SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NEW EMERGING TOOL OF MARKETING: EFFECT OF E-REPUTATION IN ALGERIAN MARKET

Meriem Nouala
University of Sidi Bel Abbes
Algeria
meriem_nouala@hotmail.com

Nassera Dani El kebir
University of Sidi Bel Abbes
Algeria
kdaninacera@yahoo.fr

Imene Kerroucha Maitre
University of Mascara
Algeria
kerrouchaimen@yahoo.fr

ABSTRACT

During the fast growth of social media, the ways companies usually use in their marketing are changed; social networks became a great approach for companies to improve their communication with customers. The wide usage of social networking sites and tools by individuals makes companies want to think carefully on how they can benefit from such usage in rebuilding their relationship with customers and increasing their engagement level. Such companies found that social media marketing is the solution through which companies and their customers will become much closer. This paper covers four main sections where traditional marketing and electronic marketing concepts are reviewed in the first section. Then a detailed exploration of social networks and their distinct features is presented in the second section. A discussion of social network marketing tools and its related technologies is explored in the third section. Finally, we conduct a case study showing the effect of the online reputation in Algeria through the social media.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Social Network Marketing, On-line Reputation, E-Reputation, Algerian Market

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social media has become not only a platform that is easily accessible to anyone with Internet connection, but also the favorite communication channel for a large number of people. Such shift changes the relationship between companies and their customers which leads to a tremendous impact on the ways companies conduct marketing. Companies, using social networks, can build closer and more profitable relationship with customers along with better understanding of their needs (Nezamabad, 2011). Social network marketing is very advantageous for companies; it can be represented as a great tool for finding talent, building brand awareness, finding new customers, and conducting market research (Bolotaeva & Cata, 2011, O'Brien, 2011).

There are wide ranges of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace and many others. Each site has its own distinct features but all of them share some common features. They are global, free with zero cost and easily used (Suneetha

& Kumar, 2012). Facebook for example is one of the fast growing social network sites; according to Das and Sahoo (2011), it has the first rank in the list of the ten most popular social networking sites in the world with M550 estimated unique monthly visitors compared with Twitter which has M95.8 and LinkedIn which has M50. Facebook is launched in 2004 with easily used interface and wide range of features that helpful for both individuals and companies (Khasawneh & AbuShanab, 2013); these features enable companies to create: profile page allows them to prove their existence on the Internet, group to make discussions: this feature is limited because it will be useful only for people whom joining it, and fan page where large number of people sharing the same interests (Khasawneh & AbuShanab, 2013, Farooq & Jan, 2012).

Conducting marketing over the Internet and other electronic media has several advantages; Internet is fast, cheap, flexible, and comfortable with no time restriction. It enables two-way relationship through easily used interface that helps customers to do purchase wherever and whenever they want. Internet also is considered as a friendly environment or platform of ordering, paying, and delivering products and services which guarantees that customers will be satisfied and loyal to their brands (Yazdanifard, et. al., 2011).

This paper will shed the light on the important role that social networks play in electronic marketing area by focusing on the ways through which companies can benefit from the services provided by social networks to gain real time engagement with customers, to adopt new and creative way of interaction, and to get more insights on customers' perceptions and opinions on their products and services.

This work focuses mainly on studying the effect of the on-line reputation (E- reputation) in the Algerian market by using the descriptive analysis approach and applying Sphynx tool.

TRADITIONAL AND ELECTRONIC MARKETING: DEFINITION AND GENERAL CONCEPTS

Traditional marketing is one of the most recognizable marketing techniques that have several strategies; print, broadcast, telephone, and direct mail are the most traditional marketing strategies where print marketing is the oldest strategy that includes advertisements in magazines, newspaper, newsletters, and any other printed material. Broadcast marketing includes radio and television advertisements. Telephone marketing or telemarketing is based on delivering sales messages to the consumers over the phone. And finally direct mail which sends printed materials such as catalogs and postcards through postal mail to attract consumers.

More and more people nowadays are choosing to get their advertisements, promotions, and news online rather than through newspapers or magazines. So most businesses have added or fully replaced traditional marketing methods with new and innovative techniques mainly based on the Internet where companies can use social

Networks, create their own webpages and blogs and become much closer with people/consumers (Khattri & Sharma, 2013).

Electronic marketing can be defined as using electronic media, specifically the Internet, to conduct marketing activities that mainly focused on attracting new consumers, retaining current consumers, and developing brand identity (El-Gohary, 2010). Online marketing, Internet marketing, and eMarketing are often considered synonymous for electronic marketing. Dehkordi and his partners mentioned in their research (2012) that Internet marketing is limited to Internet things only such as electronic mail and world wide web while electronic marketing includes Internet marketing tools in addition to mobile phone, intranet, extranet, and many other tools.

Compared with traditional marketing, electronic marketing helps in increasing marketing efficiency and effectiveness, omitting unnecessary transaction cost, adding more values to customers, making customers free from time and place constraints, increasing services quality, adding extra value to products, providing a platform for businesses to understand their customers' needs better, and last but not least creating strong relationship between companies and their customers (dehkordi et. al., 2012). Following lines describe four main tools of electronic marketing:

1) Mobile marketing: it is a huge marketing tool that creates significant opportunities for firms and marketers to communicate with their customers and increase their brands awareness. It helps marketers serve and reach customers anytime anywhere easily.
2) E-mail marketing: is an attractive tool of electronic marketing that helps companies reach huge number of customers with almost zero cost. Good email marketing message helps in rising sales communication and conversations with customers, reducing sales cost, notifying customers about their new products and services, receiving feedback from customers easily, and pushing customers to purchase (Salehi, et. al., 2012).
3) Web marketing: compared with other tools and platforms, Internet is a cheaper tool that has great capabilities in distributing information and promoting services and products and the global market. Banner ads and pop up ads are two examples of web marketing tools.
4) Social media marketing: it refers to promoting products and services over social media sites. It is explained in details in the third section of this paper.

Electronic marketing is a win-win situation for both customers and companies; it can effectively reach the target customers, it helps in conducting direct marketing campaign much faster and less expensive, its success is measurable (identifiable and repeatable), and finally it is cost effective tool in the long run. Electronic market is less appropriate for products that customer needs to touch, smell, or physically try. It is highly depends on technology, security, and privacy issues (Gangeshwer, 2013).

SOCIAL MEDIA: AN OVERVIEW

Social media is all about networking; it is about sharing and discussing information among people via Internet based tools and online platforms. It is where users can share their opinions, contents, and views using highly accessible publishing techniques. It consists of user-driven websites where they usually have a specific focus or feature; it transfers people from being passive content readers into active content publishers involved in decision making process. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are some of the popular social media sites (Neti, 2011).

There is no agreed upon definition of social media; it can be understood as a platform that has several online resources used by people to create and publish creative content and real time feedback. Compared with traditional media, social media enables online interaction, discussion, collaboration, and digital content creation and sharing. Following is a simple exploration of some of the most popular and high profile social media (Chan-Olmsted, Cho, & Lee, 2013):

- Social network sites: where people can create their personal pages and profiles and then start communicating with online friends and sharing whatever they want (Ex. text, videos, pictures, etc.).
- Blog: it is information sharing technology available online. It has the same function as online journal in terms of tone, topic/issue, and ease of subscription and inserting links. Usually it has a clear owner for maintenance purpose.
- Wiki: it is a collaborative website where users can create, modify, and disseminate web based content easily.
- Forums: it can be called online message boards. It developed with specific topics and interests where administrator is responsible for deleting inappropriate content and spam.

Social media can be classified into the following mentioned categories/outlets based on its applications and uses; sites for online publication of opinions and information (ex. blogs and wikis), content sharing sites (ex. YouTube), sites allowing real time discussions (ex. Facebook), tools for micro-blogging and publishing (ex. Twitter), tools for social networking (personal 'livecast' platform), virtual networking platforms, and networked games sites (Erragcha & Romdhane, 2014).

There are five general characteristics that all social media sites and applications share; participation: social media encourages all people/users to engage with each other. It is represented as enabler for action oriented interactivity. Conversationality: social media is two-way communication environment where the capacity and speed of conversations/dialogues are enhanced. Connectedness: social media helps interpersonal relationships to stay forever using available communication technologies. Community and commonality: social media is an effective mechanism for building communities consists of people differs in their nature and goals but they have something in common regards specific posts, video, or any online content

Shared. Openness: it is highly related to allowing feedback and is mainly based on three types of behavior which are requesting/giving information, receiving information, and acting on information received (Chan-Olmsted, Cho, & Lee, 2013). For businesses and companies, social media is considered as a low cost platform for reaching large number of customers and increasing their engagement level. It mainly helps in cost reduction by decreasing staff time and supports revenue generation by increasing the probability of reaching more prospected customers. It is a key enabler for knowledge and expertise sharing where customers can help customers directly; it can increase brand reach and awareness. It is a necessity that each company should have a social media strategic plan that has 3 C's: a **Companywide** strategy for engagement which implies **Conversation** with customers that **Causes** user loyalty (Neti, 2011).

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: DEFINITION AND TECHNOLOGIES

Social medial is a very good platform for marketers where new marketing initiatives can be effectively implemented; marketers can promote, share, and spread their products, services, and everything with large number of people easily and widely. Everyday more and more people starts using social media for several purposes in their daily life activities such as personal use, business to consumers and business to business interaction (Chaturvedi & Gupta, 2014). Social media facilitates the communication and interaction between consumers and companies. It provides marketers with several tools that change the nature of selling relationship to become more social; it enable them to better targeting their potential consumers, customizing their current consumers messages and opening interactive dialogue with them (Assad& Gomez , 2011; Miller & lammas, 2010).

Social media marketing is going around how to use online communities, social networks, blog marketing, and many other things in marketing. It is all about using online platforms to engage more with customers and keep the relationship between companies and customers much closer. It is a strategic and methodological process where companies can build their online communities of their potential customers, readers, and supporters which help in establishing companies' reputation and influence (Neti, 2011).

Chary in his research (2014) listed several important social media marketing tips that should be considered by all businesses; some of these tips are: businesses should make their post more relevant including helpful and useful solutions and information for customers, utilize available tools and features to get the maximum gain from it, try to visualize marketing posts by embedding pictures, graphics, and videos, try to connect with potential/current consumers not only for sales, and learn from social media analytics and try to utilize it to leverage the expected benefits.

Social media changes the way companies follow in managing their brands; it enables dynamic and real time interaction not only between consumers and companies but

also between consumers themselves. Consumers nowadays can easily share their brand experiences through social media; they are the brand stories generators (Gensler et al, 2013). Social media helps companies in managing their brand communities and influencing their consumers' behaviors by adopting the strategy of "co-creation"; there are several models developed to guide the process of co-creation with online consumers. DART model is an example; it consists of dialogue which highly focused on having meaningful conversation with consumers, access which implies the company's consumers access should be provided to each other, risk return relationship is explained as something tangible should be offered to online consumers, and transparency which relates to having/creating an environment for sharing valuable information (Miller & Lammas, 2010)

Social media promotion is all about knowing how technology makes people connection easier through social networks and any business can benefit and make profit from such technology; it is a great tool that helps businesses being aware more about every innovative technology released and used in the society (Chaturvedi & Gupta, 2014). Miller and lammas mentioned in their research (2010) that some studies show that 70% of consumers are visiting social websites seeking for information and some other research concluded that 90% of word of mouth (WOM) still occurred face to face or by phone. Such conclusions indicated that companies should not overstate the outcome of social media marketing and they should think very well on how to benefit from the knowledge-sharing nature of social networks in promoting their products and services.

Measuring the success of social media marketing highly depends on qualitative metrics more than quantitative metrics. These qualitative metrics include unique visitors, interaction rates, conversation size, conversation density, content freshness, author credibility, audience profiles and many others. While website traffic, hit rates, time spent online, and postings are considered as examples of quantitative metrics (Miller & Lammas, 2010). Successful social media marketing has several benefits for businesses; it helps in increasing traffic, decreasing overall marketing expenses, rising search engine ranking, and selling more products/services (Neti, 2011).

BRANDING AND REPUTATION

Lendrevie and Levy defined branding as: "A set of mental representations, subjective, stable, selective and simplistic in respect of a mark" (Lendrevie & Levy, 2013).

The nine goals of social media in branding are: the aims for brands in any social media strategy must, then, serve the organization both internally and externally. If the lines between ' them 'and ' us 'are indeed blurred, then the organization must, at the outset, (a) build a sense of membership or citizenship with the organization, (b) encourage the acceptance and communication of brand values, and (c) encourage the audience to engage in dialogue and promote the brand. Strategically, that dialogue can

(d) help the organization find and maintain a competitive advantage; (e) inform the vision behind the brand and build differentiation for it; and (f) act as a check on whether the brand is being properly communicated and understood by the audiences. The consequences are to (g) build positive brand associations, (h) build the perceived quality of the brand, and (i) build greater awareness of the brand to audiences that it has not yet reached (Jack, 2011).

REPUTATION

Reputation is «an intangible asset of a company and one of the essential components of the whole company." (Adamy,2014). It is the more appropriate external assessment of a brand than image (De Chernatony, 1999).

- The use of the term brand reputation is usually referenced to what is said about a brand by consumers and opinion leaders. Thus, reputation has two aspects: the perception of someone or something by a "public" (that is to say a community of people seen as an individual) (Adamy, 2013), and the result of the cognitive process leading to the formulation of an opinion. Further, the reputation can be seen; as a result, more than a cause. The result of actions by "someone or something" on the perception that individuals have of that person or thing. So, what is the way and how intensely the audience consider the signs and messages sent by someone or thing? This scale value idea is confirmed by the Latin etymology of the term reputation "reputation," meaning of "evaluation."

- Profit for the interpretation of signs perceived by the individual (thus becomes an opinion, that is to say the result of the "evaluation" done, consciously or not elsewhere).

The individual thus receives signs that interpreter. These signs are sent voluntarily or not (you cannot communicate). The receiver of these signs then creates an image of what the receiver perceived, and the assessment was made by its scale of values.

Indeed, the brand is a name (a commercial and legal perspective mainly), term, sign, symbol, or other item used to identify a product or service and differentiate it from other competitors. This term applies when organizations, which have a "brand". For example Renault, whose name is a brand, what is commonly called the "trademark" that allows to differentiate it from its competitors.

The brand becomes the receptacle of the projected reputation, that is to say, it helps differentiate and name the object to which we project a name, for which one has an opinion. More specifically, it is rare to hear that cars, in general, have a bad reputation, but rather that such a model or another producer (designated by a brand) was a good or bad reputation (Camille, 2009).

Generally, with the development of Internet, brand reputation depends more and more on its online reputation (E-reputation). This term is recent, synthesizes everything related to the reputation of the added "e" Internet (Adamy, 2013).

In summary, we can define the different concepts as follows:

- **Branding image**: the projected image.

- **Reputation**: the image perceived by the public.

THE STUDY OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this work is to study the key role between branding and social networks.

We achieve this objective by taking into consideration the following two assumptions:

- "The presence of a brand on social networks influences the purchase decision", and,

- "Branding varies by product category.**"**

These issues make our work quantitative based on the factorial analysis.

METHODOLOGY

First, the used survey questionnaires were administered via social networks and data collection was conducted through a questionnaire of 30 questions.

The sample was based on building social networks attendance statistics; this is the main reason we opted for convenience sampling method. And for this study, 241 people were kind enough to answer this questionnaire.

The data was processed by the software Sphinx (Ganassali, 2014) in two phases. The first phase was devoted to the *descriptive analysis* or *Frequency table* where the second phase is for the hypothesis testing by using the *factorial analysis* or *Cross tabulation* which means a percentage of calculation performed by crossing several variables.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The descriptive analysis provided by Sphinx showed the following.

- Sex proportion: 47% of respondents were women and 53% were men.

- The usability of the social network, frequency and favorite social network: From the results shows in Figure 1, 100% of respondents are users of social networks, 82% use a social network more than once a day. Unsurprisingly, Facebook is the most used social network (62%), and Youtube comes in a second position (12%). The usability of the social network has been given by Figure 1.
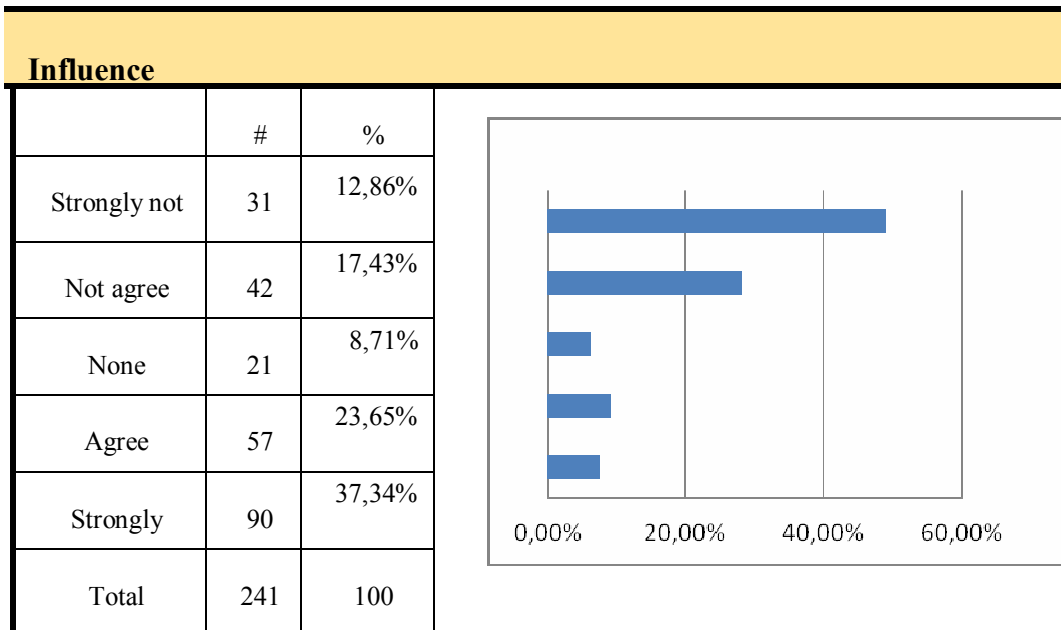
Figure 1: The usability of social network.

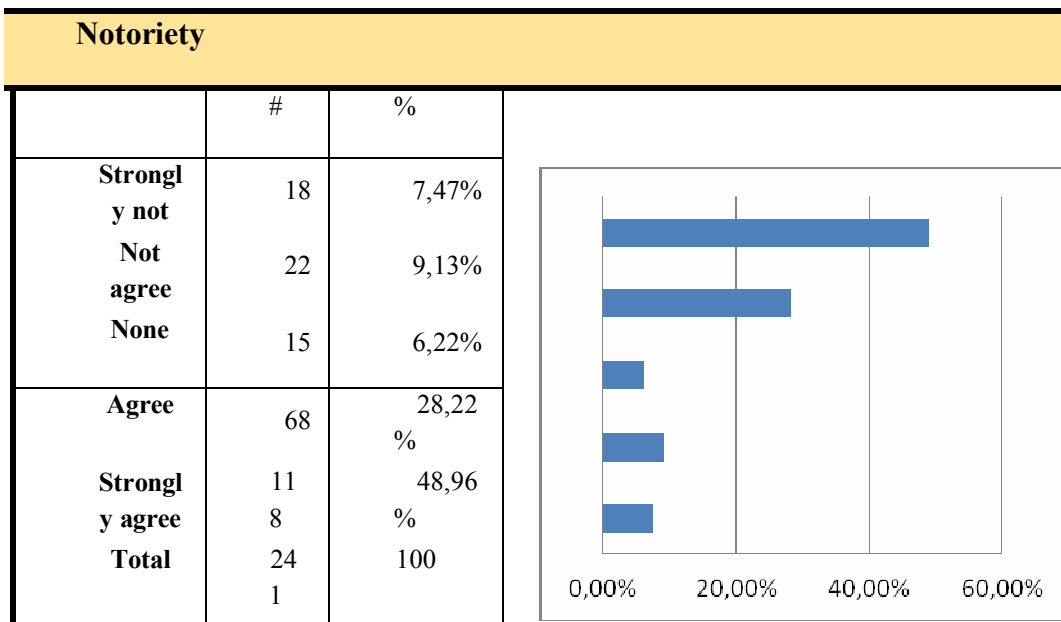|	Nb	Per
Facebook	150	62,24%
Twitter	15	6,22%
Google	30	12,45%
Youtube	36	14,94%
Linkedin	6	2,49%
Instagram	3	1,24%
Pinterest	1	0,41%
Total		**241**
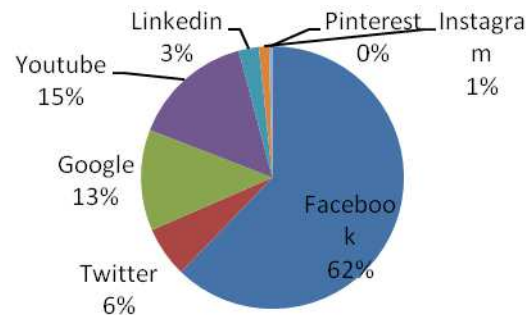
- Concerning the purpose of using social networks, the results showed that 86% use the networks to communicate with their families, 65% share pictures and videos with their friends while 40% was looking up on the news of brands.

- Concerning the most used Media that keep a customer updated, we find that 70% of customers use online media "social networks" to be updated about their favorite brands while only 30 % use the offline Medias.

- The factorial results produced by Sphinx showed that 95% of users have already looked at a brand on social networks, and 93% of them have "liked" the brand on the social network, especially, "Facebook". In addition, 53% of them adhere to the Brand's Facebook pages to know the novelty of the brand.

- Concerning the different categories of goods and services that interest users. The statistical results show that the most users like pages of fashion and wears, pages of health and beauty, jewelry and watches, sports and cars.

- Further, the statistic results show that the most users believe that the presence of a brand on social networks is very important.

- The statistic results show that the most of users believe that a brand communicating through social media is a modern brand, innovative, and more popular.

- The statistic results show that the social network users think that a brand must maintain the dialogue with Internet users on social networks where 40% of users agree about that and 45% strongly agrees.

- The statistical results show that the most users believe that the content published by brands influence their buying decisions, where only 13% of answers are strongly disagree about this claim.

- The results given in Figure 2 are about half of users found the comments and feedbacks about those pages influencing the image that they have about them.

Figure 2: The influence of the interaction in social media

Influence			
	#	%	
Strongly not	31	12,86%	
Not agree	42	17,43%	
None	21	8,71%	
Agree	57	23,65%	
Strongly	90	37,34%	
Total	241	100	

- As shown by the statistic results from Figure 3, more than half of respondents find that the number of subscribers on a page is proportional to the brand's notoriety.

Figure 3: the statistic results of Notoriety

Notoriety			
	#	%	
Strongly not	18	7,47%	
Not agree	22	9,13%	
None	15	6,22%	
Agree	68	28,22%	
Strongly agree	118	48,96%	
Total	241	100	

- The results from shows that around 55% of users occasionally consult the Fan pages to follow the news of brands and 35% of respondents are occasionally consult Fan pages to find out about promotions. As well 67% of users share their opinion about a product on social networks.

The descriptive analysis results show that 34% of respondents, they never criticized a brand via the brand's page, and, 90% they have recommended a brand's page to their friends. And 75% they believe that the comments and feedbacks about a brand have influenced their act of purchase for a brand to which they were not yet customers

FACTORIAL ANALYSIS OR BI-VARIATE ANALYSIS-CONFIRMATION AND VALIDATION OF THE STUDY'S HYPOTHESES

Testing Study Hypothesis H1: The presence of a brand on social networks influences the purchase decision of Internet users.

Figure 4: Factorial Correspondence Analysis (FCA) between the presence of the brand on social network and influence of social network:

Hypothesis #1						
Presence of brand/Reputation	Strongly not agree	Not agree	None	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Strongly not agree	7	7	1	8	10	33
Not agree	6	8	0	8	12	34
None	5	5	3	10	11	34
Agree	6	7	10	18	37	78
Strongly agree	8	4	4	10	36	62
Total	32	31	18	54	106	241
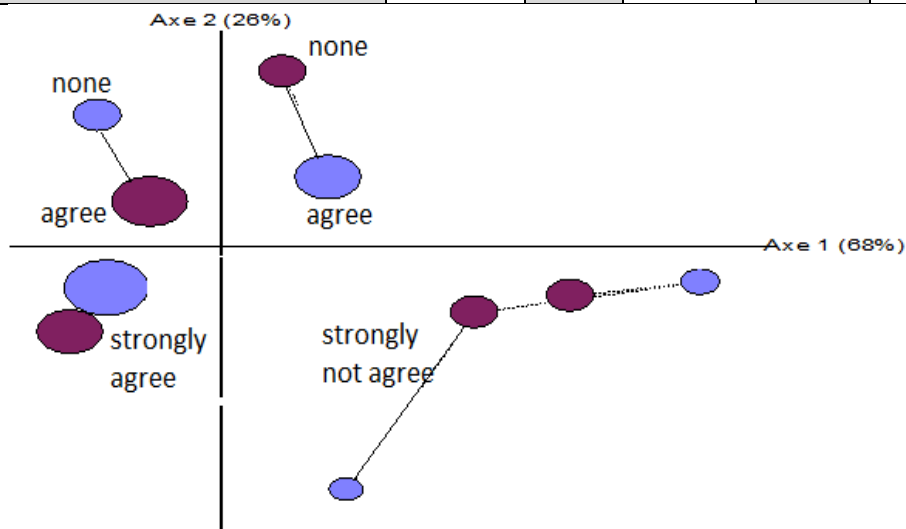
We conducted an FCA (Factorial Correspondence Analysis) between the presence and influence of social network. And as it shown in Figure 4, the presence on the social network is represented in the table on the vertical column and the figure by the axe n

1. Further, the influence of social network is represented in the table on the horizontal column and the figure by axe n 2.

> As a conclusion, since P = 0.6% < 5% for Khi2=33.58 and ddl=16. Then the authors accept the hypothesis H1.

STUDY'S RESULTS

There is an attraction between the modalities. Then, the presence of a brand on social networks influences the purchase decision of Internet users. This conclusion is illustrated by the blue and purple circles in the center of the axes.

RESULTS DISCUSSION

From the descriptive analysis, we observe that all respondents use social networks is the most uses for communication, exchange, share and monitoring the information. It is also noted that the presence of a brand in these networks is important to the user's eyes and the content posted by its influences their purchasing decision.

From the analysis FCA, we observe that the presence of a brand influences purchasing decisions of users, if a brand publishes content, promotions, and news regularly; this has a direct effect on the purchase decision of internet users, it represents for them a trustworthy source of information. We also found that the brand image does not vary according to the product categories but according to the brands themselves. In addition, her e-reputation produced a new conversational mode of communication when the consumer becomes conso-actor because he is simultaneously the transmitter and the receiver of the information.

FUTURE WORK

The aim of our future work will be to design a model, and using the modeling approach structural equation to measure the effect of social network on image branding.

The question that could be asked is: Do social networks are prominent in terms of customer relationship management or are they doomed to remain mere tools of neutral and lucid communication?

CONCLUSION

Social networks have transformed the way of communication between people as well as between people and businesses. We went from a one-way message from traditional media to a multidirectional dialogue, where everyone can express his feelings.

Based on these phenomena, the user or the customer gains in sources of information, personalized help and can disseminate his creations, comments, emotions. Further, he can influence the future of products and services of companies.

From a business side, the company meanwhile, has direct access to its clients and prospects and can turn this advantage into considerable commercial and social gains. The brand can target customers, reach new segments of the population through social networking tools each by attracting different consumer profiles. The company must take advantage of this opportunity and get more adapted to these new media. It must include in its overall strategy of communication, strategies that involving efficiently social networks.

The possibilities offered by social media, who embarks on this new challenge, bring benefits to the enterprise in many ways: increasing the brand awareness, controlling a brand with one or more significant competitive advantages. Also, they can influence through their networks and the networks of the other users, or to live the marks become "sellers".

However, one must take into account basic rules for listening, preserve communities and attract new clients: to be genuine, honest, and transparent, be open-minded and a little originality. Engage is a social being and not do social.

Social networks also seem to be a good way of communicating in a crisis or to prevent negative rumors since at the time these networks today are still neutral and playful tools, and the speed of propagation of information on these networks can reach astounding speeds. They arouse less suspicion among consumers as more traditional channels.

Further, social media is a constantly changing ecosystem services are created; others disappear, and most are transformed. These spaces are evolving rapidly adapting one hand the needs of users through the creation of new functions and partly because technological development enlarges the range of possibilities.

In addition, the results presented in this study were obtained by applying a factorial analysis by using Sphinx, and well detailed and discussed. The result of this research shows that social networks affect the online reputation, and the user/customer can be influenced positively or negatively by the content published by a brand.

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