når ret langt ud. Det  
52 gør det for os i hvert fald. Der når vi et langt højere reach end ellers. Og så tilbud selvfølgelig.

53

54 **4. Hvilke analyseværktøjer bruger I til at lære jeres kunder bedre at kende?**

55 **Rasmus Christensen:** Vi bruger jo Google analytics, selvfølgelig. Og Facebook analytics  
56 også. Det bruger vi. Men igen. Vi er ikke så dybdegående. Det er sådan lige hvordan vi  
57 prioriterer tiden. Når jeg laver nye kamper til Facebook eller til Adwords, så kigger jeg  
58 meget på det. Og ellers holder jeg øje med hvor vores links kommer fra, for at se om vi er  
59 nævnt i en blog eller et blad eller et eller andet, som vi ikke.. Altså hvor de har nævnt os uden  
60 at vi ved det. Så lige for at kunne dele det og sådan noget.

61

62 **5. Bruger I analyseværktøjer til at spore hvordan jeres kunder finder frem til jer?**

63 **Maria Liokouras:** Det er mest organisk at der trækker ved os.

64 **Rasmus Christensen:** Ja, jeg kiggede lige på det i går. Det er cirka 60% organisk. 15% af  
65 direkte i click. Der er sikker også noget fra Instagram dér. Og så er der 10% fra Guldsmeden  
66 og I love Eco Essentials' hjemmesider. Og så resten er fra ældre blogindlæg og links fra  
67 leverandører. Så det er klart, når vi bliver nævnt i en blog eller et eller andet, så stiger det  
68 voldsomt. Men det er sådan cirka det.

69

70

### 71 **6. Har I en fornemmelse af, hvorfra kunder høre om virksomheden?**

72 **Maria Liokouras:** Jeg tror Instagram har vi formået at ramme ret langt ud. Også fordi der er  
73 ret meget interaktion på Instagram. Altså de spørger ret meget og skriver.. altså det fungerer  
74 meget godt. Men ellers har vi jo meget fra hotellerne. Der lærer folk os jo at kende.

75 **Rasmus Christensen:** Vi er ret synlige nede på hotellerne. Sådan Balinesisk indretning og  
76 møbler, der ikke er så nemme at få fat i. Så deres kunder spørger ofte til indretningen. Så  
77 kommer de selvfølgelig til os. Problemet i det for os er at det giver et logistisk problem, for  
78 der er ikke så mange danske kunder. Det er mest internationale.

79 [...]

80 **Maria Liokouras:** Hotellerne og de sociale medier og word-of-mouth, altså hvordan folk  
81 snakker hist og her. Vi har ikke haft de økonomiske midler til at boome det – det havde  
82 selvfølgelig være at foretrække på en eller anden måde at gøre i starten. Derfor siver det  
83 meget langsomt ud, også selvom vi har hotellerne. Så det er meget langsomt. Det er da en  
84 udfordring.

85

### 86 **7. Vælger I at brande virksomheden, eller nærmere de produkter I sælger?**

87 **Rasmus Christensen:** I starten brandede vi nok os selv mere end vi gør nu. Der skal det med,  
88 at i starten var det også meningen at de her andre dele af I love Eco samarbejdet skulle være  
89 blevet store lidt hurtigere. Så gav det lidt mere mening. Sådan at gå ind i det der community.  
90 Så man gav en masse til hinanden. Som vi på en eller anden måde ville være en del af. [...]  
91 Jeg tror ret hurtigt vi sandede, at de sociale medier går meget hurtigt og det er meget sådan  
92 produkttilbud, så der skal være noget. Så det var lidt for komplekst, tror jeg, er mit gæt, at få  
93 folk til at sætte sig ind i hvad er det her. Så det blev mere og mere produkt.

94 [...]

95   **Maria Liokouras:** Men det er svært, for eksempel nu poster vi meget af I love Eco  
96   Essentials, for det har direkte... Det er der vi skiller os ud, for der er ikke nogen andre, der  
97   sælger I love Eco Essentials, for det er vores. Så på den måde I love Eco Essentials jo brandet  
98   I love Eco Home. Det var det, der var hele meningen. Så på den måde er der lidt... Hvor vi  
99   brander os selv samtidig med et produkt. Så har vi Mater og vi har We Do Wood, og det er jo  
100  bare. Det har rigtig mange andre jo også. Så. Det er lidt sådan en 50/50. Det er en  
101  balancegang mellem det hele tiden. Vi har ikke taget et bevidst valg om det kun er I love Eco  
102  vi brander. Det er sådan lidt, som du siger, sket med at vi startede med det, og så er der røget  
103  lidt mere over i produktbranding på en måde.

104

### 105   **7.1 Så der var en strategisk overvejelse til at begynde med, som så er blevet mere 106   elastisk?**

107   **Maria Liokouras:** Ja, det er så blevet revideret lidt.

108   **Rasmus Christensen:** Det er blevet lidt mere dagligdags. Vi startede virksomheden i vores  
109   praktik, så der havde vi lidt mere tid til at gå og tænke over det og kunne være mere  
110   langsigtede. Så blev det også lidt hverdag. Så har man nok slækket lidt på det.

111

### 112   **8. Hvordan positionerer I brandet og virksomheden?**

113   **Rasmus Christensen:** Langt henne ad vejen, så var vores sådan hele grundlæggende tanke  
114   for virksomheden og sådan. Dels vise at man kunne godt tænke bæredygtighed og hele det der  
115   aspekt ind i mere end mad og transport og tøj, men også kunne tænke det ind i hjemmet. Og  
116   så ville vi gerne gøre bæredygtige produkter bredt tilgængelige for alle. Så vi vil helst ikke  
117   positionere os på høj eller lav pris og så videre. Det er klart. I vores bæredygtighedstanke der  
118   ligger jo at det er kvalitet. Det er ikke noget, der skal gå i stykker hver anden dag så på den  
119   måde hæver det jo prisen.

120   **Maria Liokouras:** Med I Love Eco Essentials ligger prisen jo i sådan en middel. Altså du  
121   kan få meget dyrere produkter, og så kan du få, selvfølgelig, helt billige. For der er jo en hvis  
122   kvalitet som du snakkede om, men der har vi forsøgt... Der hvor priserne bliver rigtig høje,  
123   det er jo ved alle de der designmærker som vi ikke har indflydelse på. Altså We Do Wood og  
124   Mater og alle dem der.

125   [...]

126 **Rasmus Christensen:** Altså når det er godt for kunden, så er det godt for os. Så er det noget  
127 vi ligesom kan stå inde for. Og så er der også et andet fund ved det, som vi også er blevet  
128 klogere på. Det er jo oplagt at sælge We Do Wood, Mater og alle de der. Alle kender dem, og  
129 de har ikke så mange kriterier for hvem de leverer til, så det er nemt at få deres varer og sådan  
130 nogle ting. Men fortjenesten på deres produkter bliver bare er utroligt lav.

131 [...]

132

133 **8.1 Så det er også den måde i vælger at skille jer ud fra jeres konkurrenter med også at**  
134 **have noget originalt som kun er jeres?**

135 **Maria Liokouras:** Ja, der er vi jo heldige at have I Love Eco Essentials so far, at den kun ved  
136 os. Og uanset om Essentials bliver promoveret til andre, det er jeg ikke i tvivl om, men vi vil  
137 altid have et direkte link til det i vores navn, så vi vil altid være de første, der bliver forbundet  
138 med det. Og på den måde har vi en unik..

139 **Rasmus Christensen:** I vores aftale er det også. Vi køber det til indkøbspris så vores  
140 fortjeneste er langt, langt bedre, så vi er langt mere konkurrencedygtige på priserne.

141 **Maria Liokouras:** Og de har jo så også udviklet sådan nogle bambus tandbørste og altså det  
142 er der jo også mange andre der har, men I love Eco Essentials brandet bliver ved med at  
143 skulle udvides, og en ulempe er at der er rigtig mange, der ikke kender til det. Altså ”hvad er  
144 det”? Og vil man så købe det hvis man ikke aner hvad det er for nogle produkter. Omvendt er  
145 det positive at hvis der først kommer gang i det, som der er allerede igennem hotellerne, så er  
146 det en kæmpe fordel for os. Vi har meget lidt lige nu, men min far har en møbelvirksomhed i  
147 Indonesien –Bali, Indonesien – og der er det jo en drøm at komme ned og finde bambusting,  
148 og finde alle mulige unikke ting. Og det var jo lidt intentionen at de skulle udvide det, for det  
149 tror jeg igen er noget andet end designværkerne og så videre.

150 **Rasmus Christensen:** Oprindeligt var meningen at vi ville have taget en container ned med  
151 alle mulige sådan små unikke ting, altså bæredygtige ting, hvor vi skilte os ud fordi det kun  
152 var os, der havde dem, og vi kunne køre et stort marked på dem. Men det gav lidt problemer i  
153 forhold til lager og så videre. Det gav for store driftsomkostninger i forhold til hvad vi lige  
154 havde lyst til at lægge i, så det var et sideprojekt. Så derfor blev det lige sat lidt på hold.

155

156 **9. Hvem ser I som jeres åbenlyse konkurrenter og hvorfor?**

157 **Rasmus Christensen:** My Fair Shop.

158 **Maria Liokouras:** De kom lige pludselig hurtigt frem.

159 [...]

160 **Rasmus Christensen:** Men det har til gengæld vist sig med tiden, at konkurrencen er langt  
161 mere alle, end det er direkte konkurrenter. Illum sælger også We Do Wood, og Imerco sælger  
162 også Endeavour, så det er som om at hele det der bæredygtige det er så stort i Danmark, og  
163 det er in alle steder, så det er bare ved at brede sig til hele markedet. Så på den måde er vi ikke  
164 forskånede på den måde, som vi snakkede om.

165 **Maria Liokouras:** Nej, der er klart nogle direkte. Der er også i form af e-handel nogle  
166 konkurrenter. Men som du siger: alt i alt så er vi jo alle sammen. Fordi bæredygtigt er  
167 begyndt at komme så meget ind.

168

169

170

### 171 **10. Hvilke værdier er vigtigt at få ud til kunderne om jeres brand?**

172 **Maria Liokouras:** Jamen det er j jo først og fremmest det her med, at vi gerne vil have det ud  
173 og gøre det tilgængeligt for alle. At det ikke bare er den hippe klasse, der går op i.

174 **Rasmus Christensen:** Og omvendt heller ikke at det er hippieagtigt.

175 **Maria Liokouras:** Nej, nej nemlig at det bare er, altså at det skulle være logisk for alle, at det  
176 er det vi køber frem for... Det er bambussæt fremfor det her andet sæt, der i hvert fald ikke er  
177 bæredygtigt. Det var en grundlæggende værdi. Og deri ligger jo så bæredygtighed og økologi.  
178 De to parametre vi sådan har satset på. Så er der jo kvalitet, som hører ind under  
179 bæredygtighed. Men på de sociale medier er det også tydeligt at vi skriver "organic" eller  
180 "sustainable". Altså vi bruger meget det til at slå på. For det er jo det, der er hele fundamentet  
181 for I love Eco. Altså selv i vores navn ligger jo Eco. Og det forpligter jo. Så det er klart de  
182 største værdier.

183

### 184 **11. Hvordan vil I definere bæredygtighed?**

185 **Rasmus Christensen:** [...] Eller vi har forsøgt at gøre det lidt nemt for os selv og så dele det  
186 op i sådan tre kriterier. Egentlig lige så meget fordi at...

187 **Maria Liokouras:** Bæredygtighed er jo så bredt.

188 **Rasmus Christensen:** Ja, det er så komplekst. Der er bare ikke ret stor konsensus omkring  
189 det begreb. Den ene kan synes, "det er måske også ekstremt nok", og den anden synes at

190 palstik er bæredygtigt fordi det holder længe. Så vi har valgt at lave tre kriterier for at gøre det  
191 nemt for os selv, som er; det skal være kvalitet, og det skal ikke gå i stykker, det skal holde  
192 længe, gerne så langt at det er det eneste produkt, du behøver at købe resten af livet. Og så...

193 **Maria Liokouras:** Fremstilling, ikke? Produktion. Fremstilling.

194 **Rasmus Christensen:** Fremstillingen, ja. Materialerne skal være i orden.

195

196 **11.1 Er det i forhold til selve materialet, eller handler det også om stedet, hvor det bliver  
197 lavet og arbejdsforholdene der?**

198 **Maria Liokouras:** Det kommer så som det tredje. Etik og ansvar.

199 **Rasmus Christensen:** Ja, det er to forskellige ting. Dels skal materialet være i orden. Gerne  
200 FSC-certificeret træ eller træsorter, der vokser hurtigt, genbrug og alle sådan nogle ting. Det  
201 sidste er så det der ekstra punkt, etik og ansvar. Det må gerne være i overensstemmelse med  
202 menneskerettighederne, ikke børnearbejde.

203 **Maria Liokouras:** Vi har selvfølgelig et krav til leverandørerne om, at de lever op til de  
204 værdier vi også selv. Det er selvfølgelig også et projekt at tjekke det ved hvert. Men det er de  
205 tre ting.

206 [...]

207 **Rasmus Christensen:** Og det er yderst komplekst. Så det er jo hele tiden en balancegang og  
208 en vurdering af hvad der vejer mest i forhold til...

209 **Maria Liokouras:** Vi prøver at holde os inde for de her. Som sagt, vi har et kæmpe ansvar i  
210 at det er hele fundamentet for vores virksomhed. På den måde har vi jo også kun produkter,  
211 der er bæredygtigheden og øko. Det ville ikke give nogen mening det andet.

212

213 **12. Har I en fornemmelse af, om kunder vægter den bæredygtige del? Altså det hele er  
214 jo bæredygtigt på én eller anden måde.**

215 **Maria Liokouras:** Ja, det er det. Vi poster nærmest ikke noget, der ikke er. Men på Facebook  
216 er det klart med de her links kan man se, når man poster forskellige ting. Der er der stor  
217 interaktion hvor de kommenterer, at det er ”Mega fedt”, eller sådan noget. Så det må jo være  
218 det, tænker jeg, der gør at de synes, det er fedt. Og Instagram det er lidt sværere om de bare  
219 synes, det er et mega fedt billede eller kvalitet. Det er jo det, at de som sådan [måske] ikke  
220 tænker over om lysestagerne er bæredygtige, men at de bare synes, de er mega flotte. Det er  
221 der helt sikkert også. At det så er bæredygtigt, og de får den lille gevinst oven i, det er så nok

222 meget raret. Men nødvendigvis ikke det, der er det primære. Det kan lige så godt være, at de  
223 synes, det er pæne produkter, der er.

224 **Rasmus Christensen:** Vi har ikke meget at basere det på ud fra de kommentarer, der er. Der  
225 er det mere, at det er super kvalitet eller et fedt produkt. Det er ikke sådan ”fedt det er  
226 bæredygtigt”. Jeg tror lidt, der skal være ”value for money” i det.

227 **Maria Liokouras:** Altså vi har et eksempel med en karklud fra The Organic Company, og  
228 der har været denne her store diskussion om at der er plastic i en masse karklude og alle sådan  
229 nogle tekstiler.

230 **Rasmus Christensen:** Microplastic

231 **Maria Liokouras:** Og det har vist sig nu med de har karklude, at de sælger helt vildt godt, og  
232 det tænker vi lidt, må være et tegn på denne her debat. At folk bare gerne have karklude, hvor  
233 der ikke er noget plastik i.

234 **Rasmus Christensen:** Der virker det lige så godt, fordi der er noget folk bliver bange for.

235 **Maria Liokouras:** Men det betyder også at det virker – altså at det er bæredygtigt. Det er det  
236 de vil have.

### 237 **13. Ser I CSR som værende en konkurrencemæssig fordel for jeres brand?**

238 **Maria Liokouras:** Ja, det gør vi jo.

239 **Rasmus Christensen:** Det er uden tvivl en fordel. Det kan aldrig være en ulempe. Men det er  
240 også en fordel som rigtig mange byder ind på. Og byder rigtig hårdt ind på. Så det er også en  
241 fordel, der er konkurrence på.

242 **Maria Liokouras:** Det bliver sværere og sværere at gøre det til den her store fordel. Men det  
243 er aldrig noget, man ville være, mener jeg, man skal være foruden. Det kan aldrig være en  
244 ulempe.

245

### 246 **13.1 Men det er efterhånden også blevet sådan, så, at det ikke så meget er en niche 247 længere. Det er måske mere udbredt på markedet?**

248 **Maria Liokouras:** Ja, bæredygtighed?

249 **Rasmus Christensen:** Sådan føles det i hvert fald. Og nu er vi måske også præget af, at vi  
250 sidder i det. Så vi kigger også efter dem, der gør det mere end dem, der ikke gør det. Så på  
251 den måde ser vi det måske også som lidt større end det er. Men det virker som om, at det går  
252 den vej. At det er noget alle vil have.

- 253   **Maria Liokouras:** Der er selvfølgelig de virksomheder, der ikke er så obs på [det], altså som  
254   sælger Endeavour, som er det her køkkengrej fra Nikolaj Kirk, men så brander de det mere på  
255   Nikolaj Kirk. De får ikke rigtigt ind, at det er bambus, som det hele er lavet af. Der er flere,  
256   der er begyndt at fange at det bare er et plus. Men der er også nogle, der ikke har forstået at  
257   udnytte.
- 258   **Rasmus Christensen:** Endeavour, synes jeg, gør det rigtig godt, fordi de har formået at lavet  
259   et super produkt af super kvalitet, og det koster ikke mere end et tilsvarende godt produkt. Der  
260   har de vist, at man godt kan lave den bæredygtige løsning og få et godt produkt.
- 261   **Maria Liokouras:** Ja, men dem der forhandler det formår ikke at kommunikere  
262   bæredygtigheden videre i det.
- 263
- 264   **14. Inkluderer I nogle ord, der henleder opmærksomheden på bæredygtighed i jeres  
265   SEO?**
- 266   **Rasmus Christensen:** [...] mest ud fra sund fornuft –ikke de store strategiske overvejelser.

1 Interview transcript: Jesper Holm of Copenhagen

2

3 **1. Hvilke sociale medier benytter I jer af?**

4 **Jesper Holm:** Vi har ganske lidt på Facebook, og vi opdatere den ikke ret meget. Vi har, i  
5 forbindelse med at reolerne har tyve årsjubilæum nu her, så har vi lavet noget på Facebook i  
6 den forbindelse. Der er mange, der ser det, og klikker på det, og gør et eller andet med det; ser  
7 billederne eller et eller andet hurtigt. Jeg ved ikke hvad der sker, men vi har faktisk aldrig  
8 oplevet, at der har været kunder, der er kommet her, som har sagt, de har set det på Facebook.  
9 Vi har oplevet det én gang med én, der skulle have et køkken, men endte så med ikke at købe  
10 noget alligevel. Så derfor gør vi ikke så meget ved det [sociale medier, ref.] Det har ikke  
11 flyttet noget salg for os – om det så er fordi, vi ikke gør det nok eller hvordan, det ved jeg  
12 ikke. Men det vi har gjort, har vi i hvert fald ikke kunne måle nogen effekt af.

13

14 **2. Så har I heller ikke nogen overordnet strategi for, hvordan I bruger tiden på sociale  
15 medier?**

16 **Jesper Holm:** Nej, strategien er at vi er der, vi kan findes der, osv. Men vi vil hellere have  
17 folk ind på vores hjemmeside og vise tingene der.

18

19 **2.1 Hvordan gør I så det? Altså hvordan promovere I den for at få folk derind og kigge?**

20 **Jesper Holm:** Det er Google Adwords, og Googles organiske søgninger.

21

22 **2.3 Hvordan med de andre sociale medier såsom Pinterest og Instagram?**

23 **Jesper Holm:** Vi har ikke nogen profil eller gør noget som helst der.

24

25 **2.4 Og det er simpelthen fordi, I har oplevet at det ikke bære frugt?**

26 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, men også fordi vi er formodentligt sådan lidt gammeldags. [...] Altså hvis  
27 jeg skal være helt ærlig, så forstår jeg ikke Facebook. Jeg forstår ikke hvornår noget kommer  
28 op på alles væg, eller hvad det hedder, og jeg forstår ikke hvordan det virker. [...] Og det er jo  
29 fordi jeg bruger det alt, alt for lidt – også privat.

30

31 [...]

32 **2.5 I har valgt at lade vær at bruge ressourcerne på at sætte jer ind i det her for i stedet  
33 at bruge dem på noget, som giver mening for virksomheden, og som giver profit i sidste  
34 ende?**

35 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, men om så det er det rigtige valg, det ved jeg ikke.

36

37 **3. Har du en fornemmelse af hvor de [kunderne, ref.] ellers høre om jer fra? Altså nu  
38 siger du hjemmesiden men hvordan så finder de frem til hjemmesiden?**

39 **Jesper Holm:** [...] Google Adwords. [...] Den anden måde det er kunder, der kommer igen  
40 og allerede har købt noget hos os. Så derfor har vi en bred produkts pallet, så vi ligesom kan  
41 tilbyde flere ting til de samme kunder. Også er det venner og familie osv., til vores gamle  
42 kunder, som også kommer og køber her.

43

44 [...]

45 **4. Det er lidt tilbage til det samme, men hvordan markedsføre I virksomheden og  
46 virksomhedens brand ikke mindst?**

47 **Jesper Holm:** Det er stort set kun på Internettet og det er stort set kun vores hjemmeside.  
48 Men Google det er jo ikke branding – [...] altså det er folk, der simpelthen står med et behov.  
49 De søger måske på 'Design reoler' – først så søger de på 'Reoler' også kommer der alle  
50 mulige palle reoler og Lars Larsen osv. Også søger de så måske på 'Design reoler', også  
51 kommer vi op der. Så det er ikke branding, altså det er folk som simpelthen har et behov, og  
52 de er simpelthen på markedet for at købe noget.

53

54 **5. Nu nævner du selv design, er det et af de ord I vil sætte på jeres brand?**

55 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, det er håndværk, og det er design, også er det skræddersyede løsninger. Og  
56 jeg vil sige, det er i højere og højere grad skrædder syede løsninger, fordi design det kan alle  
57 jo i dag. Altså IKEA og Bo Concept og Bolia og alle sådan nogle, de laver alle sammen  
58 design. Så det er ikke så meget et konkurrence parameter meter, altså folk vil godt kunne  
59 finde et møbel hos et varehus, som de synes er pænt, men det som vi kan tilbyde, det er, at vi  
60 kan lave et pænt møbel på mål, så det passer til et specielt ønske.

61

62 **6. Hvem ser I som jeres åbenlyse konkurrenter?**

63 **Jesper Holm:** Nu har vi jo mange produktkategorier men altså på køkkener, er det de andre,  
64 der laver snedker-køkkener. Og på vores reoler som design, der ved jeg at der findes ikke  
65 noget tilsvarende. Altså hvis folk kan gå ud og vælge, så er det designet folk, de køber. Men i  
66 garderobeskabe, der har vi mange konkurrenter. Der kigger folk, som måske ender med at  
67 købe vores klædeskabe, de har været hele vejen forbi. Selv skydedøre skabe, for at se hvordan  
68 det ser ud, har folk ligesom tjekket ud.

69 [...]

70

71 **7. Nu nævner du selv jeres reoler, men på hvilken anden måde skiller I jer ud fra jeres**  
72 **konkurrenter på? Er det hovedsageligt jeres reoler, der skiller sig ud, eller er der nogle**  
73 **nøgle værdier I lægger særlig vægt på?**

74 **Jesper Holm:** Nej, altså jeg tror, det som kunderne opfatter som vores værdi, er at det er  
75 dansk design, og det er fremstillet i Danmark, og så er det naturmaterialer og sådan nogle  
76 ting. Så jeg tror, det er det, som kunderne opfatter som gode værdier.

77

78 **8. Inde på jeres hjemmeside nævner I det her med bæredygtighed og miljø. Hvordan vil**  
79 **du definere bæredygtighed sådan helt overordnet?**

80 **Jesper Holm:** Det som jeg vil sige, er det mest reelt bæredygtige eller miljøvenlige, det er, at  
81 vi har en lang levetid for kunderne, og når kunderne bliver trætte af det, så sælger de det på  
82 den blå avis, også lever det videre hos nogle nye kunder. Så det gør at kunderne skal ikke  
83 bruge benzin på at køre til IKEA. Hvis f.eks. man bor på Præstø, så skal man bruge ret meget  
84 benzin på at køre op til IKEA, og se hvad de har. [...] Og det benzin er jo mere  
85 miljøbelastende end møblet er. Så derfor kan man sige, at hvis man boer på Præstø, og man  
86 køre til IKEA for at købe et møbel – et IKEA møbel har man kun ganske få år, så kassere man  
87 det – så køre man til IKEA igen og køber et nyt. Hvor vi laver møbler, der kan holde måske  
88 100 år både designmæssigt og kvalitetsmæssigt. Det kan holde væsentligt længere, og det gør  
89 at den kunde i Præstø kun får en tur til København ift. at skulle købe møbler. Det er det  
90 vigtigste argument i forhold til om det er bæredygtigt. Men der er jo én ting til – én ting er,  
91 hvad der er reelt bæredygtigt, og hvad man kan få Lomborg [Bjørn Lomborg, ref.] med til at  
92 sige, at det her er rent faktisk bæredygtigt, og sådan noget med at sige, at man køber  
93 vindenergi og sådan noget, som alle andre firmaer – det har jeg ikke valgt at skrive på min  
94 hjemmeside, fordi jeg synes, det er noget fis, fordi for det første er vindmøller overhovedet

95 ikke bæredygtige. Altså de bruger enorme mængder energi at stille op, og når så de producere  
96 energi, kan vi ikke bruge den, fordi så ligger alle og sover. Så det giver ikke særligt god  
97 mening med de vindmøller, så jeg har prøvet at skrive en tekst, som ikke er greenwashing,  
98 men er de ting, jeg reelt mener, er miljøforbedrende for virksomheden. Jeg kan jo ikke påtage  
99 mig den pædagogiske rolle det er, at forklare folk, at vi skriver ikke det med vindmøller fordi  
100 ”sådan og sådan”, så jeg har bare skrevet det, som jeg synes, jeg kan stå inde for og som reelt  
101 har en miljøforbedrende effekt.

102 Noget andet som er miljøforbedrende, som ikke er ligeså væsentligt som produkterne levetid,  
103 det er at vores opvarmning, som jo er den største energisluger i alle de kvadratmeter her, som  
104 vi skal varme op. Det foregår stort set udelukkende med træaffald. Så alt det affald, som vi  
105 ellers skulle bruge fossilbrændstof på at der kom en lastbil og kørte et eller andet sted hen, det  
106 bliver brændt af her på stedet. Så vi får energi ud af vores restmaterialer, også har vi efter  
107 sådan en hel fyrringssæson måske 50 kilo aske.

108

### 109 8.1 Så har I jeres eget lille kredsløb?

110

111 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, det har vi.

112

113 **9. [...] Ser du det som bæredygtigt, at du har valgt at holde produktionen her i**  
114 **Danmark – nu talte du selv om transport, i forhold til hvis du havde outsourceret det til**  
115 **Kina eller et andet sted?**

116 **Jesper Holm:** Det lyder mere bæredygtigt i folks øre, men jeg tror faktisk ikke, det er det,  
117 fordi det er køreturen fra Præstø og hertil, den er væsentligt mere energikrævende end  
118 transporten fra Kina og hertil, fordi det kommer jo på et skib sammen med tusindevis af andre  
119 containere og den lille mængde møbler, vi får sendt – altså, hele logistikken i det den er så  
120 optimeret og så energiefficient så jeg tror faktisk ikke, den har den store betydning. Og så må  
121 jeg jo sige, at vi transportere i stedet for materialer hertil, så om det er det ene eller det andet,  
122 det har sku ikke den store [betydning].

123

### 124 9.1 Hvor kommer materialerne fra [...]?

125 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, men vi henter dem jo ikke selv der. [...] Det foregår jo sådan, at de her  
126 træstammer bliver fældet et eller andet sted, på den anden side af jorden måske, og så bliver

127 de transporteret til en havn, også bliver de transporteret videre derfra til en eller anden  
128 grossist, også køber, ham jeg køber fineren af, den så og sejler den til Tyrkiet, hvor han har sit  
129 finere værk, også bliver det sendt fra Tyrkiet til hans lager i Milano, også kommer jeg ned og  
130 kigger på det, også bliver det så samlet sammen, de ting som jeg vil have, og så bliver de  
131 transporteret til Danmark. Så varer bliver simpelthen sendt rundt i en uendelighed. Men den  
132 største mængde træmaterialer vi bruger, det er pladerne, altså det der er indeni og det kommer  
133 fra Belgien fra sådan nogle store frabrikker, og de ligger i Belgien og Polen, og sådan nogle  
134 steder, og de ligger tæt på skoven [...] og der igen er det meget energiefficient. Det kommer  
135 direkte fra skoven, altså savværket og så alt det, der ikke kan laves om til tømrer bliver knust  
136 og lavet om til de her plader, også bliver de så hentet og sendt til Aalborg. [...]

137

138 **10. I forhold til at du sagde, at noget af det som du fornemmer, at kunderne godt kan  
139 lide, det er, at det er dansk produktion; har du nogen fornemmelse for hvorfor, det  
140 betyder noget for dem? Er det, det her med, at det lyder måske lidt mere bæredygtigt  
141 end det er, eller er det fordi det har sådan lidt med danske arbejdspladser at gøre? Har  
142 du en føeling for, hvad det betyder for dem?**

143 **Jesper Holm:** Der er flere plan i det. Altså forstå det sådan, at det er fordi, der er dels det som  
144 kunderne ligesom forklarer til omverdenen, altså det som ligesom bruges som argumentation  
145 for at man har købt de her møbler, og det kan være sådan noget med at de tjener en god sag,  
146 og det giver danske arbejdspladser og sådan noget. Men jeg tror, det som i virkeligheden  
147 betyder mest for folk, det er selve den immaterielle værdi af det. Og det er sådan noget med,  
148 at de synes, at det er lækkert, og de kan komme på snedkeriet, og de kan se tingene blive  
149 lavet, og de har valgt materialerne ud osv.

150 [...]

151

152 **10.1 Så kvalitet er det vigtigste?**

153 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, det giver folk mere en fornemmelse af kvalitet - det med at det er  
154 produceret i Danmark, og det vil kunderne gerne betale ekstra for. Men det der med om det er  
155 købsmotivet – bare se økologiske æg; hvor man simpelthen ikke kan være bekendt at købe æg  
156 fra de burhøns eller skrabeæg, fordi det synes man simpelthen er synd og man synes, at det  
157 decideret ulækkert, og det vil man ikke være en del af. Men her taler vi om noget, der koster,  
158 altså økologiske æg koster, tre-fire kroner, og de andre æg koster halvanden-to kroner eller

159 sådan noget. Så den holdning har folk råd til at have, men når det er møbler og et spisebord  
160 koster 20.000 kroner kontra et bord, der er lavet i Kina, der er fuldstændig ligeså godt, der  
161 koster 2-3000 kroner, så har folk altså ikke råd til at have den holdning. For at forstå det, skal  
162 man også kunne forstå, hvorfor folk køber Mercedes og Audi fremfor en Koreansk bil. Det er  
163 nogle helt andre værdier man tillægger de produkter.

164

165 **10.2 Altså det er et meget interessant aspekt det her med om det er en holdning, man**  
166 **har råd til at have, og en værdi man har råd til at gå op i, eller om man har råd til at**  
167 **vænne ”det blinde øje” til i stedet.**

168 **Jesper Holm:** Jamen folk vender ikke det blinde øje til. De tænker slet ikke over det. Altså  
169 der er aldrig nogle, der spørger til sådan noget med bæredygtigheden af vores materialer og  
170 sådan noget. Aldrig. Vi har overvejet, om vi skulle blive FSC-mærket, og det vil simpelthen  
171 ingen værdi have for os. Der er aldrig nogle, der spørger til det. Men det kan så godt være at  
172 dem, der interesserer sig meget for det, de går andre steder hen. Men altså, FSC-mærkning og  
173 alt sådan noget med Bambus møbler, det er greenwashing fra ende til anden. Det har intet  
174 med bæredygtighed at gøre. Det er svindel og hum buk. [...] Der er en masse virksomheder,  
175 der ligesom lukrere på de her misforståelser, og du skal ikke bilde mig ind at de ikke ved, at  
176 det er ren greenwashing.

177

178 **11. Spørgsmålet er så, er det derfor din version af bæredygtighed den ligesom er meget**  
179 **håndgribelig og meget jordnær og det ”bare” handler om det her med, at det er lang**  
180 **levetid, fordi så spare vi ressourcer på den måde?**

181 **Jesper Holm:** Som jeg sagde tidligere, så skriver jeg kun ting under ’Miljø og  
182 bæredygtighed’, som jeg mener, er rigtige og som har en gang på jorden, og jeg gider ikke at  
183 sidde og skrive, at alle vores træsorter er lavet med en eller anden speciel form for skovdrift,  
184 fordi det er der ingen, der kan sige med et hundrede procent sikkerhed. Det ved man  
185 simpelthen ikke. Nogle af de træsorter jeg bruger, er igennem så mange hænder på vejs, så  
186 hvor de egentligt kommer fra, det er der ingen der ved. Jeg undersøger, om træsorten generelt  
187 er udrydningstruede, og hvis den er det, så bruger vi den ikke. Vi har vingue nu, fordi vi har et  
188 lager af det, men når vi ikke har mere på lager af det, så køber jeg ikke mere af det, fordi nu  
189 ved jeg, hvordan det foregår med det vingea. De træsorter, jeg med hundrede procent  
190 sikkerhed kan sige, ”de her er ikke i orden”, så gider jeg ikke, at have ansvaret for, at være

191 med til at ødelægge noget unikt natur. Men ellers tjekker jeg teknologisk institut, som skriver  
192 om de mener, om de her træsorter er bæredygtige osv. Hvor opdateret det er, det ved jeg ikke.  
193 Men jeg ved, at en træsort som seprano, der er en miljøorganisation, der har den på sådan en  
194 'red list' som udrydningstruet, og det kan jeg så afkraefte fuldstændig – det er den ikke – der  
195 er masser af den og den bliver brugt til at brænde og lave mad over bål i Vestafrika. Der er  
196 massere af seprano, den vokser hurtigt osv. Ingen problemer. Så derfor er de der  
197 miljøorganisation, de er jo også en forretning, og de skal jo også have medlemmer, de skal  
198 have kontingenter osv. Så jeg synes sku, det er svært at stole på noget som helst.

199

200 **12. Nu har du selv sagt, at du ikke bruger Facebook særligt meget, men er det så et  
201 aktivt fravælg, ikke at promovere dine bæredygtige strategi på Facebook eller giver det  
202 bare ingen mening, når kunderne ikke er interesseret i det alligevel? [...]**

203 **Jesper Holm:** Nej, det er egentligt ikke derfor. Det er fordi, jeg tror faktisk ikke, at kunderne  
204 interessere sig ret meget for det. Det tror jeg ikke, de gør. Jeg tror, at man interessere sig for  
205 det med æg nogle gange, først på måneden, når man lige har fået løn, og sidst på måneden når  
206 man skal bage en kage, som børnene skal have med i skole, hvor der skal 20 æg i, så køber  
207 man sådan en bakke burhøns. Det er der sku ingen, der ser. Men skal man have nogen gæster  
208 til brunch, så vil man gerne kunne vise at man har de der [økologiske, ref.] æg – og man tager  
209 æggebakken og stiller på køkkenbordet. [...] Det har selvfølgelig en effekt i forhold til, at der  
210 skal være en vis form for styr på vores miljø tilgang. Firmaets værdier skal ligesom være i  
211 orden, men jeg synes ikke, det er noget som – altså hvis jeg skal skrive noget på Facebook, så  
212 skal det være for at få folk ind på min hjemmeside – og jeg tror, at hvis folk kommer ind på  
213 min hjemmeside af den grund, altså at de fatter sympati for firmaet fordi vi har gjort noget  
214 miljøvenligt, så tror jeg ikke, det er nogle, der kommer ind for at købe noget. Altså fordi det  
215 her er ikke noget man køber bare sådan impulsivt. Det er noget andet hvis vi solgte de briller,  
216 som jeg har på f.eks. Det er nogle af mine venner, som har et firma, som laver forholdsvis  
217 billige briller, og de spiller meget på det her med miljøvenlige og bæredygtighed osv. Og det  
218 er jo fis og humbug, fordi sådan et par briller, der går jo næsten ingen materialer i det. Altså  
219 der er 10 gram plastik eller sådan noget. Så om det er miljøvenligt eller ej, det betyder  
220 ingenting fordi bare den tid, vi sidder og snakker, der har vi brugt masser af energi på at  
221 varme lokalet op osv. osv. Så den mængde energi, der skal til der forsvinder lidt. Men de  
222 bruger det, at de støtter nogle aber på Borneo og sådan nogle ting, og der tror jeg, at når folk

223 kommer ind den vej, og de alligevel skal have nogle læsebriller, som er et produkt, der koster  
224 3-4-500 kroner, så tror jeg godt, at det [CSR, ref.] kan flytte noget salg. Men når det er et  
225 spisebord eller så videre, så er det ikke den vej, jeg skal have folk ind. Det tror jeg ikke, det  
226 er. Jeg ved det ikke, men det kan være, I kan fortælle mig noget andet, når I har skrevet jeres  
227 opgave.

228

229 [...]

230

231 **12.1 Så den værdi vi som forbrugere ser i at noget skal være bæredygtigt, skal være**  
232 **synlig for andre, eller skal andre hvert fald kende til før at vi synes, at det er**  
233 **spændende?**

234 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, men så skal det jo simpelthen være firmaets hovedbudskab, at man er  
235 miljøvenlig, og det firma, der hedder Mater – har I haft fat i dem? [...] Fordi de burde jo  
236 faktisk interessere sig for det, for det er jo hele deres forretningsidé. Det hedder jo Mater fordi  
237 ”it matters”. De får det jo så lavet i Indien og alle sådan nogle steder, så lige hvor miljøvenlig  
238 det foregår, det er jeg overhovedet ikke i tvivl om – at det på ingen måde er under  
239 miljørigtige, hvad hedder det. De indånder slibestøv og pis og papir. [...] Også  
240 ressourceforbruget osv. Men det er jo en måde at markedsføre sig på i dag, og det har de  
241 forstået. De opnår meget høje priser for noget, som egentligt bare er nogle Kina-varer, og får  
242 det lavet i Indien og sådan noget. Og det tror jeg, de gør på grund af det miljøelement, de har  
243 opbygget.

244

245 [...] **At man kan skabe et image af sig selv som forbruger synes, er rigtig spændende**  
246 **og lige pludselig føle at så ved de rigtig meget om bæredygtighed, uden at det**  
247 **nødvendigvis er rigtigt, men hvis du er god nok til at sælge idéen til forbruger, så er**  
248 **forbrugeren måske også villig til at hoppe på vognen, og overbevise sig selv om at så har**  
249 **man gjort noget godt for verden. Men du har ret i, at det meget hurtigt bare kan være et**  
250 **image, som man har bakket op af en eller to ting, der måske tilnærmedesvis er**  
251 **bæredygtige.**

252

253 **Jesper Holm:** Ja men altså forbrugere har jo en eller anden trang til at blive forført, og på  
254 samme måde som kvinder køber rynke creme, selvom de udmærket godt ved, at Nivea er

255 fuldt ud ligeså godt. Altså det har ingen effekt what so ever, og uanset hvor meget, min kone  
256 inklusiv, får det dokumenteret så bliver man ved med at købe det. Og på samme måde tror  
257 jeg, at man kan forføre folk til at købe møbler af den ene eller den anden grund, og der er  
258 miljø én ting. Vi har simpelthen ikke opfundet en måde at forføre vores kunder på. Det som vi  
259 sælger her, er cool facts. Det er simpelthen møbler. Kunderne vurdere det i forhold til prisen, i  
260 forhold til kvaliteten, og i forhold til at de står og har det behov, og de kan ikke løse det andre  
261 steder. Så vores kunder de Googler nettet tyndt efter alternativer, så vi er hele tiden i  
262 konkurrence på noget som er 'cool facts'. Vi mangler i den grad en værdiskabelse af  
263 produktet. Det gør vi faktisk.

264

265 [...]

266

267 **13. Bruger I nogle særlige ord for at henlede opmærksomheden på jeres brand når folk  
268 søger inde på Google. Du nævnte selv klædeskab, tror jeg. Er der nogle andre ord?**

269 Jesper Holm: Jamen, det er de produkter, vi sælger. Der har vi igennem mange års erfaring  
270 fundet ud af, hvad er det præcis for nogle søgetermer. Og det er helt vildt kommersielt, fordi  
271 vi har så stor produkt palette. Altså vi laver køkner, garderobeskabe, borde, stole, reoler, så  
272 har vi entre møbler og skoreoler osv., sofa borde, Tv-møbler, Hi-fi møbler [...] kontorborde,  
273 kontorstole. Så det er en meget, meget bred palette, men der er jo nogle af de produktgrupper,  
274 som vi sælger mere af end andre, og en del af vores værdiskabelse, hvis man kan tale om det,  
275 er netop at vi har en designlinje, som kunden kan forholde sig til. Hvor de siger "det her, det  
276 er et firma, der laver noget fedt. Det kan godt være, jeg bare skal bruge et spisebord, som jeg i  
277 princippet kan få mange steder, men jeg vil gerne købe det fra et firma, der laver en masse  
278 flotte ting."

279

280 [...]

281

282 **En ting, der går igen i de virksomheder, vi har talt med, er at det skal være god kvalitet,  
283 så det kan blive brugt i lang tid. [...] Og de bruger også IKEA som sådan "lad vær med  
284 at brug den strategi", fordi så er det ikke bæredygtigt, selvom IKEA jo også er begyndt  
285 på meget med bæredygtighed på deres hjemmeside i forhold til fremstilling osv.**

286 **Jesper Holm:** Ja, altså det bliver jo det næste. Det er jo at sådan, at nogle små firmaer finder  
287 ud af, at her er en forretningsmodel, altså det her med at man opfinder sine produkter som  
288 værende miljøvenlige, og så på den måde får tilført produkterne værdier. Og når IKEA  
289 begynder på det, så er det fordi, det er grundigt undersøgt at det har en betydning. Samtidigt  
290 så udvander det dét fuldstændigt så der er ingen, der tror på det. På samme måde som de tager  
291 et design og kopiere det og fuldstændig udvander det – så der er ingen, der gider at have det –  
292 på samme måde vil det gøre med det her øko. [bæredygtighed, økologi, ref.] Så vil de bare  
293 drive rovdrift på det, og når så det ikke er mere, så vil de så gå videre til noget nyt.

1 Interview transcript: We Do Wood

2

3 **1. Hvilke sociale medier benytter I jer af?**

4 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Vi bruger primært Instagram, Facebook og Vimeo til videoer.

5

6 **2. Hvor meget tid bruger I om ugen på de sociale medier, inklusiv forarbejde som at**  
7 **tage billeder, style, osv.?**

8 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Det har jeg aldrig tænkt over. Det er nogle timer. [...] Måske to-tre  
9 timer om ugen eller sådan noget. [...] Altså Facebook tager lidt længere tid, fordi man skal jo  
10 skrive noget. Men Instagram, det er jo bare at knalde nogle billeder op. Men det er faktisk  
11 vores designer, der har Instagram-delen, så han går bare sådan engang imellem og tager nogle  
12 billeder. Men han bruger det ikke så meget igen. Det sådan [at det] vi kommer til at bruge  
13 mere tid på i fremtiden, det er videoer. Vi har sådan en idé om, at videoer bliver større og  
14 større. Også i forbindelse med, hvad skal man sige, man kan jo hurtigere få data nu og i  
15 fremtiden, end man har kunne tidligere, så jeg tror at man får [...] at se videoer som sådan en  
16 større og større kanal. Og der har vi jo så bare satset på Vimeo fordi den er lidt renere. Der er  
17 så meget reklame og alt muligt andet på YouTube, som vi ellers brugte i starten. Men nu  
18 bruger vi en anden.

19

20 **3. Er det så med fokus på storytelling og [...] for at vise folk produktionen og designet**  
21 **og [...] tage dem lidt mere bag kulisserne?**

22 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Ja. Det er både [...] sådan lidt behind-the-scenes[at vi] har gjort lidt,  
23 og så er det faktisk også bare instruktionsvideoer [...] Altså bare taget med en iPhone, fordi  
24 det er egentlig okay kvalitet. Men så igen for at fremme vores bæredygtighedsprofil. Vi gider  
25 ikke lægge instruktioner, altså printede instruktioner, på 20 forskellige sprog ved vores  
26 møbler. Så der er ingenting. Til gengæld, [...] fordi man kan vise det på en video uden at sige  
27 noget, hvordan man samler et møbel, [så er det dét vi gør] i stedet for. Dels fordi vi synes, det  
28 er smartere, fordi der er aldrig nogen, der kan forstå de der manualer alligevel, og dels fordi så  
29 er det mere bæredygtigt. Altså man behøver ikke at printe noget. Så kan vi altid opdatere det  
30 nemt, hvis det er. Så man kan bare gå ind på vores hjemmeside, så kan man se hvordan man  
31 samler møblerne på en video.

32

33 **4. Er der en strategi for hvordan I bruger tiden [på sociale medier]?**

34 **Jens Holme Jensen:** Nej, altså der er ikke en strategi for hvordan vi bruger tiden, men man  
35 kan sige, vi har selvfølgelig en begrænsning i forhold til budget, fordi specielt Facebook vil jo  
36 gerne have at man bruger en masse penge på at booste og sådan noget, og det gør vi ikke så  
37 meget. Vi gør det en lille smule. Vi har kørt nogle kickstarter kampanjer og sådan noget, der  
38 har vi gjort det. Men ellers er det [mere] med at prøve at begrænse budgettet end at smide  
39 penge efter alle de der forskellige platforme, end at vi har en decideret strategi.

40  
41 **4.1 Så det er ikke sådan, at I har nogle strategier for, hvornår I lancerer nogle**  
42 **konkurrencer [...]?**

43 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Nej, det er det ikke. [...] Altså vi har udvalgt, hvad for nogle sociale  
44 medier det er vi gerne vil være på. Vi har blandt andet valgt, at vi ikke vil bruge Twitter og alt  
45 muligt andet, hvad der ellers findes. Vi har ligesom sagt, at der er nogle ting vi skal. Altså,  
46 Facebook fra da vi startede, og den bliver vi ved med, og så Instagram fordi det er et godt  
47 medie til vores design. Og som sagt så tror vi meget på video fremadrettet. Så det er sådan  
48 strategien.

49

50 **4.2 [...] Jeres strategi i forhold til at fravælge specifikke [platforme], er det også med**  
51 **henblik på ressourcer, at I vil lægge tiden på de medier, I tror på?**

52 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Ja, det er. Hvis vi skulle kunne gøre noget på alle de sociale medier,  
53 der findes, så ville vi jo ikke kunne [lave] andet. Der har vi sådan valgt, hvad er det, vi gerne  
54 vil have ud, og det er jo meget billeder, altså af vores ting. Det er der, hvor det gør sig bedst.  
55 Men for eksempel Pinterest, [der] har vi heller ikke valgt, fordi hvis ikke du går ind og  
56 vedligeholder en masse boards inde på Pinterest, så bliver det kedeligt. Og vi synes egentlig  
57 hellere, at vi via Instagram skal kunne føde ind til en masse eksisterende boards i stedet for at  
58 lave vores eget. Så det er sådan et bevidst fravalg.

59

60 **5. Hvilke analyseværktøjer bruger I til at lære jeres kunder bedre at kende? [...]**

61 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Altså vi kigger jo på Facebook, hvad det er for nogle. [...] Både  
62 demografisk og.. Så det kigger vi da helt klart på. Men derudover kan man sige at vi sælger jo  
63 via designbutikker og møbelbutikker, så den direkte kontakt med slutkunden har vi jo ikke. Så  
64 det er egentlig mest via de sociale medier, at vi kan se én eller form for profil af hvordan det  
65 fordeler sig både geografisk og demografisk. Og det er fint nok. Men jeg har også én eller

66 anden idé om, at det handler måske lidt om hvad det er for nogle aldersgrupper, der bruger de  
67 sociale medier. Jeg tror ikke helt, det er retvisende faktisk. Fordi nogle af vores bedste  
68 kunder, sådan noget som Politiken plus, de er egentlig ældre end vores Facebook [...] profil  
69 siger, de skal være. Så jeg tror ikke helt, det er retvisende, det man kan få ud af de sociale  
70 medier. Jeg tror, der er mange af de ældre, der slet ikke bruger det.

71

72 **6. Nu sælger I jo ikke direkte til slutkunden, men har I alligevel noget indblik i, hvordan**  
73 **[kunderne] finder frem til We Do Wood, eller lader I mere [forhandlerne] om det?**

74 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Altså både og. Dels er det via forhandlerne. [...] Vi har ret mange  
75 onlineforhandlere, så de gør selvfølgelig et stort arbejde for at øge trafikken på deres site, så  
76 det hjælper selvfølgelig os indirekte. Men derudover arbejder vi ret meget sammen med to,  
77 specifikt, større sites. Det ene hedder Monoki, som ligger i Berlin. Monoki de laver sådan  
78 nogle flash sales på syv dage engang imellem, hvor man så kan få noget design i syv dage, og  
79 så er det ovre. Men de har en million følgere, så derfor er det godt engang i mellem at være  
80 der. Og så laver vi ret meget med nogle, der hedder Arkiproducts, som er italiensk, som også  
81 har rigtig, rigtig mange følgere, og egentlig er mere aktive på de sociale medier end Monoki.  
82 Så vi har de samarbejder, som er noget, vi betaler for, men også handler igennem. [...] Hvor  
83 at vi opsøger kunder, kan man sige. Men vi gør det jo ikke direkte. Vi er egentlig mere en  
84 designvirksomhed. Producent, kan man sige. Og går ikke hele vejen ud. Hvis vi havde vores  
85 egen, altså hvis man kunne købe vores møbler på vores egen hjemmeside, så skulle man  
86 måske være mere aktiv. Men det er ikke strategien lige nu.

87

88 **7. Hvordan og hvorfor promoverer og markedsfører I virksomhedens brand?**

89 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Det er fordi, vi arbejder med design, så hvis ikke man har et brand, så  
90 [...] altså det siger næsten sig selv, at man skal promovere sin virksomhed. Men man kan  
91 sige, det, der er det vigtigste spørgsmål er, hvad er det så brandet skal stå for? Og hvad er det  
92 for en historie vi gerne vil ud med. Og det er helt klart den der kobling mellem design og  
93 bæredygtighed, der er vores [...] brand promise. Hvis man skal gå over i sådan noget sprog.  
94 [...] Altså der er nogle ting som vi altid skal leve op til, når vi leverer nogle møbler, ikke? Det  
95 er, at det netop er vores eget design, og det er bæredygtigt design. Det er det vigtigste, vi vil  
96 have igennem. Under [...] det brand promise, der har vi så noget vi kalder "Our  
97 responsibility" på vores hjemmeside, som handler om vi mener, at vi tager ansvar ved at gøre

98 nogle forskellige ting. Og der forklarer vi så sådan lidt mere detaljeret, hvordan vi udvælger  
99 vores materiale, og hvordan vi tænker over det og sådan nogle ting. [...] Dem der læser det,  
100 de er virkelig interesserede. Det er ikke det, der sådan skal være blikfanget, eller brandet. Det  
101 er mere med at forklare, sådan at det er ansvarligt, det vi gør, og vi forklarer hvorfor. Men helt  
102 grundlæggende handler det om design og bæredygtighed.

### 103 **8. Hvordan positionerer I brandet?**

104 Vi kigger sådan på designmarkedet ud fra tre akser. Hvor man kan sige, at der er én akse, som  
105 bare hedder design. Dem, der fuldstændigt satser på design. Og så er der nogle, der satser på  
106 pris. Og så har vi vores, som hedder bæredygtighed [...] og vi kigger meget på [...] hvor er  
107 det de andre ligger, hvad er det, de andre vil. Altså sådan nogle som Hay, for eksempel, de  
108 ligger et eller andet sted, og gerne vil sælge billigt design. De er jo [...] ikke IKEA, det er  
109 ikke billigt. [...] Men indenfor denne her verden hvor det handler om design, der er Hay ret  
110 billigt. Hvorimod hvis man kigger på nogle som Muuto og Normann Copenhagen, så [...]  
111 satser de ikke så meget på, at det skal være billigt men at det skal være nyt, Dansk design. De  
112 trækker nye designere frem. Hay er lidt mere ligeglads med om det er dansk. Så de [Muuto og  
113 Norman, red.] er meget ovre i design. Så har vi sådan nogle andre. Der er for eksempel én,  
114 som hedder Mater, som også kigger på bæredygtighed og den nye design. [...] Og vi mener  
115 egentlig at design for os er en qualifier. [...] Enten kan du lide vores design eller også kan du  
116 ikke lide vores design. Så vi tager det faktisk ikke rigtigt med på samme måde. Hvis du går  
117 ind på vores hjemmeside, det er ikke det første vi viser, det er ikke vores produkter. Men hvis  
118 du går ind på alle de andres hjemmeside så er det allermest du ser, det er deres produkter. Vi  
119 vil gerne fortælle vores historie omkring bæredygtighed så vi vil gerne ligge faktisk og sælge  
120 bæredygtige produkter til en okay pris. Ikke at vi skal konkurrere med Hay. Men vi vil gerne  
121 sælge bæredygtige produkter til samme pris som for eksempel Muuto og Norman gør. [...]  
122 Hay har også lavet nogle produkter, de mener er bæredygtige, Muuto har også. Så dobler de  
123 prisen. Vi vil gerne sælge produkter, der er bæredygtige og koster det samme som andre  
124 designprodukter. Så det er vores, hvad skal man sige, strategi [eller] positionering. Vi mener  
125 at der er sådan et sweet-spot dertil, hvor der ikke rigtigt er nogle, der tænker bæredygtighed og  
126 pris, for det bliver altid pissedyrt, hvis det skal være bæredygtigt. Og vores er ikke billigt,  
127 men det er faktisk heller ikke dyrere end de andre ikke-bæredygtige virksomheder.  
128

#### 129 **8.1 Så der har I ligesom en værdi?**

130 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Lige nu har vi i hvert fald. Der er ikke særligt mange i  
131 møbelbranchen, der tænker bæredygtigt overhovedet, men der er i hvert fald ikke mange, der  
132 tænker bæredygtighed og så én eller anden form for pris. Jo det er der så, hvis vi tænker, altså  
133 IKEA er jo begyndt at kigge en lille smule på bæredygtighed, men det er noget andet. Det er  
134 ikke dem, vi konkurrer med.

135

136

### 137 **9. Hvem ser du som jeres åbenlyse konkurrenter og hvorfor?**

138 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Jeg synes, det kommer an på om man skal konkurrere på design eller  
139 på bæredygtighed. Altså vores åbenlyse konkurrenter, det er jo de andre producenter, der er i  
140 de butikker eller hos de forhandlere, hvor vi er. Fordi man kan sige, hvis man går ind og  
141 handler de steder, så ved man godt at man er inde i én eller anden priskategori. Og så kan du  
142 jo sige, så er sådan nogle som IKEA for eksempel ikke konkurrenter, vel? For så har du jo  
143 ligesom valgt dem fra som forbruger. Så jeg vil sige, at hvis vi kigger på det som design, så er  
144 det alle de andre nordiske designvirksomheder, der er vores konkurrenter, og det, der skal  
145 differentiere os fra dem, hvis man kan lide vores design, for vi mener jo at det er sådan en  
146 qualifier, det er jo så det der med at vi er bæredygtige, for der er ikke rigtigt andre, der er. Så  
147 hvis man kan komme ned i den niche, så har vi ikke rigtigt andre konkurrenter. Så er det mere  
148 sådan nogle [...] af de andre som har noget bæredygtigt, eller nogle udenlandske, som satser,  
149 altså vi satser på bambus som et godt udgangspunkt, men der er jo også nogle, som satser på  
150 re-cycling eller up-cycling, som også har bæredygtighed som profil. Eller Mater for eksempel.  
151 [...] Nu ser jeg ikke Mater som en specielt stor konkurrent, for de har lidt en anden  
152 kundegruppe end vi har, tror jeg. Så det er faktisk nogle, vi taler med. Som kolleger [en  
153 sammensmeltning af konkurrenter og kolleger, ref.], hedder det. [...] Der er nogle  
154 Hollændere, der hedder Piet Hein Ek, de er meget re-cycling og up-cycling. Det kunne man  
155 godt sige var en konkurrent i udlandet. Men det er så anderledes det, de gør. Det er noget helt  
156 andet design. Så jeg ved sgu ikke rigtigt, hvem jeg skal sige, er vores største konkurrent. Men  
157 det er jo nok i virkeligheden "the usual suspects". Muuto, Normann, Hay er dem, som vi  
158 kæmper om synlighed og plads med. Når vi så er i den der købsproces hos kunden, så er det  
159 jo bæredygtighed, der er vores [...] unikke ting.

160

- 161 9.1 [...] Altså du gav lidt udtryk for, nemlig, at bæredygtighed er en ret ny  
162 differentiering inden for design. Er det...  
163 Der er jo ikke noget nyt i bæredygtighed, men der er bare ikke særligt mange der... Hvis du  
164 tager på møbelmesse; der er ikke ret mange, der fokuserer på det. Det er ikke ligesom med tøj.  
165 Det sælger ikke rigtigt, tror jeg ikke, og det har nok noget at gøre med, at folk vil ikke rigtigt  
166 betale mere for det. Og det er det vi håber, at man ligesom kan sige ”nå men vi tager heller  
167 ikke mere for det. Det koster det samme.” [...] Men jeg tror, vi er før vores tid. Jeg tror ikke,  
168 at markedet overhovedet er åbnet endnu. Det håber jeg i hvert fald ikke. Der er ikke særligt  
169 meget, hvis man kigger. Faktisk.  
170
- 171 **10. Er [bæredygtighed] kerneværdi[en]?**
- 172 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Ja. Som omdrejningspunkt. Men der er jo massere af ting. [...] Altså  
173 bambus er bare et rigtig godt materiale at arbejde med på grund af rigtig mange ting. Det  
174 vokser sindssygt hurtigt og det er hårdt, slidstærkt, men bæredygtighed kan også være at lave  
175 nogle produkter i en god kvalitet så de holder i lang tid. Altså produktlevetiden. Det er for  
176 eksempel sådan noget, som diskvalificerer IKEA men egentlig også sådan noget som Hay.  
177 Det er noget rigtigt bras. Jeg har selv en sofa fra Hay, så jeg ved hvad jeg taler om. [...] Men  
178 vi vil jo gerne lave nogle produkter i en ordentlig kvalitet, så de holder, og som kan have flere  
179 funktioner i virkeligheden, fordi så du har lyst til at tage den med dig. Vi har lige lavet en stol,  
180 der hedder Nomade chair, fordi vi ser sådan folk, specielt unge mennesker, sådan nogle som  
181 jer, flytter rundt i deres studietid og deres første job og sådan noget. Hvis nu man investerer i  
182 en stol, som man rigtig godt kan lide, og som er en ordentlig kvalitet, så kan man jo faktisk  
183 tage med sig, i stedet for den der køb-og-smid-væk-kultur, som for eksempel IKEA har været  
184 med til at indføre. Så derfor vil vi rigtig gerne have at udgangspunktet skal være i orden, det  
185 skal være ordentlige materialer, men vi vil også gerne arbejde med andet end bambus på sigt.  
186 Men så skal det altid være god kvalitet, så det kan holde lang tid, og så skal det altid have så  
187 mange funktioner som muligt, så man kan flytte det rundt. [...] Vi har et børnebord for  
188 eksempel. Det er egentlig ikke et barnligt bord, det er bare et lille bord. Så man kan også godt  
189 bruge det som sengebord, eller man kan bruge det i sin entre, når børnene ikke skal bruge det  
190 mere. Vi har en slagbænk som man også kan bruge som et sofabord eller et sengebord. Det er  
191 egentlig bare en kasse med opbevaring i, i virkeligheden, ikke? [...] Hver gang vi har et  
192 møbel, så prøver vi at krydse af hvor mange rum i huset kan det her møbel egentlig være i.

193 Det er klart at en spisebordsstil, den kan bruges som et spisebord og måske også foran et  
194 skrivebord, men så er det også ved at være det. Men der er andre møbler, hvor man kan sige,  
195 hvis man kan flytte dem rundt i huset og indrette sig anderledes med de møbler, så er det  
196 egentlig en fed ting, for så kan man beholde det. Ellers håber vi bare, at folk vil sælge det  
197 videre på den blå avis eller et eller andet.

198

### 199 **11. Hvordan vil du definere bæredygtighed?**

200 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Der er ikke én definition på bæredygtighed. Men hvis du kigger på  
201 materialerne, for eksempel, så er bambus meget, meget slidstærkt, men det er egetræ jo også.  
202 Der er bare ikke nok egetræ. Altså hvis man kigger sådan helt groft på det. [...] Bambus er  
203 faktisk ikke træ, bambus er græs. Men det er jo et trælignende materiale, og har de samme  
204 egenskaber. Faktisk ret tæt på egetræ i virkeligheden. Så hvis du kigger på alternativet, så er  
205 der ikke rigtigt noget. For bambus er faktisk et af de eneste materialer, der kan holde trit med  
206 det forbrug, vi har. Hvis, sådan helt skåret ud i pap, hvis man er imod afskovning, så er  
207 bambus et rigtig, rigtig godt materiale til træ, fordi det er det eneste materiale, der vokser  
208 hurtigt nok til at holde trit med det forbrug, vi har. Men så er der andre ting. Det er jo for  
209 eksempel så råvarerne, så blandt andet det her bord som vi sidder ved nu, det er olieret. Det er  
210 ikke... Hvis du kigger på rigtig mange af de andre, så har de brugt noget affaldstræ og så  
211 maler de det. Det, der sker, når du maler noget, eller lakerer det, for den sags skyld, det er jo  
212 at det ser pissegodt ud, når du pakker det ud, og så går der nogle uger eller måneder, så  
213 begynder det at få nogle ridser. Og den eneste måde at man kan komme ud over det, det er at  
214 slibe det fuldstændigt ned og slibe det om. Men der er bare rigtig mange, der bare ender med  
215 at smide det ud. Hvis du kigger på noget, der er olieret, og det har fået en ridse et eller andet  
216 sted, jamen så tager du bare noget fint sandpapir lige dør, hvor den har fået ridsen, og så giver  
217 du det noget olie og så er det som nyt igen, ikke? Og det er jo også bæredygtighed at man  
218 tænker på hvordan bruger man materialerne. Det er med vilje, at vi oliere det her med  
219 lindolie, som er et rigtig godt olieprodukt, det er fordi, igen, så kan du forlænge levetiden af  
220 dit produkt. Vi kunne også sagtens have valgt at male dem her sorte, men så ville de igen bare  
221 blive ridsede og grimme, og så kan folk ikke... Så skal de til at have det med hen til en  
222 professionel maler eller et eller andet, og det for de ikke gjort. Så vi prøver sådan, og det  
223 ligger også på vores hjemmeside, hvordan vedligeholder man et bambusprodukt. Det er jo  
224 også bæredygtighed. [...] Emballage er også bæredygtighed. Det er sådan to-do på vores liste.

225 Det skal være flat-pack, alt det vi laver. Det er sådan rent transportmæssigt. Men også  
226 hvordan emballerer du det. Jeg kunne rigtig godt tænke mig, at have sådan at vi kun brugte  
227 genbrugspap. [...] Så skal man måske fore det indvendigt med nogle hjørner, at det var lavet  
228 af nogle materialer, som var bedre end det, vi gør i øjeblikket, hvor vi bruger sådan nogle  
229 skumhjørner, for det er egentlig ikke supergodt. Men altså vi kan ikke redde hele verden på én  
230 gang. Men det er også noget af det, vi kigger på. Der findes [...] eller et eller andet  
231 svampemateriale, har jeg læst om, hvor man kan få sådan nogle hjørner –sådan noget, der  
232 vokser ud selv, eller et eller andet. Men det er også sådan noget, man kunne kigge på. [...]  
233 Det skulle ikke være sådan et hult brand. Det skulle være noget, vi egentlig gerne vil leve op  
234 til hele vejen rundt. Og vi gør det så godt vi kan, synes jeg. Vi gør det bedre end de fleste.  
235 Men der er stadig masser at komme efter.

236

237

238 **11.1 Hvad med det mere sociale aspekt i forhold til [...] de plantager hvor bambussen**  
239 **bliver indsamlet? Med arbejdsforhold og lønninger osv.?**

240 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Altså det er jo sindssygt svært, fordi det er i Kina, og vi kan ikke stå  
241 der hele tiden. Så det, vi har gjort, det er, at vi er gået via FSC Danmark. [...] Dem har vi  
242 snakket med en del. Og så har vi udvalgt; vi bruger kun én bambusleverandør, og den  
243 bambusleverandør er FSC-certificeret. Det kan I gå ind på FSC og se, de har sådan ti  
244 grundlæggende principper. Og det er selvfølgelig noget med, at man skal plante et træ når  
245 man fælder et træ. Men det er sådan lidt overflødigt, når det er bambus, fordi bambus er græs,  
246 så hvis vi høster bambus, så skyder det op af samme rodsystem. Det er noget af det, der er  
247 smart ved det. Men FSC er egentlig meget mere end det. Det betyder også, at du ikke må  
248 bruge kemikalier, og det betyder også, at du skal sørge for at, jeg kan ikke huske hvordan de  
249 beskriver det, men det kan I selv gå ind og se de der principper, men at lokalsamfundet skal  
250 bevares og have noget ud af den produktion, du laver. Så helt specifikt, vores bambus  
251 kommer fra én producent, som er FSC-certificeret. Vi ved, at de handler ind hos nogle lokale  
252 bambusplantageejere, og så får de det ind til deres centrale produktion, og så laver de  
253 pladematerialet, og vi ved præcis hvad for en limtype de bruger til det også, så det ikke er  
254 skadeligt. Vi har fået testet vores møbler, faktisk, på teknologisk institut lige her ovre, fordi så  
255 kan man måle afdampningen fra det. Så hvis det er et eller andet, der ikke skulle være der, så

256 opdager vi det. Og det er der ikke. Så alt det der, det er certificeret hele vejen igennem. Ikke  
257 via os –vi køber bare kun igennem certificerede bambusproducenter.

258

259 **12. Og så så vi også at produktionen den foregår både i Slovenien, Italien og Danmark.**

260 **Hvordan kan det være, at I ikke bare har udelukkende fokuseret på Danmark som  
261 produktionssted?**

262 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Det er for dyrt. Det er den eneste grund. Vi har prøvet. Vi vil rigtig  
263 gerne. Men det er for dyrt. Det er fordi, vi gerne vil sælge noget til en pris folk vil betale. Og  
264 der er ikke nogle af dem oppe på den der liste, der producerer i Danmark. [...]

265 Jeg tror slet ikke, vi kunne. Eller det ved jeg ikke. Så er det en helt anden historie i hvert fald.  
266 Det er slet ikke det, vi vil. Vi vil gerne sælge møbler, som folk har råd til. Danmark ville være  
267 rigtig fedt, men bare det, at det er i EU, er egentlig fedt, synes jeg. [...] Hvis vi kan skabe  
268 arbejdspladser i Slovenien, og i Italien og i Danmark så er det fint. Og den fabrik, vi bruger  
269 mest, den ligger i Slovenien, og de er skide dygtige. De har haft møbelproduktion i halvtreds  
270 år. De har ikke den samme tradition som i Danmark, men en anden tradition, og de er rigtig  
271 dygtige. De leverer høj kvalitet –lige så god som Dansk. De har lige så nye maskiner som i  
272 Danmark. Vi kan oven i købet sejle bambussen. Altså vi køber fulde containere af bambus, og  
273 så sejler vi den til Trieste i Italien, og det betyder faktisk at vores logistik er ret optimeret. For  
274 så skal man ikke sejle hele vejen rundt om Europa, og til Hamborg eller Rotterdam eller et  
275 eller andet sted. [...] Vi skipper hele vejen rundt om Europa, og dermed også en to-tre, to uger  
276 tror jeg, sejlads. Og sejler det ind til Trieste. Så kører vi det kun 100 km på lastbil. Fra Trieste  
277 og så til fabrikken. Og så producerer vi møblerne efter behov. Og så bliver det kørt i lastbil til  
278 Danmark. Så det er sådan ret optimeret supply chain, vi har. Hvorimod hvis man skulle  
279 transportere alt bambussen til Danmark, før vi begyndte at forarbejde det, så er jeg ikke  
280 engang sikker på at det sådan, rent Co2-mæssigt ville være bedre. Men det er da klart, at det  
281 kunne være mega fedt at producere mere i Danmark. Der er den kæmpe fordel, at danskere  
282 holder ofte hvad de lover. Jo længere syd på man kommer, jo mere, ikke at de er svindlere  
283 alle sammen, men det bliver en lille smule mere usikkert. Vi vil gerne leve til tiden og  
284 sådan. Så det arbejder vi på. Men det er desværre ikke alle møbler, det kan lade sig gøre med.

285

286 **12.1 Men det lyder da til [...] at der er tænkt rigtig meget over hele supply chain og  
287 logistik, og produktionen i udlandet er en meget gennemtænkt strategi?**

288 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Ja. Det har vi brugt meget tid på. [...] Der er rigtig mange, der flytter  
289 til Slovenien, må man bare sige. Altså også de helt store. Fredericia Møbler, ved jeg, får lavet  
290 noget. Jeg ved, Hay får lavet rigtig meget, Muuto får lavet rigtig meget. Fordi vi kan se, at  
291 nogle af deres møbler står på samme fabrik som vores. [...] Vi kan heller ikke gå imod alle  
292 strømme, vil jeg sige. Og den der med arbejdslønnen - [...] - der er rigtig meget håndarbejde i  
293 at lave et godt møbel, ikke? Det er ikke bare, altså alle kanter skal brækkes i hånden, og det  
294 hele skal olieres i hånden og så videre. Så hvis en dansk timeløn er det dobbelte eller  
295 tredobbelte, så betyder det bare noget i forhold til den endelige pris. Det må være nogle  
296 politikere, der løser det.

297

### 298 **13. Promoverer I denne bæredygtighed på sociale medier?**

299 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Det gør vi på mange måder. Altså det er jo hele grund-substensen i  
300 vores brand, så alle der følger os, de ved hvad vi står for. Men vi laver specifikke opslag og  
301 videoer omkring bæredygtighed, og linker også ofte, hvis der for eksempel er et Cup. Cup et-  
302 eller-andet-møde. [Vi] linker til artikler til dem, der følger os, der handler om bambus. I det  
303 hele taget så prøver vi så vidt som muligt at referere til, hvad andre har undersøgt, eller  
304 forsket i, i stedet for bare at skrive et eller andet smart om at bambus kan dit og dat. Så prøver  
305 vi at skrive, at den og den forsker har sagt sådan og sådan. Og ”vidst du at bambus kan også  
306 bruges sådan og sådan”. Så vi prøver sådan at oplyse lidt engang imellem. Og det kan vi godt  
307 se, at det er der ret stor respons på. Nogle gange så bliver det for meget, og så skal man også  
308 bare vise nogle billeder af nogle fede produkter, ikke? Så sådan er det også. Vi prøver sådan  
309 så vidt muligt at komme med sådan nogle historier hele tiden. Og så selvfølgelig på vores eget  
310 site. Og så kan man gå ud og se alle de forhandlere, vi har. De har også tit en beskrivelse af  
311 hvad We Do Wood er, og den er vi jo oftest kommet med til dem. Der står også noget om  
312 hvem vi er, og omkring bæredygtighed og bambus. [...]

313

### 314 **14. De sociale medier, det er så meget sådan værdi-opslag og at skabe en fælles interesse 315 med jeres følgere, fremfor bare at lave produktopslag og salgsorienterede opslag?**

316 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Ja. [...] Så prøver vi også engang i mellem at give dem noget, hvis  
317 nu... Nu er vi i gang med nogle nye produkter i øjeblikket, så kan det være, vi slår nogle  
318 billeder op undervejs [...] med én eller anden prototype, så det handler også om at folk, der  
319 interesserer sig for hvad vi går og laver, de får lidt mere end [...] de kan få ved at se vores

320 produkter hos én eller anden. [...] Så designaspektet er også vigtigt. Så det tror jeg også, der  
321 ligger noget på Facebook, hvor man kan se nogle billeder af en hylde, vi sådan er rimelig  
322 langt med. [...] Det har vi egentlig gjort sådan løbende, når vi udvikler nye ting. At så sender  
323 vi engang imellem et billede ud. Først, når vi er så sikre på, at det kommer hurtigt på  
324 markedet, at vores konkurrenter ikke kan nå at kopiere det. [...]

325

### 326 **15. Har du en fornemmelse af, om kunder vægter den bæredygtige del?**

327 Det er en blanding. Altså det er sgu en blanding. [...] Nogle af dem, der følger os, de går op i  
328 bæredygtighed. [...] Vi har også børnemøbler, ikke. Rigtig mange de synes bare, det er nogle  
329 fede børnemøbler, og så følger de os. Det kan man se specielt på Instagram, hvis man går ind  
330 og lige slår op #wedowood. Der er alle mulige, der hele tiden knalder billeder op med We Do  
331 Wood. 8 ud af 10 det er børnemøbler. [...] Unge mødre, eller mødre i det hele tager bruger  
332 bare det medie rigtig meget, mens de går rundt med deres små unger. Og det er jo også fint.  
333 Det er bare ikke vores historie. Men det er også fint, at der kører et eller andet liv derude,  
334 hvor at folk de selv tager billeder af deres børneværelser, og der står nogle We Do Wood-  
335 møbler der. Det er da bare fedt. Men det har vi ikke rigtigt noget med at gøre. Men det er jo  
336 også sociale medier, at det så får sit eget liv på en måde. Det kan man ikke kontrollere. Så  
337 længe det ikke er en shit storm, så er det jo fint med lidt omtale.

### 338 **16. Det næste [spørgermål] er, om I ser det som en konkurrencemæssig fordel, men det 339 gør I vel? [...] At I har bæredygtighed inkorporeret så meget i jeres strategi.**

340 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Ja, altså, det er da det, der differentierer os, ikke? Men som jeg  
341 sagde, så tror jeg, vi er lidt forud, for det har været en hård vej, og vi er ikke nogen stor  
342 virksomhed overhovedet. Vi er stadig en lille start-up. Jeg tror ikke at det er den nemmeste  
343 måde at skabe en virksomhed på, men vi gør det også fordi vi synes, det er sjovt. [...] Det skal  
344 være en god forretning, men det skal også være sjovt. Jeg tror, man kan lave hurtigere penge  
345 på andre måder end at lave bæredygtige designmøbler. [...] Det eneste vi printer, faktisk, og  
346 det er kun når vi tager på messe, det er bare sådan en folder, der viser vores portefølje. Det  
347 kan I også se det allerførste, vi skriver, [...] det handler om at vi synes, bæredygtighed og  
348 design, vi kalder det bare etik og æstetik, det skal gå sammen. Men det er bare sådan en  
349 lillebitte folder, og that's it. Hvorimod vi kan se, at alle andre de printer store, fede kataloger.  
350 Det er egentlig ikke det, vi gider. Men man er jo nødt til, når man er på messer, at så give folk  
351 et eller andet med hjem. Men i virkeligheden så vil vi rigtig gerne have folk online. Vi vil

352 gerne have dem ind på vores hjemmeside, og vi vil rigtig gerne have dem ind på vores sociale  
353 medier og så videre. Så det er alt, vi gør, og det er også igen for at holde det så langt nede,  
354 som vi overhovedet kan. Men vi var på en messe uden noget som helst, for at være sådan helt  
355 firkantede, og [...] hvis du er på messe så går folk rundt med sådan en pose, og så smider de  
356 ting ned i den der pose, [...] når de kommer hjem, så er det måske dér de sådan absorberer det  
357 hele. Så er man glemt igen [hvis ikke man har noget med, ref.]. Så derfor så gør vi det der.  
358 Men jeg kan egentlig også godt se, at når man står derude, der er også rigtig mange, de går  
359 bare med deres iPhone og så tager de billeder af et eller andet, hvor der står We Do Wood på,  
360 og så går de igennem det, når de kommer hjem. Jeg tror også, der er sådan en bølge. Folk de  
361 gider ikke hjem med tonsvis af papir, når de har været på designmesse. [...] Så det er også en  
362 del af vores brand, at vi minimerer det der fuldstændigt næsten. Og så har vi sådan nogle små  
363 bambuskort. Dem har jeg ikke lige her. [...] Dem giver vi også som sådan en produktprøve  
364 med vores brand på.

365

366 [Der påpeges at de lader til at have en meget veletableret start-up virksomhed]

367 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Jamen vi har også være nogle forløb igennem, vil jeg sige, [...] altså  
368 blandt andet det der med vores supply chain. Vi har lige afsluttet et forløb, der hedder Nye  
369 Grønne Forretningsmodeller, som er støttet af Erhvervsstyrelsen, hvor at vi fuldstændig har  
370 fået hele forsyningsskæden på plads med certificering og hele svineriet. Det har vi fået noget  
371 støtte til, fordi det er svært at gennemføre selv, ikke? Med at tage ud og finde den helt rigtige  
372 underleverandør og få hele den der rute med skibsfragt ind. [...] Men brandet har altid været  
373 klart. Det er udgangspunktet for det hele.

374

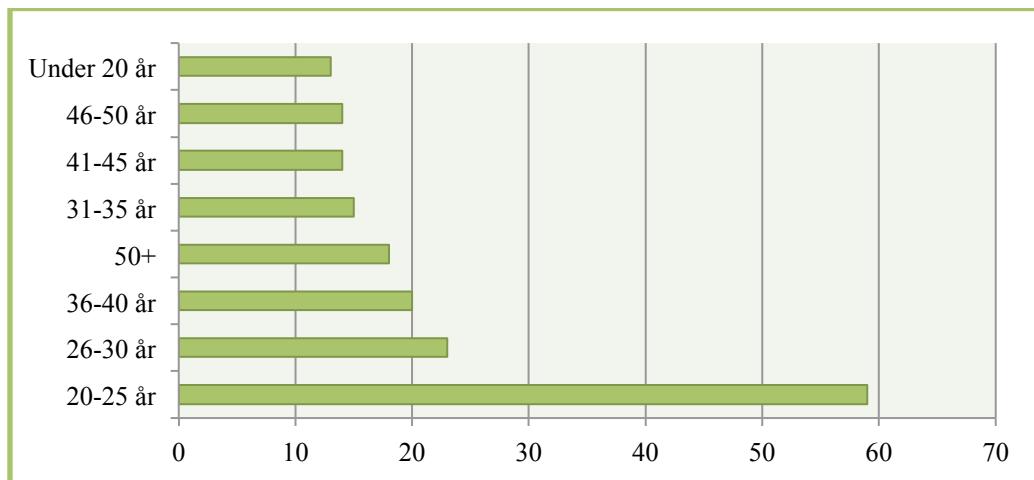
### 375 17. Hvornår startede I? Var det 2008?

376 **Anders Holme Jensen:** Nej, der startede en virksomhed i 2005, tror jeg, som hed We Do  
377 Wood. Eller 06. Men det er ikke den her virksomhed. Det var en virksomhed oppe i Holbæk,  
378 som lavede køkkener og interiør. High, high, high end. Altså vi taler køkkener til 500.000  
379 kroner, og Sebastian Jørgensen, som er designer i We Do Wood, han er designer i den  
380 virksomhed. [...] Sådan fra '06/07 stykker og så frem til '08, '09, '10, der gik han og  
381 designede nogle møbler, fordi han egentlig er møbelsnedker. Han startede med den, der hed  
382 Lily's chair. Lily er hans datter. Så han designede den, da hun var lille. Og så kom der et bord  
383 til, der hed Geo's table. Så havde han ligesom en børneserie. Så kom der et par andre møbler

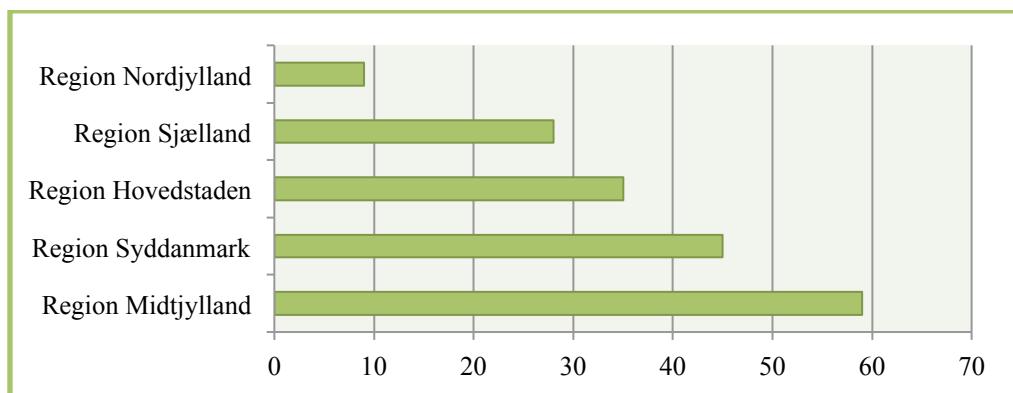
384 til. Så i 2011, sommeren 2011, der etablerede man så We Do Wood, som er det her selskab.  
385 Altså en møbelvirksomhed, og det andet er så sidenhen gået konkurs, og det har vi ikke noget  
386 med at gøre. Og Sebastian gik så over til det her selskab. Jeg tror, da krisen kom var der ikke  
387 så mange, der skulle have køkkener til 500.000, men det er en anden historie. Så derfor har vi  
388 faktisk været i gang siden 2011 [...] og så siden sommeren 2012 cirka begyndte man at have  
389 møbler på lager. Så vi har været i gang sådan en tre-fire år, sådan aktivt. De første par år  
390 sloges [vi] lidt med at finde den rigtige model, og så på det sidste år har det kørt sådan rimelig  
391 okay. Så vi er rimelig unge.

**Questions and answers from the consumer questionnaire survey****Q1. Hvad er din alder?**

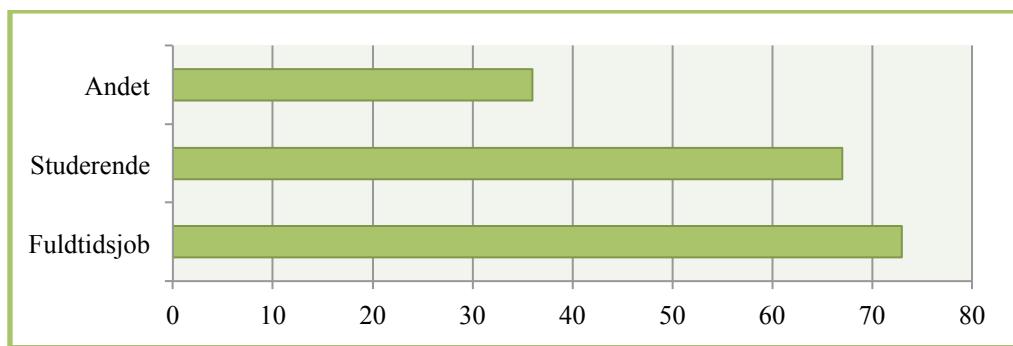
176 ud af 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.

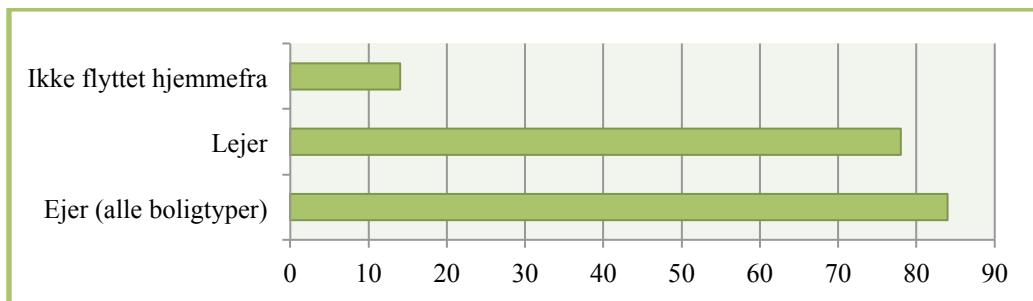
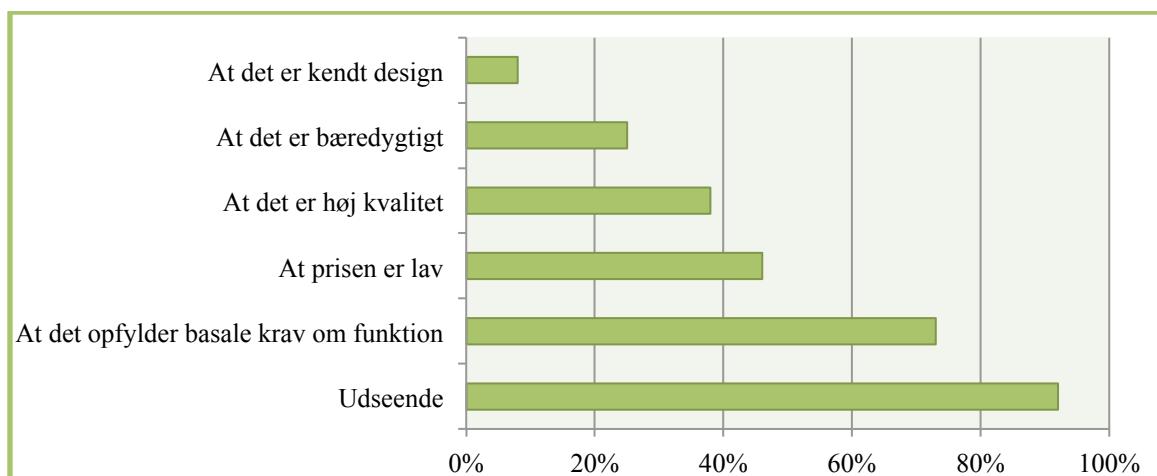
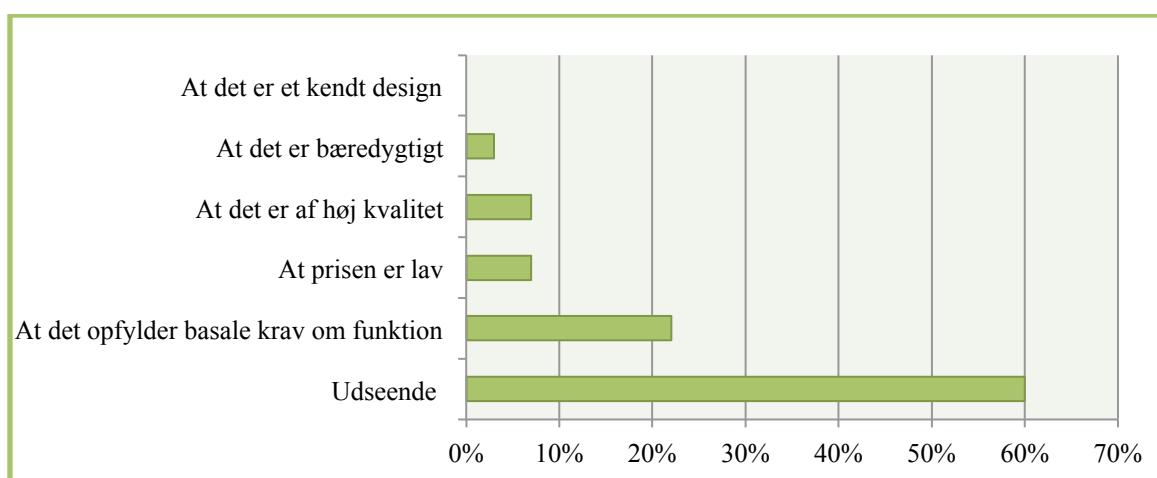
**Q2. Hvor bor du?**

176 ud af 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.

**Q3. Hvad er din hovedbeskæftigelse?**

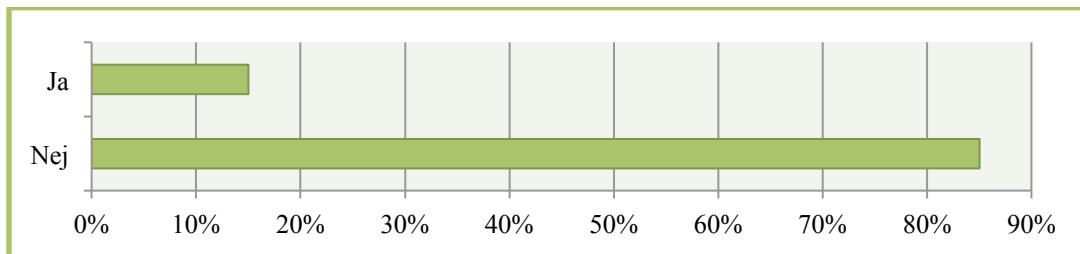
176 ud af 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.



**Q4. Hvad er din nuværende boligsituation?***176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.***Q5. Hvor mange af nedenstående værdier lægger du vægt på, når du køber et møbel?***176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål. Flere svarmuligheder.***Q6. Hvilken værdi lægger du mest vægt på, hvis du skal vælge én?***176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*

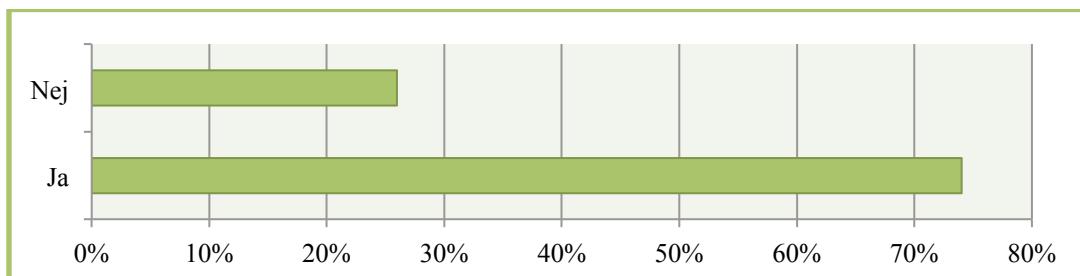
**Q7. Er det vigtigt for dig, at denne værdi er kendt for andre?**

*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*



**Q8. Har du nogensinde delt et billede af dit hjem eller et købt møbel på enten Facebook eller Instagram, eller kunne du finde på at gøre det?**

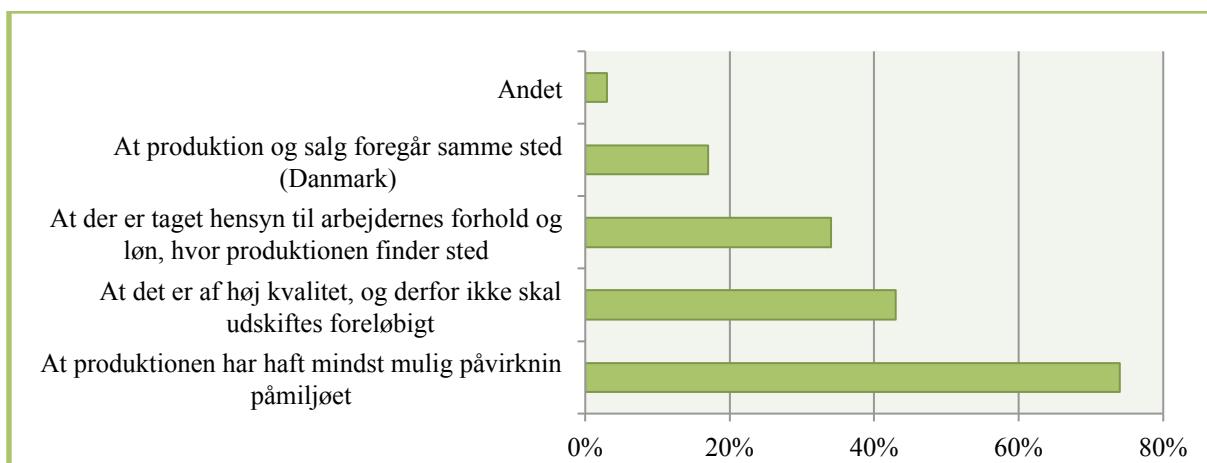
*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*



**Følgende spørgsmål handler om dine værdier og bæredygtighed**

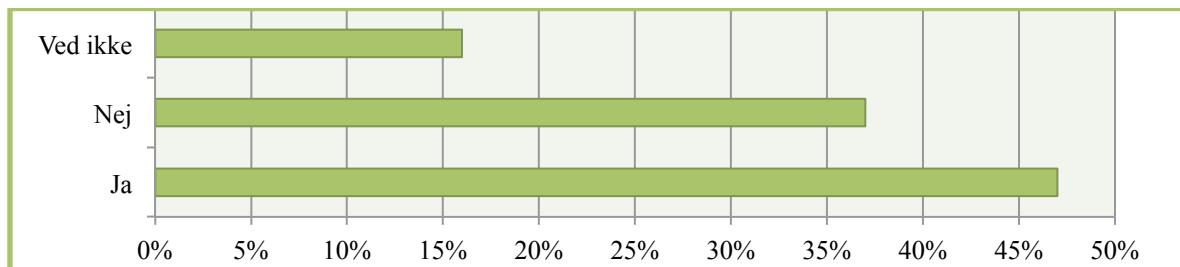
**Q9. Hvordan vil du definere et bæredygtigt møbel?**

*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål. Flere svarmuligheder.*



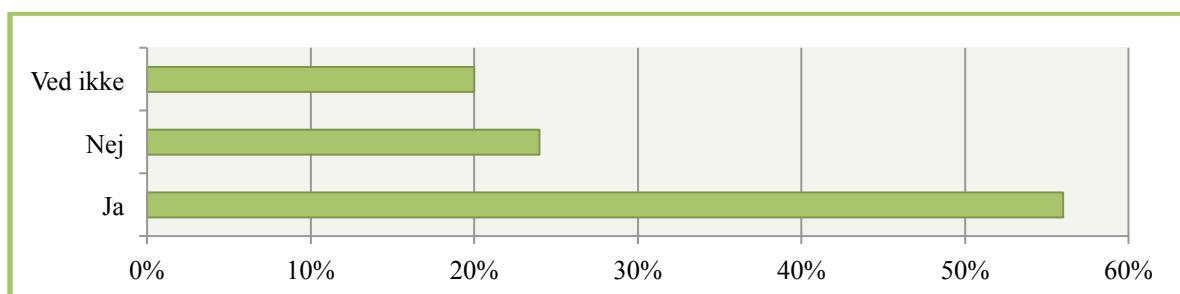
**Q10. Er du villig til at gå på kompromis med andre værdier, hvis møblet lever op til din definition af bæredygtighed?**

*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*



**Q11. Er du villig til at betale en højere købspris for et møbel, der lever op til din definition af bæredygtighed?**

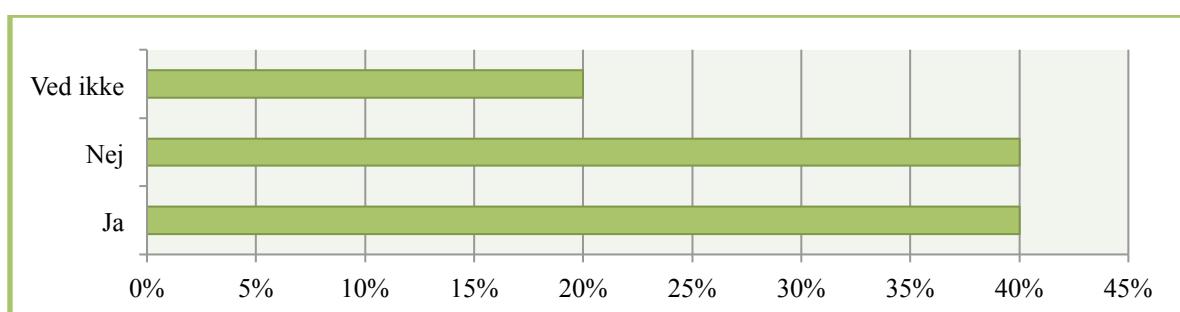
*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*



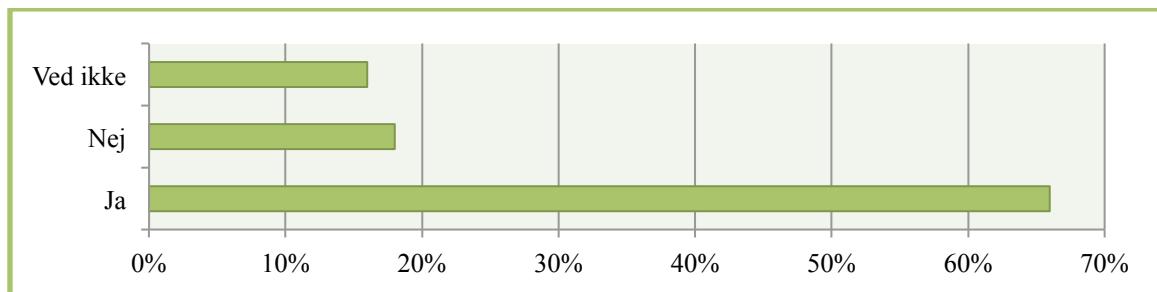
**Q12. Ser du en positiv sammenhæng mellem følgende:**

*176 ud 176 personer svarede på følgende spørgsmål.*

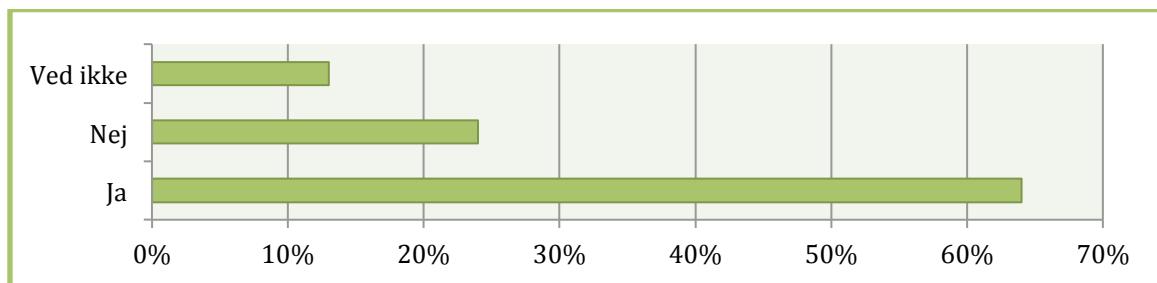
**Q12. A. Lav pris og bæredygtighed?**



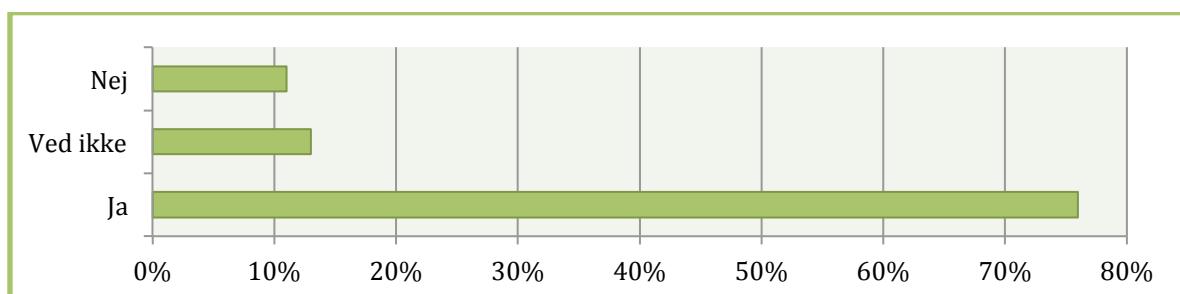
**Q12. B. Funktionalitet og bæredygtighed?**



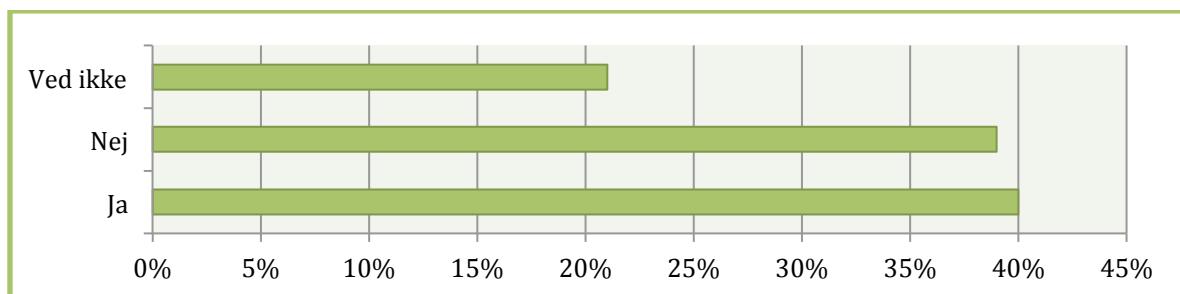
**Q12. C. Udseende og bæredygtighed?**



**Q12. D. Høj kvalitet og bæredygtighed?**



**Q12. E. Kendt design og bæredygtighed?**



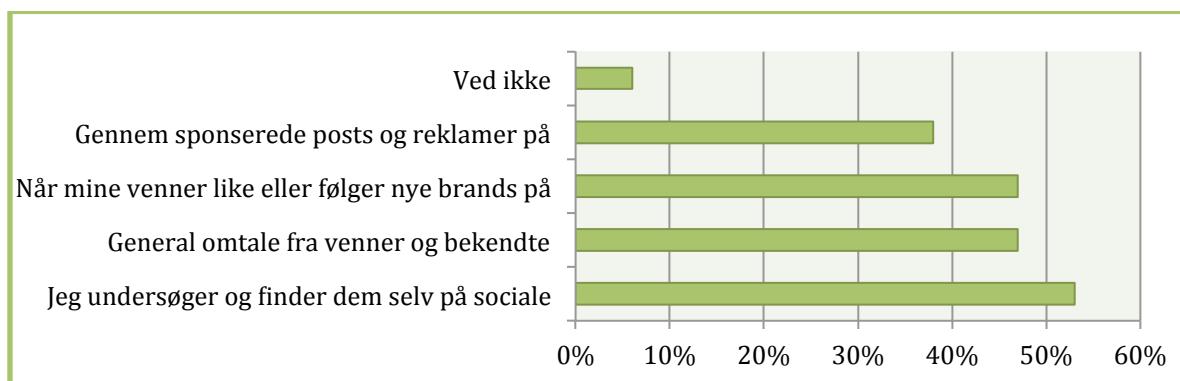
I nedenstående spørgsmål vil du blive spurgt ind til brands.

Brands kan i denne forbindelse betegnes som værende det "varemærke" et produkt sælges under.

Dette kunne for eksempel være Hay, IKEA eller Kähler. Der er dog ikke specifikt fokus på nogle af disse.

**Q13. Hvordan bliver du opmærksom på nye brands?**

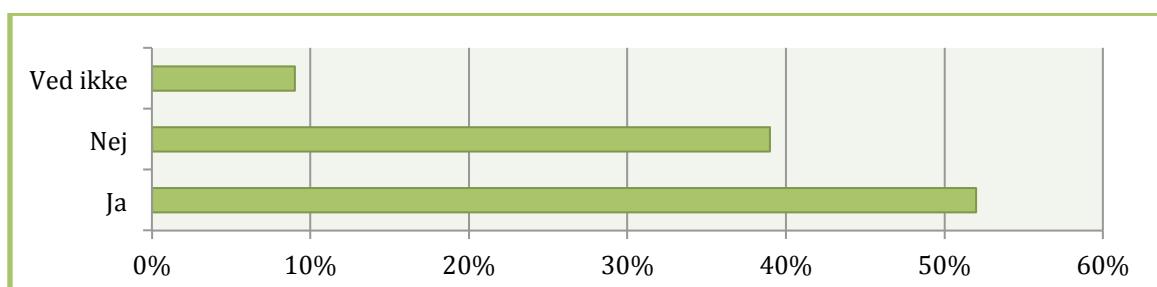
176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål. Flere svarmuligheder.



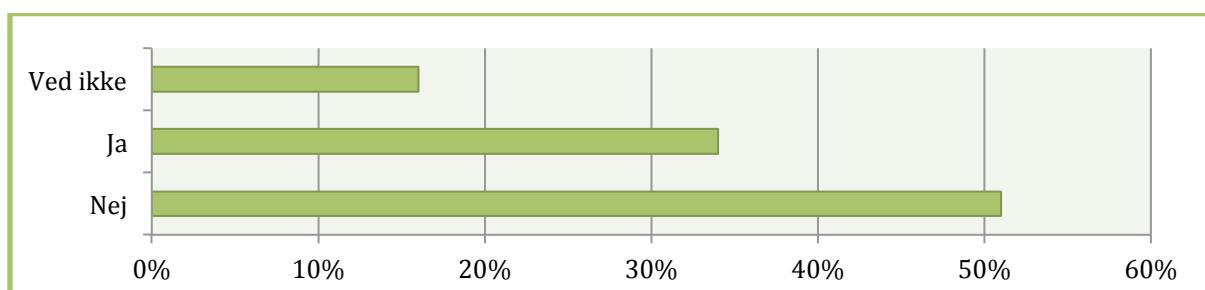
**Q14. Bliver din opfattelse af brands på de sociale medier mere positiv når:**

176 ud 176 personer svarede på følgende spørgsmål.

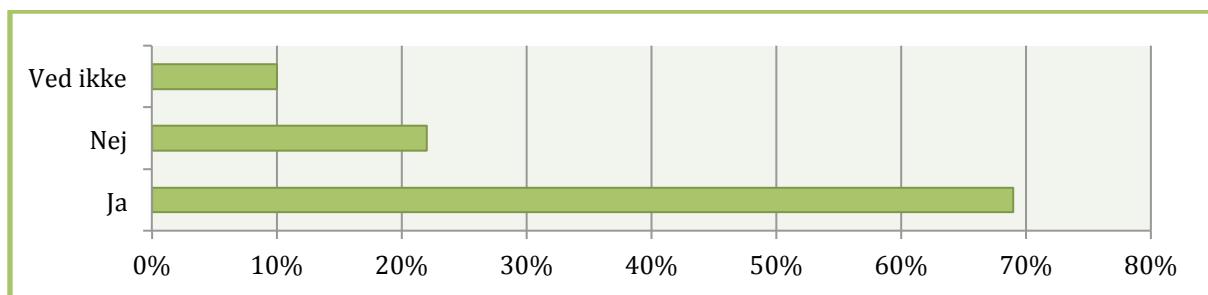
**Q14. A. Du ser opslag om brandet fra venner og folk, du følger?**



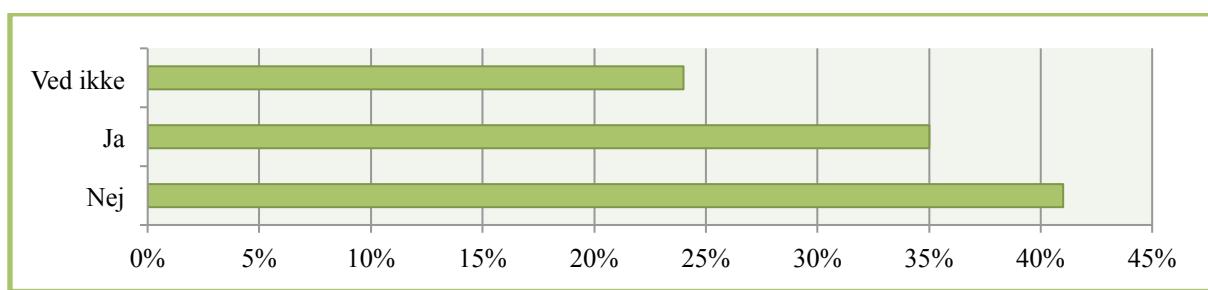
**Q14. B. Du ser salgsorienteret produktopslag fra brandet?**



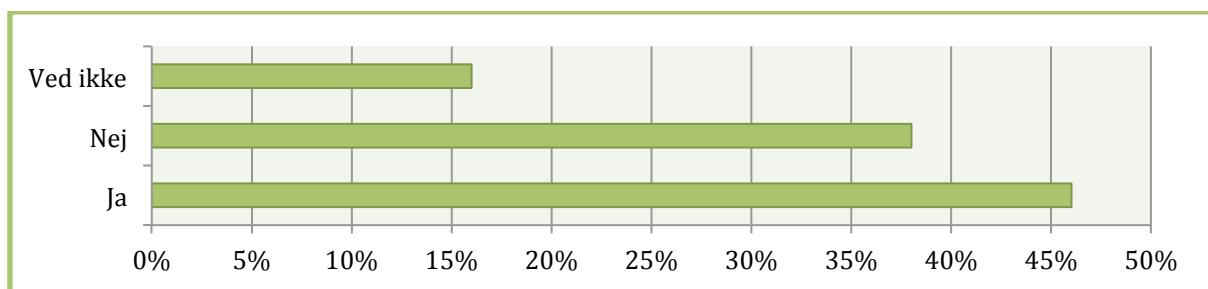
**Q14. C. Du får indblik i produktion og materiale via billedmateriale og links?**



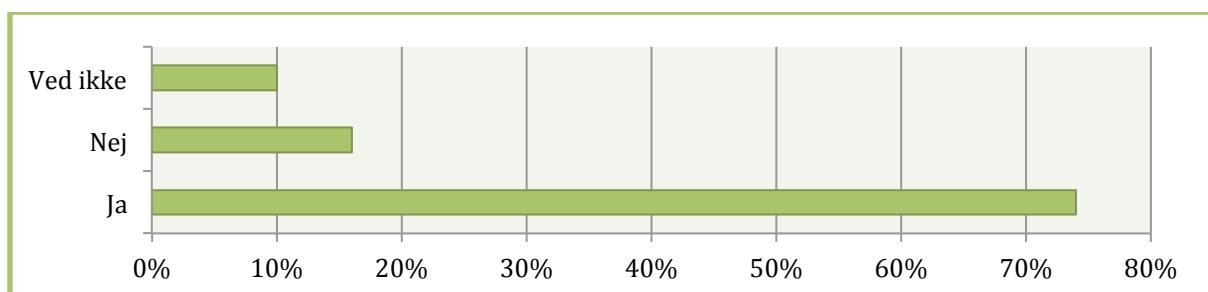
**Q14. D. Virksomheder re-poster opslag fra gruppemedlemmer og følgere?**



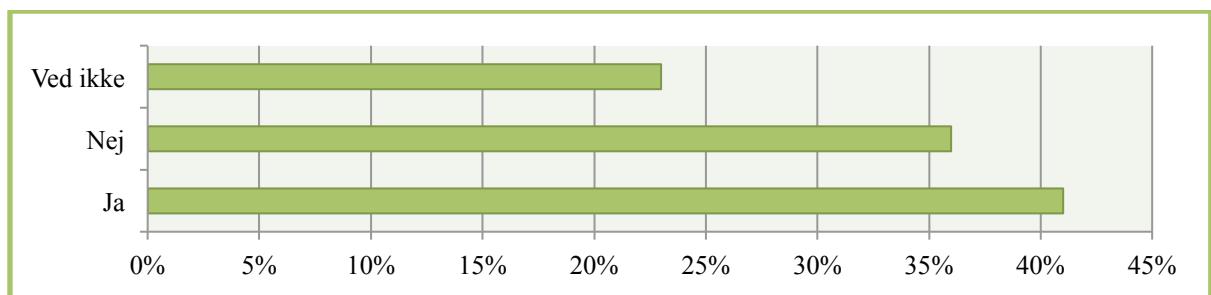
**Q14. E. Virksomheder linker til artikler og videoer, der rammer dit interesseområde?**



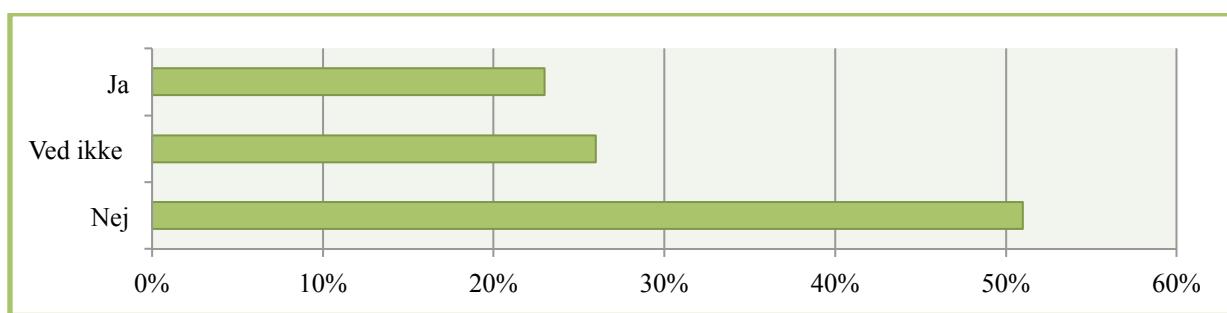
**Q14. F. Virksomheder synligt lægger vægt på de samme værdier som du selv?**



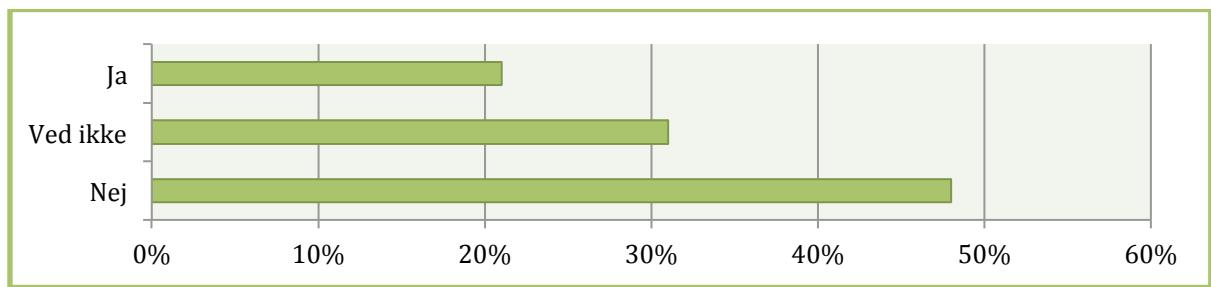
**Q14. G. Der generelt er meget aktivitet fra brandets side?**



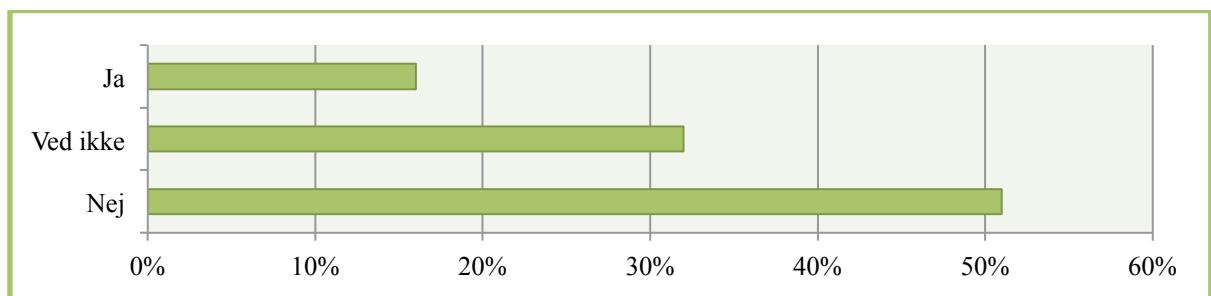
**Q14. H. Der kun er opslag fra brandet selv?**



**Q14. I. Der kun er opslag om selve brandet?**

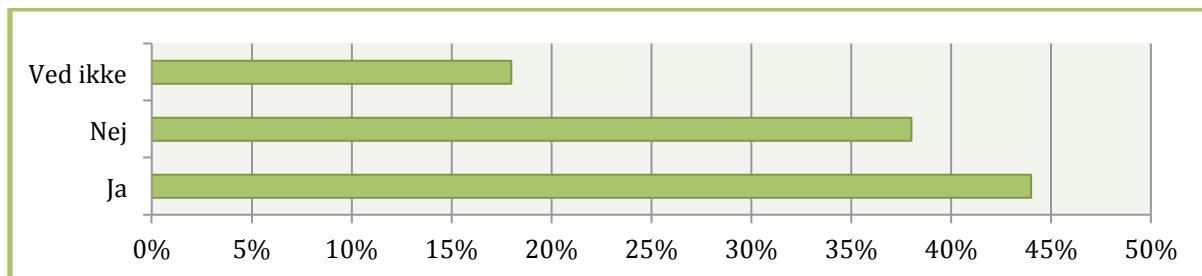


**Q14. J. Der er få opslag fra brandets side?**



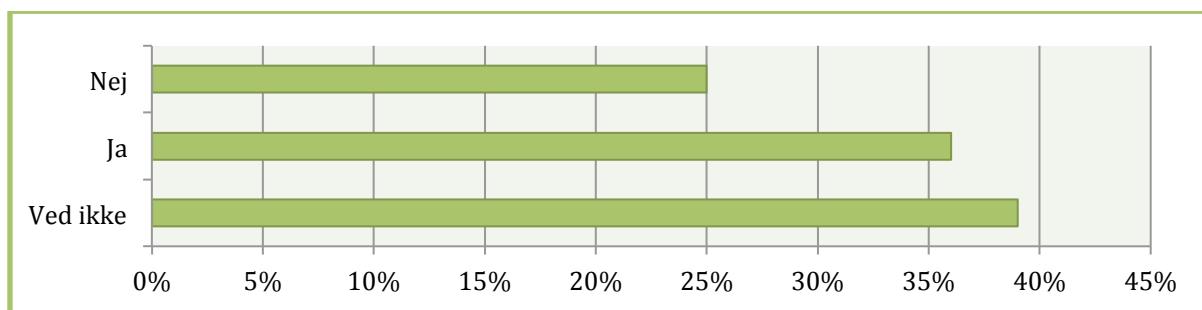
**Q15. Er du interesseret i brandets værdier, når du skal købe møbler?**

*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*



**Q16. Hvis ja til forrige spørgsmål, er du så interesseret i, at værdierne skal fremgå på Facebook og/eller Instagram?**

*176 ud 176 personer svarede på dette spørgsmål.*



## Byron Sharp's List of Laws

The law-like patterns (empirical generalizations) that are introduced in Sharp's book are:

- **Double jeopardy law:** Brands with less market share have far fewer buyers, and these buyers are slightly less loyal (in their buying attitudes).
- **Retention double jeopardy:** All brands lose some buyers; this loss is proportionate to their market share (i.e. big brands lose more customers; though these represent a smaller proportion of their total customer base).
- **Pareto law: 60/20:** Slightly more than half a brand's sales come from the top 20% of its customers. The remaining sales come from the bottom 80% of its customers (i.e. the Pareto law is not 80/20).
- **Law of buyer moderation:** In subsequent time periods heavy buyers buy less often than in the base period that was used to categorize them as heavy buyers. Also, light buyers buy more often and some non-buyers become buyers. This 'regression to the mean' phenomenon occurs even when there has been no real change in buyer behavior.
- **Natural monopoly law:** Brands with more market share attract a greater proportion of light category buyers.
- **User bases seldom vary:** Rival brands sell to very similar customer bases.
- **Attitudes and brand beliefs reflect behavioral loyalty:** Consumers know and say more about brands they use, and think and say little about brands they do not use. Therefore, larger brands always score higher on surveys that assess attitudes to brands because they have more users (who are also slightly more loyal).
- **Usage drives attitude (or I love my Mum and you love yours):** Buyers of different brands express very similar attitudes and perceptions about their respective brands.
- **Law of prototypicality:** Image attributes that describe the product category score higher (i.e. are more commonly associated with a brand) than less prototypical attributes.
- **Duplication of purchase law:** A brand's customer base overlaps with rival brands in line with its market share (i.e. in a time period a brand will share more of its customers with large brands and fewer small brands). If 30% of a brand's buyers also bought brand A in a time period, then 30% of every rival brand's customers also bought brand A.
- **NBD-Dirichlet:** A mathematical model of how buyers vary in their purchase propensities (i.e. how often they buy the category and which brands they buy). It correctly describes and

explains many of the above laws. The Dirichlet is one of marketing's few true scientific theories. For more information on this mathematical model visit the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute's website: [www.Marketingscience.info](http://www.Marketingscience.info)

Sharp, Byron (2010). How brands grow: What marketers don't know. Victoria 3205, Australia. Oxford University Press.