



Marketing on Instagram

A qualitative study on how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool

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Abstract

The last years technological developments have lead to significant improvements in Internet usage, availability and the way people interact online. Recent statistics show how Internet and foremost social media usage increases rapidly, which have been noticed by companies, increasing their presence on social media platforms as well. Previous research has extensively been conducted within the area of social media marketing. However, the focus has mainly been put on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and social media platforms in general.

The purpose of this qualitative thesis is to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. Moreover, the thesis aims to investigate companies' awareness and concern regarding their potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram. The thesis aims to provide new insights that can be added to contemporary research within the field of social media marketing. The research question of concern is: How do companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool?

Semi-structured interviews were conducted on seven marketers working for Swedish companies present on Instagram. The empirical findings were analysed and presented through the different building blocks in Kietzmann et al., (2011) Honeycomb of social media, which worked as a foundational skeleton to the study. Other relevant theories were additionally compared with the empirical findings and four themes or approaches were determined. Two main, and one minor theme or approaches of how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool were determined. The first approach of Instagram marketing includes companies that we have chosen to call the "rookies". They are relatively new to Instagram and/or have not been distinctively active in the way they interact on the platform. The rookies share characteristic of being in an experimental stage, trying to find their optimal usage of Instagram. The second approach of Instagram marketing includes companies that we have chosen to call the "Oldies". A characteristic identified among these companies is a rather extensive Instagram experience, gained either through long-term presence or through distinct active presence during a shorter period of time. However, Company 4 could not be included in any of the above-identified approaches, as their marketing tendencies on Instagram follow a slightly different character. Their specific approach of Instagram marketing belongs to what we have chosen to call "The exception".

It was moreover brought to surface that the interviewed marketers seemed to have no ethical concern regarding the increasingly present 12-15 year olds on Instagram, as they do not believe they reach this group of young users.

The final conclusion is how all of these approaches generate from the fact that Instagram is new platform where companies are learning by doing how to best make use of the unique characteristics of Instagram. We would like to encourage firms planning to create an Instagram account to embrace some of these characteristics. 1. The real-time aspect; Instagram users feed constantly updates with the latest content, creates an excellent opportunity for marketers to promote goods and products at a relevant and specific point in time. 2. Hashtags; as Instagram allow for little statistical information we argue that hashtags are great tools for reaching out to specific customer groups. By using hashtags connected to certain topics of interest among ones targeted users, companies can arguably attain enhanced customer interest.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Internet and the Rise of Social Media

Today internet is considered a natural aspect of the majority of the Swedish populations' everyday life (Swedish Media Council, 2015, p. 4). The popularity of Smartphones and the technologically improved rapidness of the portable internet performance (Davidsson, 2015, p. 5) have furthermore resulted in that the Swedish population nowadays are more or less constantly online (Swedish Media Council, 2015, p. 4). With the rise of social media platforms, interaction and sharing has become an essential part of Internet usage (Kietzmann et al., 2012). Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 141) describe *online social networks* defined as "online communities where people socialize or exchange information and opinions". Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 63) further explain what they call *Social networking sites* as "[...] applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other."

Social media marketing seem to be the current trend in marketing (Jadhav et al., 2013; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Neti, 2011), a trend that is here to stay. *Social media advertising* can be described as different to traditional marketing strategies as it "uses social communities, such as social networks and virtual worlds as an advertising medium" (Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011, p. 213), instead of the traditional TV, newspapers and radio. When reading previous work within the field of social media advertising we continually stumbled upon one frequent term that we became especially intrigued by and wanted to investigate further, *viral marketing*.

1.2 The World of Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is defined as "a company's activities to make use of customers' communication networks to promote and distribute products." (Helm, 2010, p. 158). Many scholars exemplifies viral marketing by using Jurvetson and Drapers article from 1997, in which the rapid Internet diffusion of the email service, Hotmail, was described as one of the earliest and most groundbreaking viral marketing strategies historically (Jurvetson & Draper, 1997; Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004; Swanepoel et al., 2009; Helm, 2010). The strategy is referred to as a fast and cheap marketing solution with wider reach compared to traditional marketing campaigns (Jurvetson & Draper, 1997; Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011; Kotler & Armstrong, 2011). Helm (2010, p. 158) describes how the traditional selling procedure moves from a company to its consumers when using viral marketing. Companies are described to take advantage of customers' online WOM tendencies in their promotional aims (Helm, 2010, p. 158). Ferguson (2008, p. 180) describes viral marketing as a cause achieved through the effect of WOM (or: word of mouth). Online WOM has got the potential to reach a broader audience as information is spread among both known and anonymous users online, whereas for the traditional WOM information is spread among real life networks (Sun et al., 2006, p. 1109). Kaplan and Haenlein (2011, p. 255) finally define viral marketing as "[...] electronic word-of-mouth whereby some form of marketing message related to a company, brand, or product is transmitted in an exponentially growing way, often through the use of social media applications.". In other words, these scholars regard viral marketing as more or less equal to electronic word-of-mouth, or e-WOM, which is another name for online WOM marketing. In our study we have chosen to do the same.

We do not claim it necessary to separate these two concepts in order to fulfil the purpose of our study. From now on viral marketing will be the expression used in the thesis.

Some scholars within the social media marketing field focus on underlying behavioural factors to why individuals pass on viral messages (Dhaoui, 2014; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 363) argue that customers tendencies to forward viral content is enhanced when the customer have knowledge about the firm and its products. Dhaoui (2014), on the other hand, proposes four constructs; endorsement, feedback, conversation and recommendation, that might bring some clarity to why individuals choose to forward viral content. Other scholars focus on how individuals pass on viral messages (Keller, 2010; Phelps et al., 2004). Keller (2010, p. 827) articulate a certain understanding for that all customers are different and hence are driven by different aspects when forwarding messages and content. Phelps et al., (2004, p. 344) dig deeper into the underlying factors of how consumers pass email messages forward and identifies varying “pass-along profiles”. Kietzmann et al., (2011) focus on explaining how social media platforms overall are constructed and what implications these platforms have for marketers. Further studies within viral marketing have focused on other social media platforms (Dhaoui, 2014; Jadhav et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2008; Tsur and Rappaport, 2012). Tsur and Rappaport (2012) investigate how hashtags work on Twitter. Dhaoui (2014) focus on viral marketing on Facebook, Jadhav et al., (2013) discusses social media marketing tendencies on several platforms such as for instance Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. Singh et al., (2008, p. 283) argues in their study that blogging can be considered as viral marketing as “it also uses social networks, user-generated content, and interactivity to spread the message.” The authors further argue that companies that blog, can capture their wanted customer segments more or less without lifting a finger as the customers following them are already interested in the company or their products (Singh et al. 2008, p. 288). We wonder if Instagram, a social media platform that, in a way, works in a similar manner as photoblogs, hence can be considered to hold similar viral marketing tendencies as blogs do. When searching for previous research concerning viral marketing we found many interesting studies investigating different social media platforms. This made us wonder if Instagram, a rather new and popular platform among our acquaintances, held any specific marketing opportunities. Additionally, as mentioned in the first paragraph of the thesis there is a shift in people's internet usage, from computers to phones. Arguably, as Instagram is a mobile platform, this can be of relevance for marketers targeting customers through social media. In order to reach their customers, such trends may be interesting to monitor and adapt to.

1.3 Instagram

The social media platform Instagram was launched in 2010 as an application for smartphones (Instagram [1], 2015). The business idea was to provide users with a simple way to upload and share mobile photos with friends (Instagram [1], 2015). The platform evolved quickly and now offers the possibility to share video clips of 12 seconds and add a variety of filters to the pictures (Instagram [1], 2015). In december 2014 Instagram had 200 million active users, an increase of 100 million user since Mars the same year (Statista [1], 2015). Global statistics show that the majority of the users are younger than 25 years old and only a few percent are over 55 years old (Statista [2], 2015). Looking at Sweden, Instagram is the most popular social media network among 9-16 year olds (Swedish Media Council, 2015, p. 12). The main version of Instagram is free from advertisements in the sense that there are no ads within the app itself

(Instagram [2], 2015). Arguably, this makes Instagram stand out from other social media platforms containing ads, which companies can buy. Only Instagram users in the US have experienced ads in their feed on rare occasions (Instagram [1], 2015). Many companies have their own Instagram accounts where they upload content. One of these companies, H&M, is currently followed by 6,1 million Instagram users. Thus, each photo or video uploaded by the company is seen by more than 6 million people. The fact that posting photos and videos on Instagram is free, makes it a cheap and effective promotion channel. Grusell (2006, p. 360) states in her research that Swedish consumers have a positive attitude towards commercials and advertisements that are perceived as self-selected, whereas promotion through email and text-messages is in general negatively received. Since Instagram is a platform where the users only see pictures and videos posted by users which they have made an active choice to follow, we argue that marketing on Instagram is self-selected. In our strive to understand how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities we wonder if this is anything they might take into account.

Kaikati and Kaikati (2004, p. 9) explain that “[...] viral marketing attempts to harness the strongest of all consumer triggers—the personal recommendation”. We argue that the equivalent phenomenon on Instagram is the usage of hashtags. Tsur and Rappaport (2012) describes in their research that a hashtag is much more than a symbol that connect the dots, it is a sign of what to expect and something that shows affiliation to a bigger group. Hashtag (#) is a phenomenon frequently used on Instagram, defined as “hashtag *n.* (on social media web sites and applications) a word or phrase preceded by a hash and used to identify messages relating to a specific topic [...]” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015). Hashtags originated on the microblog Twitter and has spread to Instagram as a tool to relate and group pictures to a specific topic (Tsur & Rappaport, 2012). A hashtag in front of a word or sentence creates a link to all pictures with the same notation. Furthermore, the “at” function (@ followed by a username) creates a way for followers to forward pictures to other users. We argue that these two concepts (# and @) can be described as the e-WOM of Instagram. In other words, we can see tendencies for viral marketing on Instagram. We want to find out whether companies active on Instagram agrees with our opinion and how they make use of this platform for marketing purposes.

1.4 E-Sweden, a portable Social Media Universe

The popularity of Smartphones and the technologically improved rapidness of the portable internet performance (Davidsson, 2015, p. 5) have resulted in that the Swedish population nowadays are more or less constantly online (Swedish Media Council, 2015, p. 4). Recent statistics show that 12-35 year olds spend in total more than one hour each day using their smartphones, and most time is spent by the 16-25 year olds who use almost two hours each day to browse their phones (Findahl, 2014, p. 19). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 67) recognizes this technological shift from stationary to mobile social media use and articulate the topical turn of mind: “Why wait until you return home to watch the new YouTube video if you can do so conveniently on your iPhone?”. At the end of 2014 78% of 9-12 year olds and 95 % of all 13-16 year olds had their own Smartphone (Swedish Media Council, 2015, p. 19). Moreover, Instagram, seem to be quite popular among young Swedish women, if looking only at the age group 12-15 years old, 62% of the girls are present on the platform compared with 45% of the boys in the same age (Findahl, 2014, p. 30). The shifting behaviour in peoples’ social media usage, from computers to phones, becomes highly relevant from marketers targeting customers through social media. In order to reach their customers such trends must be

monitored and adapted to. As we have chosen to focus on Instagram, an application designed for a mobile platform, and as we wonder how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool, the rise of mobile social media usage is arguably of interest for our research.

1.5 Possible Ethical Implications?

If one is to believe previously mentioned statistics, Instagram is a quite popular social media platform among young swedes. However, there are no direct Swedish laws against social media marketing aimed at minors. The only existing regulation is the Swedish Marketing Act (Marknadsföringslagen, SFS 2008:486) prohibiting encouragement of direct purchase in commercials aimed at children (The Swedish Consumer Agency, 2015). Moreover, we have found no scholarly articles investigating potential concerns regarding how marketing messages may affect children present on Instagram. We wonder if companies active on Instagram are concerned with the possibility of their messages reaching quite young audiences.

1.6 Purpose and Reseachquestion

1.6.1 Purpose

The purpose of the thesis is to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. Moreover, the thesis aims to investigate companies awareness and concern regarding their potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram. The thesis aims to provide new insights that can be added to contemporary research within the field of social media marketing.

1.6.2 Research question

How do companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool?

2. Theoretical frame of reference

This part of the thesis will be dedicated to relevant theoretical aspects found within previous research. In this thesis we will present relevant theories and models concerning social media, social media marketing and viral marketing. Theories found within scholarly articles will be discussed in relation to Instagram, as we would like to evaluate if these are of any relevance to contemporary marketers with Instagram accounts. Firstly we will more thoroughly describe social media and social media marketing in order to introduce the reader better to the context of our study. Secondly Kietzmann et al.,'s (2011) Honeycomb of social media, a model comprising different building blocks of social media platforms, will be explained and used as a skeleton to the theoretical part. We will dig deeper into the different parts of social media, by adding the work of other scholars. Suitable theories will guide our path towards a better understanding of how companies make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. Last but not least possible ethical aspects will be investigated.

2.1 The Social Media Marketing Landscape

Social media can be described as a phenomena that “employ mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content.” (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 241). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 67) explain marketing on social media platforms as being more effective and less costly than traditional marketing. Furthermore, Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 358-359) argue there are communicational advantages involved with the phenomenon; social media do not only provide means for customer-to-customer interaction but also for customer-to-business interaction and business-to-customer interaction. Jadhav et al., (2013, p.45) describes in a similar manner that social media platforms allow the recipient of a message to interact with the author as well as pass the message through to a whole community. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) continues on the same path, arguing that social media have evolved from the *Web 2.0*. *Web 2.0* refers to the occurrence of Internet as it ceased from being a mere information database where individuals could search for information, to transform into an interactive platform where users themselves could join in and create new content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Some authors (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004; Singh et al., 2008) claim that today’s shattered marketing landscape has made it more difficult for contemporary marketers to reach out to its customers, as these have learned to ignore mass media marketing messages. Thus, in order to maintain customer loyalty it has become crucial for marketers to send marketing messages so interesting that customers simply do not want to ignore them (Singh et al., 2008). Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 410) moreover argue that “[...] new media formats let marketers reach smaller groups of consumers in more interactive, engaging ways”. Hanna et al., (2011, p. 271) view is that marketers with the aim of reaching out to customers need to consider that traditional and new media are equally important when developing marketing strategies.

2.2 The Honeycomb of Social Media

When companies enter the world of social media, they could arguably profit from a certain understanding of how social media platforms work (Kietzmann et al. 2011). Kietzmann et al. (2011, p. 242) realized there was a knowledge gap among marketers concerning social media, hence they created, *The honeycomb of social media* (see figure 1 below). The purpose of the model is to explain different blocks that build up social

media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011). The model is divided in two honeycombs, each containing seven blocks that represent different building blocks of social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011). The first model, to the left, explains various functionalities of social media, whereas the right hand honeycomb explains the implications these functionalities have for firms who want to engage in social media (Kietzmann et al., 2011). The model and its blocks are constructed to work as a general framework, not all social media platforms contain all blocks (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Kietzmann et al., (2011) bring up some implications relevant only for companies wanting to create their own social media platform. These implications will not be discussed, even though all blocks are still represented, as we are focusing on Instagram, an already established social media platform.

In our research, Kietzmann et al.'s (2011) Honeycomb will act as a skeleton, a base from which other theories within social media marketing will be explored. Since the model explains different building blocks of a social media platform along with its implications for companies (Kietzmann et al., 2011), we will connect relevant theories to the different blocks. For instance theories discussing tendencies to forward viral content will be connected to and discussed under the building block “Sharing”. We argue these blocks are however integrated, what affect one block might have an impacting for another one as well. Some additional theories we have chosen to involve might hence be of relevance for more than one block. Arguably, the honeycomb model will with help from our empirical evidence make us determine which building blocks are of relevance for the social media platform Instagram. By determining how Instagram function we hope to better understand how companies make use of the platform.

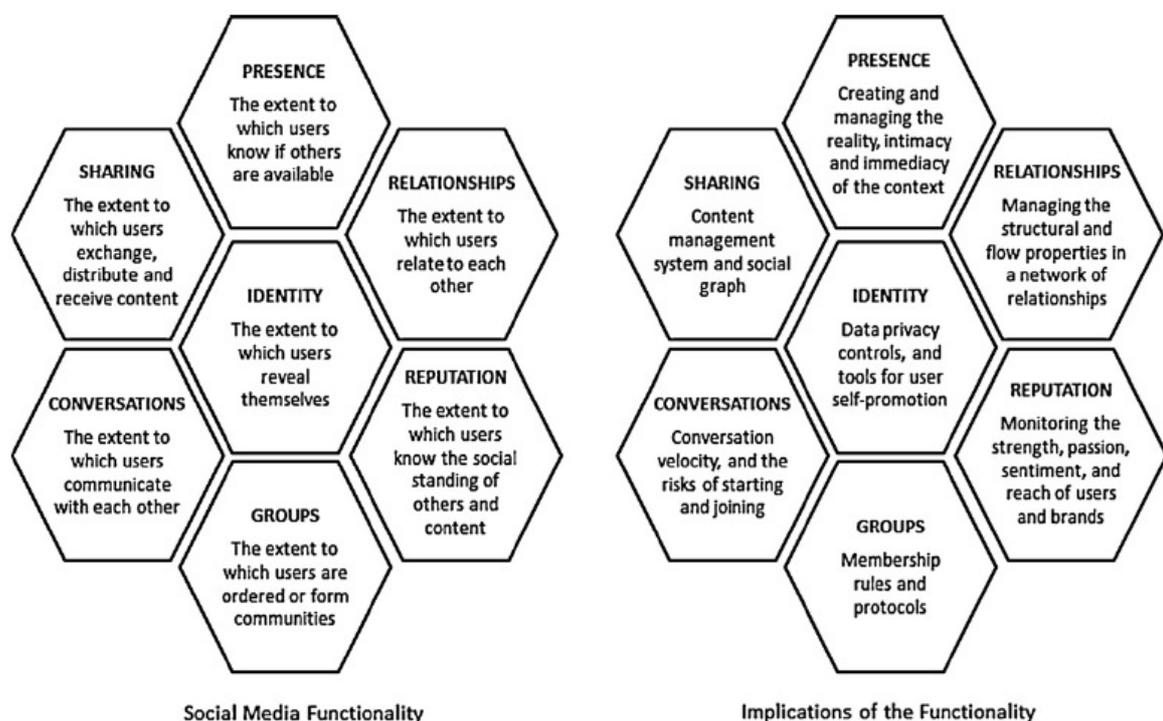


FIGURE 1 THE HONEYCOMB OF SOCIAL MEDIA
 (Source: Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 243)

2.2.1 Identity

The central building block of Kietzmann et al.,’s (2011) model is Identity. In the honeycomb of social media identity embodies “the extent to which users reveal themselves” in terms of for instance age, gender, occupation and individual preferences (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 243). Arguably different social media platforms provide different opportunities for users to express their identity (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 243). On some social media platforms, such as Facebook, users build an entire profile, while on other platforms only a pseudonym might be required, hence, social media allow for the creation of virtual identities, which not necessarily match identities in real life (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244). Moreover, Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 244) point out that users of social media platforms in general are quite keen about their privacy, hence firms need to handle user information delicately in order not to lose trustworthiness.

Krombholz et al., (2012, p. 176) have recognized a tendency of people sharing more and more information about themselves in social media. This in turn has been recognized by companies who nowadays may use social media platforms both for marketing, and information gathering purposes (Krombholz et al., 2012, p. 176-177). Krombholz et al., (2012, p. 177), explains in their study how Facebook continuously gather information (education, age, current living, interests, and so on) which they sell to companies, sparing them the trouble of searching for it themselves. Krombholz et al., (2012, p. 177) concluded in their research that five to six per cent of all Facebook identities could be considered as fake. Believable these fake identities may likely cause certain biases in the data companies receive about potential customers on Facebook (Krombholz et al., 2012, p. 177). Krombholz et al., (2012, p. 177) reveals how Facebook more or less ‘allow’ their users to embody pseudonyms by assuming the registration information they provide in fact true. On Instagram the only official information is a pseudonym username and no other information then email address is required in order to register. As information about customers are considered an appreciated feature for companies engaging in social media (Booth & Matic, 2010, p.17) we find this aspect relevant to investigate as our aim is to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities.

2.2.3 Relationships

Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 246) describe the relationship block of social media platforms as “the extent to which users can be related to other users”. The way in which users are related on social media results in that connections among users varies as well as the way in which communication is conducted (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 246). A mutual relationship between users, built on common interests, generally involves content being frequently shared, whereas a work related relationship generally cause low levels of social media interaction (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 246). Acknowledging the nature of user relationships can arguably be useful information for firms marketing on social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 246). Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 246) further discuss that users with many followers can hold ‘influencer’ tendencies, in the way that their opinions can possibly affect many recipients. A second implication firms might want to consider is the great diversity of users’ relationships, for instance, on a platform focusing on establishing professional connections, the relationships are assumably formal and homogenous, whereas for a platform where video sharing is the

main function, the relationships are more likely to be versatile and casual (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 246).

Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 139) discuss *opinion leaders* as influential people with broad networks chosen for the sole purpose of representing for example a company or a product. According to Li and Du (2010, p. 190) an opinion leader is a person that is “normally more interconnected and has a higher status, education, and social standing”. Collaborating with opinion leaders is something viral marketers’ tend to do, as these individuals holds the skills to affect others in their social media network (Li & Du, 2010, p. 190). Phelps et al., (2004) dig deeper into the underlying factors of how consumers pass email messages forward. The scholars identify two different types of senders; *Viral mavens* and *Infrequent senders* and emphasise that these are of different importance to marketers as their manner of forwarding emails varies (Phelps et al., 2004, p. 336). The viral mavens are defined as the most frequent to pass forward viral messages compared to the more infrequent senders (Phelps et al., 2004, p. 336). Even though the infrequent senders were found not to pass on the majority of viral messages, they were proven to “have an especially noteworthy impact due to their more targeted, personalized, and motivating approaches to sending emails to their network members” (Phelps et al., 2004, p. 344). However, the importance of looking at both types of senders is also stressed (Phelps et al., 2004, p. 344). Arguably, by identifying and sending out specifically targeted messages to infrequent senders, marketers can receive successful viral results (Phelps et al., 2004, p. 344-345). Phelps et al., (2004, p 345) further argue that in order to get wanted results from marketing campaigns, marketers need to determine what information senders find forward worthy. The concepts of viral mavens, opinion leaders, influencers and infrequent senders are relevant for the block of reputation and sharing as well. It connects to reputation since whom you are associated and collaborate with may affect the overall reputation of your company. However, in our thesis, focus will be put on the relationship part of the discussion, whether the interviewed companies aim to build relationships with viral mavens and opinion leaders. Through investigating this, we argue we will be able to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities.

2.2.4 Conversations

The conversation block embodies “the extent to which social media users communicate with each other” (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 243). Underlying reasons to why individuals virtually interact varies widely, from the purpose of meeting like-minded people, to find love, display problems and share content (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244), or making ones message heard with the hope of causing change in for instance political or humanitarian matters (Beirut, 2009, cited by Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244). The authors argue that the great amount of messages sent in a rapid virtual manner makes it problematic for firms to observe and control all that is said about them in social media (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244). Hence, Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 244) call out for tools to help companies track relevant conversations in order to be able to take advantage of the conversation on social media platforms. Firms may arguably generate publicity by starting new conversations and ride on the wave of existing viral messages (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 245). Dhaoui (2014, p. 213-214) furthermore argues that feedback can be provided on Facebook in the form of ‘comments’. Feedback can be used as constructive clues to how the company may improve (Dhaoui, 2014, p. 213). As feedback and comments are visible for all present users on Facebook, other

customers may join the conversation, creating lively discussions that may induce viral attention (Dhaoui, 2014, p. 214). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 66) moreover claim that what social media marketers need to do is to give customers a interesting enough reason for engagement so they start interact with companies because they want to.

Kotler and Armstrong (2011) mentions something called *the promotion mix* or, *marketing communications mix* defined as “The specific blend of promotion tools that the company uses to persuasively communicate customer value and build customer relationships.” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011, p. 408). The mix involves “tools” such as: *Advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations* and *direct marketing*, activities that marketing managers could engage in to strengthen their customer relationship (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011, p. 408). However even though firms have all these great tools at their disposal some firms still fail to synchronize their ongoing marketing strategies (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011, p. 410). Instead of having one message sent out to the public, different marketing messages are in some cases sent out from several marketing channels, resulting in that customers end up with a mixed and often confused idea of the company (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011, p. 410). In order to deal with the issue rose the concept of *IMC* or *Integrated Marketing Communication* defined as the process of “Carefully integrating and coordinating the company’s many communications channels to deliver a clear, consistent, and compelling message about the organization and its products” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011, p. 412). Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 359-360) argue that the social media climate has made it more difficult for marketers to keep track on all that is said about their company or products over social media. As social media brought with it a possibility for customers to talk online with each other about company products (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 359). Hence, Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 360) aim to emphasise for managers how important it is to listen to consumer generated content that is spread virally on social media platforms. Since social media moreover have made it possible for customers to talk with companies online, achieving a conversation rather than the monologue previously conducted on company webpages (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 359). Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 410) argue that IMC can be considered a mix of traditional media and new media, hence IMC aim at representing the marketing mix contemporary marketers are challenged with. Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 359) further claim social media as an evident part of contemporary marketers integrated marketing communication. As the company communication and promotion is what is sent out for public scrutiny the IMC moreover touches upon the Honeycomb blocks reputation and relationship. Companies can be able to affect the public opinion of them through how they choose to communicate with the public. By sending out scattered marketing messages from several channels firms may possibly confuse customers that may affect corporate customer perceptions negatively. IMC provide the conversation block with a discussion whether the messages companies send out on Instagram are integrated in an overall marketing strategy. Thus, we wonder whether the companies interviewed use the same marketing strategies for Instagram as for other marketing channels or whether Instagram rather work as an individual marketing channel. By evaluating this we might understand better how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool.

As a final aspect of conversations and communication we will include Hunt and Grunig's 4 PR model (Fawkes, 2001, p.11). Fawkes (2001, p.8) divides marketing and public relations in two separate categories arguing that marketing is sending out messages with the aim to sell a product or service, whereas public relations deal with

maintaining good customer relationships. Kotler & Armstrong (2011, p. 408) however, give room for both public relations and marketing as natural parts of the promotion mix. We will take the same standpoint, arguing that all means that provide efficient customer communication could be of relevance for marketers within social media. Moreover, Hanna et al., (2011, p. 267) argue that consumers nowadays expect to be able to actively engage with companies on social media platforms. Hence, we claim that public relations and what type of communication companies send out to customers is a relevant matter for companies present on Instagram. Kietzmann et al., (2011) honeycomb model discusses communication and relationships among *individuals* in social media. However, in order to be able to answer our research question; How companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool, we are interested in investigating relationships and communication between *companies and their customers* on Instagram.

In 1984 Grunig and Hunt founded four Public Relation models by looking at the PR history of several American companies (Fawkes, 2001, p.12). The models are built on the communication and relationships between senders (companies) and receivers (the public) and focuses on how communication is performed (Fawkes, 2001, p.12). In the first model, *the press agency/publicity model*, the sender aims to receive attention rather than provide accurate facts to the receiver (Fawkes, 2001, p.12). The model furthermore has the aim of changing the opinion or behaviour regarding something among the users and is mostly used for product promotion, in show business and in celebrity PR (Fawkes, 2001, p.12). The second model, *the public information model*, focuses on the sender's task to inform the receivers (Fawkes, 2001, p.12-13). The importance of keeping information accurate is greatly emphasised in this public information model, however, its aim is not to cause any change in opinion or/and behaviour among the receivers (Fawkes, 2001, p.13). Examples of public information model are traditional newspapers or TV broadcasted news (Fawkes, 2001, p.13). These two models are both based on one-way communication, from sender to receiver (Fawkes, 2001, p.12-13). In the third model however, the *two-way asymmetric PR*, the sender aims to provide accurate information as well as cause a change in reception or behaviour among the receivers (Fawkes, 2001, p.14). This model is based on two-way communication that is built on that the receiver has the same ability to interact with the sender, hence the third model is symmetric in its communication, however, the model also hold asymmetric features in its aim to change the receivers attitudes or behaviour, not the senders (Fawkes, 2001, p.14). The last model the *two-way symmetric PR*, is explained by Fawkes (2001, p.15) as a model built on communication and mutual understanding, therefore is the concept of sender and receiver not applicable here. This model relies on the equal ability of both parties, companies and consumers, to affect each other (Fawkes, 2001, p.15-16). Fawkes (2001, p.16) further states that when the four public relation models were born, there were no existing marketing channels that enabled the two-way symmetric model to work. By examining these models we hope to better evaluate what type of communication companies are using on Instagram.

2.2.5 Sharing

Kietzmann et al.,'s (2011, p. 243) sharing block, focuses on “the extent of which users exchange, distribute, and receive content”. Firms wanting to engage in social media platforms arguably need to understand what type of sharing habits and well as content preferences users have on social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 245). Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 245) moreover emphasise that firms additionally can gain from evaluating content they share on social media in order to not offend people by

posting inappropriate content. Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that customer tendencies to forward viral content is enhanced when certain circumstances are fulfilled, for instance; when the customers have knowledge about the firm and its products, when the customer feel engaged and when the customer perceive some kind of emotional connection. Keller (2010, p. 827) articulates a certain understanding for how all customers are different and hence responds differently to marketing messages. Moreover, knowing how social media platforms are built and how the majority of content is shared is essential to be able to create a forward friendly message (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Kaplan and Haenlein, (2011, p. 257) argue that some ingredients relevant to achieve a fruitful marketing message include presenting something new, that provoke the recipient to feel positive or negative emotions. Smith et al., (2007, p. 392) on the other hand identified people called *influencers*, which had a tendency to forward viral content when they felt doing so could be helpful for someone. Arguable people feel better about themselves when they feel they have made a difference somehow (Smith et al., 2007, p. 392).

2.2.6 Presence

The presence block connects the social media platform to real-time situations of their users (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 245). It represent the extent to which users of the social media platform know where other users are and whether they are available, online and in real life (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 245). One example of presence is found on Facebook where users in posts and on their profiles can show where they are geographically through pinpointing their location (Facebook, 2015). Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 246) argues that time and presence can be of importance when wanting to reach out to one's customers. Arguably customers might be more attentive towards marketing messages if they seem adapted to their current location and time (Kietzman et al., 2011, p. 246). The same location feature as discussed above regarding Facebook, exist on Instagram. Instagram users are able to add the location of where each of their uploaded photos were taken.

Keller (2010, p. 826) has developed a model, the *marketing communication tetrahedron* (see figure 2 below), in order to help firms to more effectively integrate their marketing communications. The model aims at helping marketing managers understand how different customers react to messages sent out by different marketing communication tools (Keller, 2010, p. 826). According to Keller (2010, p. 827) customers hold different demographic, psychographic and behavioural characteristics, which arguably affect how they respond to different marketing messages. These traits are in the model divided into two dimensions which affects how marketing messages are received among customers, these are: *prior knowledge* and *processing goals* (Keller, 2010, p.827). The prior knowledge dimension involves customer knowledge about a product/service, company or brand, the processing goals dimension incorporates for instance the readiness of a customer to accept a targeted marketing message and moreover what the customer requires in order to become affected by a targeted marketing message (Keller, 2010, p. 827). Hence what customers know about a certain brand in combination with what they aim to achieve will possibly affect how customers respond to marketing messages (Keller, 2010, p. 828). The consumer *response* part of the model incorporates how the consumer is affected by a targeted marketing message, arguably the recipient may experience certain feelings when watching for instance a commercial (Keller, 2010, p. 828). The response involves that each marketing message *processed* by the consumer leads to a certain *outcome* (Keller 2010). Keller (2010, p. 829) argues, in a similar

manner as the presence block in Kietzmann et al., (2011) that external *situational* aspects such as for instance *time* and the *place*, play a great part in how marketing messages are received by the customer. The *communication* part of the marketing communications tetrahedron focus on important characteristics of the marketing message itself, which is built on three levels: *modality information*, *Brand related information* and *executional information* (Keller, 2010, p. 828). Modality information stand for which type of approach the information in the message hold, for instance: if the message is verbal or written, brand related messages can for instance differ in terms of what and how the message is articulated and the executional aspect embodies how in fact the message is executed, as lyrics in a song or through a video clip (Keller, 2010, p. 828). Keller's (2010, p. 829) idea when creating the model was that the factors: *communication*, *consumer*, *situation* and *response* are all related when it comes to figuring out which marketing messages suits a specific group of customers better. Keller (2010, p. 829) describes the four factors to be in close relationship to the basic journalistic questions *Who?* and *Why?* when it comes to identifying one's consumers; *What?* when it comes to communication, *When?* and *Where?* when determining situational context and *How?* for the response part, how will the consumers act?

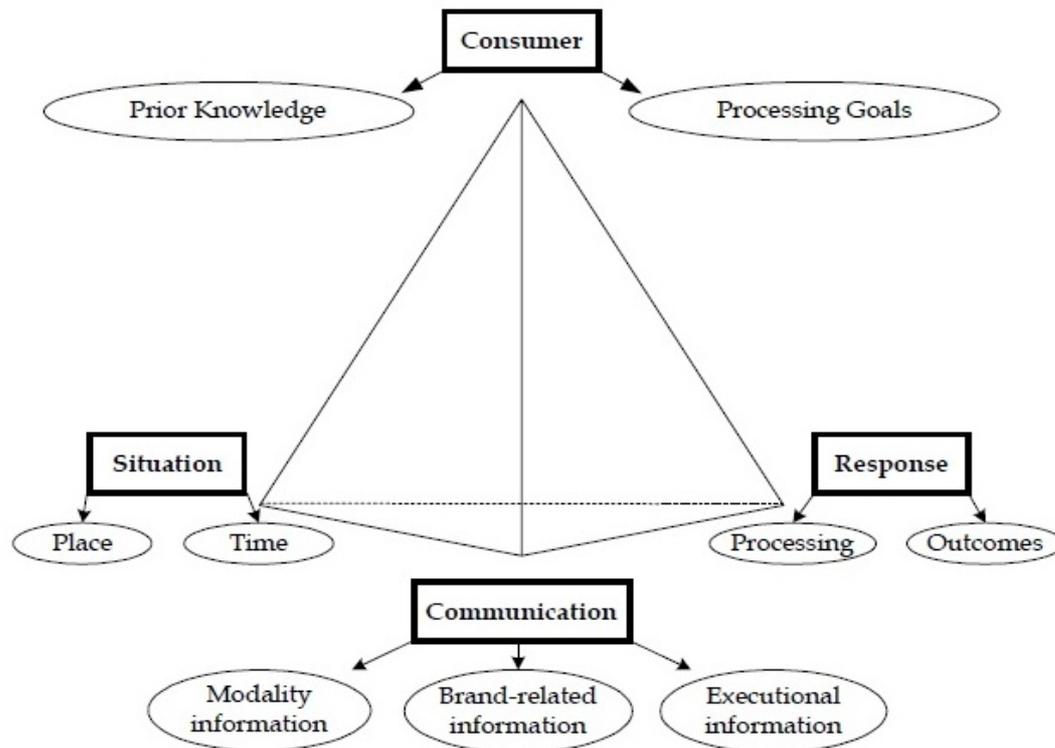


FIGURE 2 THE MARKETING COMMUNICATION TETRAHEDRON
(Source Keller, 2010, p. 826)

The marketing communication tetrahedron can arguably provide companies with greater insight into individual customer responses to specific marketing messages, that marketers can use when designing consistent and relevant marketing messages (Keller, 2010). However, in order to achieve true marketing communication integration the author emphasise the importance of looking at several, or in fact, all marketing messages the firm sends out, not only specific cases (Keller, 2010, p. 831). The tetrahedron model adds a variety of aspects regarding company presence and marketing

on social media platforms and discusses concepts brought up by Kietzmann et al. (2011) more thoroughly. Moreover, it adds a deeper discussion regarding the impact of situational aspects as time and place, and their importance for how marketing messages are received by the customer (Keller, 2010, p. 829). This will hopefully help us in our aim of understanding how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool.

2.2.7 Reputation

The social media reputation block embodies “the extent to which users can identify the standing of other users and content” (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). Reputation can be measured in several ways depending on the platform and content of concern, it can be measured through the function of users being able to ‘like’ content, though the number of ‘views’, numbers of shared content or number of followers (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 247) emphasises that concerns about company reputation can influence why and how companies chose to engage in social media. Why they should do so is due to the possibility of affecting their reputation on social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). The how aspect involves the importance of create a strategy for measuring company reputation (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 247) highlight the significance of choosing relevant tools to measure and evaluate reputation, depending on the type of platform and type of content the firm represents. Dhaoui (2014, p. 213) further explains that by “liking” something on Facebook, followers “demonstrate their endorsement of the brand and/or the values expressed in the content”. Dhaoui (2014, p. 214) moreover claim that if customers are pleased with a product or company they start recommend it to others virally.

Booth and Matic (2010 p.16) further describes how companies today have to be aware as their reputation does not lie in their own hands but is highly affected by consumers interacting with one another on social media platforms. The first step described as affecting conversations about a company is to engage in social media (Booth & Matic, 2010, p.16). They authors further argue the importance of building good customer relationships and how this often is forgotten (Booth & Matic, 2010, p.17). Booth and Matic (2010, p. 18-19) discuss the importance of openly display the company values, not just tell it in words. Further highlighted is the importance of identifying influencers, people on social media with the ability to reach and affect others (Booth & Matic, 2010, p. 19). We argue the block of reputation is strongly connected to other honeycomb blocks as which relationships companies choose to form can be connected to the block of conversations and relationships. Moreover, what content the company display, and thereby is connected with, can be associated with the sharing and conversation blocks. The block of reputation provides the thesis with a foundation to discuss if and how companies are working on building and controlling their reputation on Instagram.

2.2.8 Groups

Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 247) claim that groups are a common phenomena in social media and embodies “the extent to which users can form communities”. Arguably firms that want to create their own platform can profit from giving individuals opportunities to form groups as large social groups often involve greater customer reach (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 515) moreover claim that firms can join in and interact with already existing groups in social media. Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 248) further argue that communities in social media holds different characteristics, comprises different people and tend to function in different manners.

Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 248) emphasises that firms could profit from gaining knowledge about groups to better understand how to engage with these on social media platforms. Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 515) discuss *online social networks* or *Web communities* defined as “blogs, social networking Web sites, or even virtual worlds - where people socialize or exchange information and opinions”. Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 361) expresses that individuals sharing common interests like to get together, hence by providing their customers with group forming, or networking possibilities, marketers can find a way to please their customers. In our investigation of how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool, we wonder if these types of groups exist on Instagram and whether companies make use of them in current marketing activities on the platform.

2.3 Ethical Aspects

Hunt (1976, p. 6) argues that “the purpose of all advertising is to persuade”, and points out that advertising is something not only marketing managers engage in. One might argue that persuasion is morally wrong and hence all sorts of marketing could be considered as such. However, in a study made by Haefner (1972, cited by Gardner, 1975, p. 40 – 41), it was found that consumers and jurisprudential spokespersons had different opinions regarding what could be considered deceptive and not. Hence, different people seem to have different view of what is in fact meant by deception, it seem to be a rather subjective topic. Gardner (1975, p. 41-42) emphasise asking questions such as “What is deception?” “Deceptive to whom?” and “can deception be measured?” In his study, Gardner (1975, p. 42) came to the conclusion that in order to be deceptive “the advertisement would make a claim that is completely false [...] (as) there would be no way for consumers to achieve the claimed benefits.” These types of deceptive advertisements argue Gardner (1975, p. 42) are unjust to the customer. However, one might question if this type of deception in advertising is to be considered ethically wrong. As mentioned above: what some claim morally wrong might not be considered legally wrong for an entire community or nation and according to Section 9 in the Swedish Marketing Act (Marknadsföringslagen)(SFS 2008:486) “All marketing shall be formulated and presented in such a way that it is clear that it is a matter of marketing”, furthermore “The party responsible for the marketing shall also be clearly indicated”. According to the same act it is not allowed to target children under 16 years old with direct marketing (The Swedish Consumer Agency, 2015). Examples of such marketing are text messages and all direct mail (The Swedish Consumer Agency, 2015). As we aim to investigate companies’ awareness and concern regarding the potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram. These aspects of what is considered morally versus legally wrong when it come to target children with commercials, becomes interesting on a platform as personal as Instagram.

Kaikati and Kaikati (2004, p. 6) claim viral marketing to be one so called *stealth marketing strategy*, for which the aim is to reach customers that have become used to avoid, traditional, more obvious marketing. According to Kaikati and Kaikati (2004, p. 6) viral stealth marketing occurs in such a smooth manner that consumers might not even recognize it as marketing. Even though this sort of ‘camouflaged’ marketing seem to be quite smart and efficient, the authors illuminates the view of certain critics claiming stealth marketing as manipulating, questioning the ethics in not making marketing obvious for the customer (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004, p. 19). Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 604) argue that in order for marketing managers to maintain a good reputation they need to have contemporary sustainability and ethical concerns in mind.

We wonder however, to what extent social media marketers consider ethical aspects that might be involved with marketing on Instagram

3. Methodology

The aim of this part is to explain with what methodological lenses we have conducted our thesis with. Philosophical standpoints are here explained, described and motivated. The research design and specific courses of action will be explored. Moreover are ethical and social considerations, along with source criticism evaluated.

3.1 Research Paradigm

A paradigm can be defined as “a philosophical framework that guides how scientific research should be conducted” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p. 55). It therefore seem quite relevant to determine such a paradigm for our thesis. The research paradigm chosen for the thesis is of a *Naturalistic* character. According to Guba and Lincoln (1982) the naturalistic paradigm can be seen as the counterpart to a more *rationalistic* research perspective, the former being associated with qualitative research and the latter with quantitative research. A Naturalistic approach makes room for the human nature rather than a more rational, objective behaviour and arguably provides rich, in depth knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 235) moreover explain that naturalists are not trying to fit the nature of reality into some set scientific framework, the naturalist rather aim at developing theoretical explanations from data they have gathered in real life. Arguably the naturalist approach, according to those in favour of it, might in the end generate a more authentic qualitative theory (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 244). As the purpose of our thesis aim at acquiring a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover investigate the awareness and concern among marketers involved with the potential reach of younger customer audiences, a naturalistic research paradigm hence seemed a suitable choice.

3.2 Ontology

Ontology can be described as the methodological philosophy circulating around the occurrence of social phenomena (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 20). Ontology aim at evaluating whether occurrences in our society are external, things which humans can not effect, or if these social entities are rather social arrangements which have risen from the interpretational nature of human beings (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 20). One ontological approach is *Constructivist*, which aim to grant deeper knowledge about how humans interact and how they experience the world (Creswell, 2003, p. 9). The constructivist approach is in contrast to *Objectivism* where emphasis is put on separation of individual impact and human phenomena (Bryman & Bell, 2011,p. 21). Constructivists believe in subjectivity and see human beings as the main influencers of social phenomena (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 23). The constructionist’s view of the world is that it is built on social occurrences, subjective explanations human beings constructs about the world they live in (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 21-22). As the purpose of the thesis aim at acquiring a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, a constructivist ontological approach has been chosen for the thesis. The reason for our choice is anchored in that we aim to capture and highlight human perceptions of the social phenomena Instagram. Instagram can be considered as the world we aim to better understand, companies represent social actors present in this world, hence their perceptions are of great importance to our study. Creswell (2003, p. 8-9) view is that constructivists claim all humans are different and moreover that differences are what matters. Hence, in our strive for knowledge we will therefore acknowledge

differentiating opinions, backgrounds and contexts among our interviewees. Moreover, constructivists are aware of that underlying norms, views, previous knowledge and experiences might shape their comprehension of the gathered data (Creswell, 2003, p. 8). As we, like our interviewees are but people, we recognize the existence of this 'human factor', and understand that our pre-understandings might affect the outcome of our findings.

3.3 Epistemology

A researcher's epistemological standpoint can be described as: the researcher perception of what is considered as accurate knowledge (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 15). *Positivism* is one epistemological standpoint that rises from theory, claiming that social scientist need to objectively scrutinize the world around them (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 15). The epistemological view of *interpretivism* arose in contrast to the philosophical standpoint of positivism, when social scientist started to argue that subjectivity and differences among people needed to be emphasised (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 17). According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p.15) positivists standpoints are closely related to natural sciences, relying on analysing social occurrences based on established theories. Interpretivists do not aim to explain their society; they aim at understanding human behaviour (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 16). Interpretivists view is that societal phenomena rise from individual differences among social actors (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 17). As our area of research is within the sphere of social sciences: we have chosen to focus on a social media marketing perspective, part of the marketing field, embodied within Business Administration, and the purpose of our thesis aim at acquiring a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover investigate the awareness and concern among marketers involved with the potential reach of younger customer audiences an *interpretive* approach hence seemed suitable to rely on.

3.4 Scientific Approach

In order to be able to conduct scientific research, It might be suitable for the researcher to determine what scientific approach will be chosen. Arguably different approaches may lead the research in different directions, which may affect how the result in the end will turn out to be. In order for the researcher to know how to physically conduct the research, it is important to make a scientific standpoint and chose an approach that is relevant for the study one want to conduct. As researchers we ask ourselves: what type of approach will work better in order to be able to answer our research question? A researcher can choose to rely on an inductive or deductive approach. The *deductive* approach can be defined as "a study in which a conceptual and theoretical structure is developed and then tested by empirical observation" (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p. 8). The approach involves forming certain hypotheses, theoretical assumptions within a specific research area, which are to be scientifically tested (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.11). In other words, in deductive research empirical data is gathered with the aim to test existing theory (Thomas, 2006). *Inductive* research on the other hand is defined as: "a study in which theory is developed from the observation of empirical reality" (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p. 8). Hence, this type of research "inductively develop a pattern of meaning" (Creswell, 2003, p. 9). The scientific approach chosen in order to fulfill the purpose of our study can be considered having an inductive character. The reason for this choice is that we do not aim at generalizing, having preconceived ideas of what we will end up finding. In our research we aim at gather information from real life marketers. Our empirical findings will hence be used in order to develop an understanding of how

companies make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. However, certain deductive traits will also be present in our research, as we started out deductively by consulting previous research. We had some trouble finding applicable scientific theories designed for Instagram marketing, however we found theories related to how social media platforms in general are build up and how they function. Hence, in a deductive manner we decided to test if a certain social media model could help us in order to understand how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram. However, when analysing our empirical data with our theoretical model certain themes seemed to emerge out of the findings in an inductive manner. Due to that our research hence will have both inductive and deductive characteristics, we claim our scientific research holds a mixed method status rather than a purely inductive or deductive approach. Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 13) argues that there will always be some aspects of deductive research even in studies with a strictly inductive approach and vice versa in research with a deductive approach. Hence we argue our choice to define our study as a mixed approach is to be considered as justified. When it comes to the *inductive data analysis*, empirical data is analysed and categorized into emerging themes and concepts which can be summarized into findings (Thomas, 2006, p. 238). When analysing the data we will make use of this inductive approach. The established findings will be critically scrutinized in order to check that we uphold certain truth criteria. By establishing our research as trustworthy, it can arguably work as a nice contribution to previous research within the field of social media marketing.

3.5 Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative researchers try to make sense of human behaviour rather than mathematical numbers which is the focus of quantitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 240). According to Collis and Hussey (2009, p. 7) qualitative research involves “collecting qualitative data and analysing them using interpretative methods” whereas quantitative research involves “collecting quantitative data [...] and analysing them using statistical methods.” Bryman and Bell (2011, p.410) describe how a qualitative method makes use of measurements such as words, deeply rooted underlying behaviours, descriptions and hidden meanings, in comparison to quantitative methods where numbers are decoded into mathematical logic. As we aim to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram, a qualitative research method seemed a reasonable choice.

Qualitative interviewing is described as a method, which is more flexible compared to the more *Structured interviewing* technique (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 466). The structured interview, often conducted by quantitative researchers, holds a clear and set structure concerning what need to be investigated in order to reach measurable results (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 202). The qualitative interview on the other hand focus on analysing interviewees differentiating point of views, hence is more adaptable in terms of which questions are asked (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 467). As the purpose of our thesis aim at acquiring a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover investigate the awareness and concern among marketers involved with the potential reach of younger customer audiences. The qualitative interviewing technique seemed a reasonable methodological choice as we aim to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram.

3.6 Source Criticism

In order to maintain a certain level of reliability throughout our work we have had a high level of source criticism in mind. In order to end up with a trustworthy contribution to previous research we acknowledged early on that we would need to devote quite a lot of effort into finding relevant and valid scholarly articles. The majority of our examined research within the social media-marketing field has been chosen due to that the articles have been peer reviewed which strengthen articles credibility. We therefore argue that these sources can be considered as trustworthy and hence that a good quality may be achieved throughout our work. The used articles have primarily been found at the university library article database (searching within scholarly articles) and Google scholar (criteria; peer reviewed). The search words used and number of hits is displayed in table 1 below.

Search words	No of hits on Google scholar	No of hits on University library
Instagram	98 000	226
Instagram marketing	15 200	116
Instagram marketing tool	5 270	0
Instagram social media	35 700	55
Instagram social media marketing	31 200	1
Social media	3 570 00	142 457
Social media branding	232 000	273
Social media marketing	2 150 000	3 576
Social media PR	1 990 000	257
Viral marketing	71 200	1 275
Word of mouth	1 080 000	33 194

Table 1, Search words and number of hits

What was realized when searching for scholarly articles was how the number of hits decreased when including specific words such as “Instagram” in the search. When including words such as marketing, the results became more varied. Some articles only mentioned Instagram or had a very specific focus in relation to the platform, neither of which were helpful in our investigation. On the other hand when searching for the broader concepts of social media and social media marketing the number of hits rose remarkably and a majority of the hits included broad evaluations of for instance social media marketing concepts. Based on these results our decision was to use articles discussing the general concepts of social media marketing and compare these with our empirical data regarding Instagram.

Known researchers within the field of marketing and qualitative research have mainly written the books that have been used. They were chosen mainly from reference lists of other sources we found reliable. When a specific concept, model or theory have been

used we have to a large extent tried to find the original creators of this phenomena, thus we have tried to find the very source of the concepts, in order to be able to truly understand them. When we have not had the opportunity to find these, course literature and handbooks within the field of social media marketing and qualitative research have been examined. All used books were found at the University Library. When it comes to statistical facts and information concerning for instance Swedish laws etc. web pages under the Swedish government authority and supervision has been used. Hence we argue these sources could be considered both trustworthy and relevant to involve. The data collected through interviews has its reliability in the vast experience and knowledge of the interviewees. They all represent companies who have been present on Instagram for quite some time and thereby have had the time to developed valuable thoughts and experience of the platform and its marketing opportunities. Furthermore, they all have high positions within their companies, hence we argue they hold a great level of knowledge concerning various marketing strategies and channels. We therefore argue that our interviewees and the data provided by them can be considered as trustworthy.

3.7 Sampling Method

There are two basic types of sampling; probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Merriam, 2009, p.77). *Probability sampling* has the aim to generate results that can be generalized and applied on the population from which the sample was drawn (Merriam, 2009, p.77). The most common sampling method in probability sampling is *random sampling*; a random sample is drawn from the chosen population and since no criteria whatsoever is being used the sample should posses the same characters as the population it was drawn from (Merriam, 2009, p.77). *Non-probability sampling*, and its most common method *purposive sampling*, is on the other hand characterized by the aim to understand and explain a phenomenon by a sample, selected based on certain criteria (Merriam, 2009, p.77). Merriam (2009, p.77) argues that statistical generalization is not a qualitative concern, hence no probability sampling is formally required. Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 234) moreover argue that “Random sampling [...] is a virtual impossibility in any real world situation [...]”. We do not live in a perfect world and to achieve totally random sampling, however unbiased that might be, would arguably not fulfill our research purpose. Our empirical data was gathered through qualitative interviews and our sample consisted of marketers from swedish companies present on Instagram with a business idea including sales. In other words, the interviewees have been chosen for their specific knowledge. In order to find interviewees with our wanted qualities we chose to rely on a *probability sampling* method. If we would have chosen our interviewees randomly, we would arguably not have been able to fulfil the purpose of the thesis: to acquire a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram, and moreover investigate the awareness and concern among marketers involved with the potential reach of younger customer audiences

3.8 Designing the interviews

When designing and conducting interviews, different approaches are available. A *structured interview* contains already prepared straightforward questions which are asked in order to receive solid answers, little room is given for the interviewee to speculate and discuss (Collis & Hussey, 2003, p. 195). The opposite, an *unstructured interview* contains open questions that encourage the respondent to discuss around topics the interviewer usually has prepared in order to encourage discussion rather than direct questions (Collis & Hussey, 2003, p. 195). Finally (Collis & Hussey, 2003,

p.195) describes a middle way, semi-structured interviewees. Semi-structured interviews contain a set of prepared question but additionally allows for the interview to ask follow-up questions to get the interviewee to further discuss relevant and interesting topics (Collis & Hussey, 2003, p.195). Collis and Hussey (2003, p. 195) further describe how there are benefits and disadvantages with all of the three interview structures, a structured interview will generate straight forward answers which are easy to compare but it can be hard to discover underlying reasons and speculation. Unstructured interviews on the other hand have the advantage revealing possible differentiating aspects among the interviewees as well as focus on topics that are more relevant for each interviewee (Collis & Hussey, 2003, p. 195). For us it seemed suitable to combine these two methods and conduct semi-structured interviews. Even though the unstructured approach might provide the interviewee with more freedom in terms of discussion and speculation, we want to be sure to receive certain information connected to our research question and purpose and will these by choose an semi-structured interview strategy. Additionally, we fear that marketers might be reluctant to spontaneously share their views concerning certain ethical issues involved with marketing on Instagram. We feel a need to guide our interviewees with certain questions in order to achieve responses that are relevant to our study. We moreover aim to provide our interviewees with a certain level of freedom to answer the questions however they feel suitable along with giving room for probes. By creating an *Interview Guide*, a sort of list of questions which can be a support when conducting the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.647), we get a chance to make sure that all the questions we ask are formulated in a similar manner to all interviewees. Arguably this will decrease the risk of biases caused by interviewees interpreting the same question differently as it was formulated slightly different during the interviews. The questions we have chosen to formulate in advance will be further discussed in the Interview Guide.

3.9 Interviewguide

In order to be able to answer our research questions, semi-structured interviews were conducted and interview questions were therefore developed. There are some advantages with creating an interview guide on beforehand. In order to end up with responses that would help us answer our research questions we needed to assure ourselves that we asked questions that were of relevance. Moreover, as mentioned under Designing the interviews, we wanted to end up with responses that were as fruitful as possible hence we took interest in individuals differentiating opinions concerning similar topics and matters. We put effort in writing a script of questions containing questions we wanted all our interviewees to answer. Merriam (2009) emphasise the importance of making sure that questions are not perceived as judgemental as it would set the respondent in a defence position. An interviewee in defence is more concerned by that than answering questions, or alternatively, starts to answer the questions with believably “correct” answers rather than provide honest and truthful information (Merriam, 2009 p.105). Creswell (2003, p. 17) describes that in order to understand underlying motives and thoughts, one have to ask *open-ended questions* (meaning: questions that are more *open* towards interpretation), compared to the *instrument based questions* (meaning; questions that can be quantitatively *measured*). This is something we aim to follow; make sure that our questions, are open and allows for interpretation and discussion, example “*Describe how your company make use of Instagram?*”. However since our topic is rather specific, some questions of a more direct character had to be asked as well, in order for us to fully understand how companies use Instagram to market themselves, example; “*Do you use Instagram to target any specific customer segments?*”. We argue this mixture is giving us the best possibilities to

investigate our research question concerning how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 255) questions asked during the interview need to be formulated in such a manner that they can help fulfil the purpose and answer the research question of the thesis. In order for our questions to achieve this, we had to constantly have in mind: what is it in fact that we would like to know? Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 256) moreover claim that in order not to confuse the interviewees the researcher need to refrain from asking ambiguous questions which can be interpreted in several ways. Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 256) argues that one should try not to ask leading questions, as they might bias the respondent to take a specific standpoint or answer in a specific manner. As we wanted to let our interviewees respond as freely as possible we found this aspect crucial to have in mind. Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 256-257) point out that asking too broad questions might result in broad and varied answers. We are aware of this fact and have therefore kept questions of a more general character in the beginning of the interview, aimed at being more or less warm-up questions for our interviewees. These questions merely aim to introduce our interviewees to the research topic.

The interview guide (which is to be found in the Appendix) is constructed around four main topics; *General marketing information*, *Marketing on Instagram*, *Technical functions on Instagram* and *Interaction on Instagram*. The first topic includes questions regarding general marketing strategies of the company and how they work with social media overall. This part provides us with a foundation and an overall picture of the company and how they work with marketing. This information is relevant in order to be able to understand companies usage of Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. Furthermore these questions give us essential information about the interviewee and his/hers work tasks, information that is useful when comparing the different companies, as people with different responsibilities and work tasks assumably have different perspectives on marketing. The second topic, *Marketing on Instagram*, questions why the company has chosen to be present on Instagram and how they make use of the platform for marketing purposes. This topic is chosen in order to find out managers opinions about Instagram as a marketing tool and how the managers reason about the content they post and what goals they aim to achieve with this content. Since the main focus of the thesis is to understand how companies market themselves on Instagram the third category, *Technical functions on instagram*, was created. As the purpose of our thesis aim at acquiring a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover investigate companies' awareness and concern regarding their potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram involved with the potential reach of younger customer audiences, we claim these questions discussing technical functions available on Instagram might help us better understand this. The fourth topic, *Interaction on Instagram*, concerns how the interaction between the companies and their followers on Instagram is handled. The topic investigates whether companies are able to gain information about customers and followers through Instagram. It is furthermore discussed whether Instagram is used to target specific customers segments and/or if the companies adapt their Instagram content according to these. Additionally, companies knowledge about the increasingly growing presence of young Instagram users are examined. This fourth part evaluates companies marketing behaviour on instagram.

3.10 Telephone Interviewing

The companies contacted were chosen by two criteria; they had to actively use Instagram and they had to sell something, goods or services. We brainstormed for possible companies which we then investigated whether they had Instagram or not. If they had Instagram they were contacted. In order to reach out to companies it seemed convenient to conduct all interviews over telephone. Neither we, nor the marketers, had the time or resources to travel around Sweden in order to conduct face-to-face interviews. Face-to-face interviews would have provided an additional level of understanding through the display of body language (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 489). We are aware of that we will not be able to profit from these additional fractions of information. However, Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 489) emphasises that interviewees possibly may feel more at ease if they only hear a voice and do not see their interviewers. Merriam (2009, p.106) emphasises the general importance of being as clear as possible when asking questions as our voices will be the main tools for communication. One benefit with conducting telephone interviews is that the interviewees will be less limited in time and location (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.206).

Seven marketers were interviewed in order for us to get a deeper understanding of marketing on Instagram. The initial contact with the companies was made by phone. However this procedure became rather time consuming as the majority of companies required more than one phone call in order for us to get in contact with the right person. Therefore we decided to handle initial contact through email. We started out by contacting 20 companies, hoping that half of them would be available for interviews. However, as their responses lingered and we had a rather tight time schedule, we contacted more interesting companies. I total 65 companies were contacted. From the 65 contacted companies we received 48 answers with 25 direct declines (in the majority of cases due to their too busy schedules) and 23 positive answers. However, 13 of the positive answers included an urge to contact another person within the company, often someone with the main responsibility for the company or the social media channels. Three of these companies were in the end included among the interviewees, five of them declined, and five took too long to answer and could therefore not be included in the study. In the end there were eight companies available the days during which we had the opportunity to conduct the interviews. However one of the interviewees got sick, and thereby we ended up with a total of seven interviews.

The interviews were all conducted by the same person in order to keep them as consistent as possible and in order to avoid bias due to differentiations among interviewers. However, both authors were present during the interviews, and the second interviewer hence held the role of being able to ask additional, follow-up questions if necessary. To minimize misunderstandings and make the interviewees as comfortable as possible, the interviews were conducted in the native tongue of both interviewers and interviewees; Swedish. The interviews were thereafter translated into English. The interviews took place over telephone, at a mutually agreed day and time. The interviewers called up the interviewees, presented themselves and asked whether it was okay that the interviews was recorded. The only purpose of the recording was in order to be able to transcript as accurate as possible. All companies agreed on being recorded. After the two first interviews were conducted some sub-questions were added. The interviewees had provided surprisingly interesting information, which we wanted to make sure to discuss with the rest of our interviewees. A possible bias may have

occurred as two of the interviewees requested to read the questions in advance, whereas the other five did not require doing so. This was after the first two interviews had been conducted so there was no possibility to hand out questionnaire to all the interviewees on beforehand. The two interviewees however got a chance to read the questions on beforehand, hence we are aware of that this may have resulted in possible biases.

It need to be pointed out that in some interviews an ethical discussion did not even rise due to that one of our questions was ambiguously formulated, the interviewees hence interpreted our last question quite differently. Unfortunately we realized this too late, after having conducted some of the interviews already. Hence, an additional follow-up question relating to a more direct ethical standpoint was sent to these respondents by mail, so that they would have the possibility to have a say in the matter as well. Unfortunately only one interviewee chose to add information when asked this second time.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

In order not to end up making immoral choices during a research project Diener and Crandall (1978, cited by Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 128) proposes four areas of ethical consideration: *harm to participants*, *lack of informed consent*, *invasion of privacy* and *deception*, which business students can actively be aware of and hence identify and limit possible ethical issues involved with their work. According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 128) it is morally wrong to intentionally harm parties involved in a specific research project. Diener and Crandall (1978, cited by Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 128) moreover illuminates that harm might happen even though it is not intended. However, by continuously having in mind that we do not want to harm and by actively trying not to do so we argue we can limit the most risky areas where harm might be present. All interviewees were clearly informed and assured of that we have no hidden agenda or intention to harm the interviewees or their employees. It was clearly explained that the purpose of the study was to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities.

According to the MRS Guidelines for Qualitative Research Rule 18 (Market Research Society, 2011, p. 10) “*Members must ensure that participants are provided with sufficient information to allow informed consent to be given*”. When conducting our interviews we therefore made sure to rely upon MRS guidelines provided in rule 18 (Market Research Society, 2011, p. 10). Hence, before each and every interview we made sure to clearly state our names, which university we are studying at, what our research aimed to investigate, that we intended to record the interview but that we were the only ones that would listen to of this information along with providing an approximation of how long the interview would take. Before the interview was conducted we asked if they were okay with these terms.

In order not to intervene with our interviewees privacy, the interviewees were provided with the possibility of being anonymous, which they all chose to rely upon. Moreover, we chose not to involve any questions with personal character in our interview guide. A similar concern was in mind when we chose to make use of semi-structured interviews. According to Merriam (2009, p. 90) this type of interview structure is a good option in terms of that it make the interviewees to feel secure enough to discuss around the topics. Unstructured questions might result in that the respondent gets too carried away in the discussions and reveals more than intended which might result in that the interviewee

start feeling at unease (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). To keep anonymity even further intact, the name of the companies will be held anonymous and only key facts such as how many followers and which business sector will be displayed. We have however chosen to state the work responsibilities of the interviewees as we argue that such information strengthen the credibility of their answers, showing that the person interviewed has deep and comprehensive knowledge regarding marketing. If there would be any questions that the interviewees' would not like to answer, whatever the reason, they would have the possibility to choose not to. However this situation did not rise during the interviews. Overall, all questions asked received an answer.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 136) deception happens when “researchers represent their research as something other than what it is”. We have not intended to deceive or harm any of our interviewees. In order to limit the possibility of deception, we have tried to be as clear and informative as possible throughout the research process. All interviewees were provided with information concerning the aim of the research.

3.12 Transcriptions: Data analysis

Thomas (2006, p. 238) argues that many researchers struggle with complex data analysis approaches of qualitative research, in order to make it more clear for researchers he proclaims following a more general inductive approach. In an inductive approach data analysis is accomplished through multiple readings of the gathered data where purpose and questions of the study are used to identify relevant topics to be investigated (Thomas, 2006, p. 239-240). Thomas (2006, p. 240) argues that even though these findings are formed by the study and thereby the author, they arise from the raw data and is thus not influenced by expectations about specific findings. The findings are shaped by the evaluators in the sense that the ones evaluating the data decide what is important to highlight (Thomas, 2006 p. 240). The primary method of the analysis is the progress of transforming raw data into categories and develop a model or framework (Thomas, 2006, p. 240). As mentioned above, we are conducting qualitative research with a constructivist ontological standpoint and an interpretivist epistemological standpoint. Our aim is to understand how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover investigate the awareness and concern among marketers involved with the potential reach of younger customer audiences. However, as mentioned in the scientific research part above our data analysis have followed a *mixed method approach*. We began by conducting a deductive analysis of our gathered data, these findings were later processed inductively using Thomas (2006) inductive data analysis approach. The inductive coding procedure is described below. We will use this procedure as guidance when analysing our data.

The inductive coding procedure is divided into five different stages; the first including the construction of all raw data files into a common format (Thomas, 2006, p. 241). The second stage of coding involves the researcher gaining an understanding of the data by thorough reading of the text. Thomas (2006, p. 241) explains that in third step contains the process of categorization and creation of themes. He further reasons that it most likely that the general categories are created based on the research aims whereas the more specific categories are drawn from the raw data reading, a process called “vivo coding” Thomas (2006, p. 241).

This part of the process is not strict, different procedures of coding and tools can be used (Thomas, 2006, p. 242). The fourth step of coding is rather a clarification than an actual step in the coding process (Thomas, 2006, p. 242). It is stated that parts of text that are seen as irrelevant do not have to be included in the process as well as one part of the text may be used in two different coded categories. The final step is the “continuing revision and refinement of the category system”, meaning that each category is searched for the revealing of new insights, important points and subtopics and the selection of appropriate parts that captures the essence of each category (Thomas, 2006, p. 242). Thomas (2006) argues that the aim of the coding process is to create three to eight summary categories.

In this thesis we have followed the data analysis of Thomas (2006) except for one step in the coding procedure. Instead of, in the third step; categorizing and creating themes from the raw data we divided the data into the categories/blocks of the honeycomb and through these blocks the data was analysed and themes were created. The categorization into the honeycomb blocks enabled a consistency in the thesis, and made us exclude irrelevant data and identify the main features relevant for Instagram.

3.13 Quality Criteria

In order for research to be accepted and considered as valuable and trustworthy knowledge Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 394) emphasises quantitative researchers evaluate their research using certain reliability and validity criteria. However, as previously mentioned, we are not quantitative researchers and therefore we have looked for other quality criterions that could better fit our thesis. Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 246) proposes four criteria that qualitative researchers following a naturalistic research paradigm may use when evaluating trustworthiness, these include *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability* and *confirmability*. As we follow a naturalistic research paradigm it hence seemed reasonable to rely on these quality criteria throughout our work in order to maintain a certain level of accuracy in our findings.

When questioning the level of **credibility** the researcher challenges how believable the finding are (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 246). Some practical precautions the researcher may need to take in order to achieve this are for instance to try to exclude “personal feelings, anxieties and stresses that otherwise might affect the inquiry adversely” (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 247). The researcher can moreover compare the research with other qualitative data analyses, or to scientifically test the theory through real life experimentation (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 247 – 248). To achieve this criteria we have tried to stay focused when actively working with the thesis in order to stay dedicated in our strive to acquiring a deeper understanding of companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. We have emphasized the importance of taking regular breaks of relaxation, doing some sports in between work, and have hence been able to clear our minds and managed to stay focused. We have moreover ‘tested’ an existing theoretical social media model in accordance with our empirical findings in order to highlight certain important traits of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram.

The **transferability** criteria investigates whether the findings can be recaptured in other settings (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). In order to test this criteria Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 248) suggest the qualitative researcher engage in purposive sampling and provide as much information as possible concerning the context in which the data

collection was conducted. In that manner, other researchers may try to mimic the research procedure in other contexts monitoring how similar/different the outcomes turn out to be (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 248). For the study we have chosen a purposive sampling method and tried to explain in great detail as much as possible concerning the external context of how our empirical data was gathered. Hence we argue that other researchers may make use of our structure and may test if our research applies to other situations.

The **dependability** criteria aim at evaluating whether the study could take place in another moment in time (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). A qualitative researcher must ask if the findings are as trustworthy as they are consistent (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 247). Hence if another researcher would repeat our research in a couple of months would similar findings and conclusions be achieved? Arguably this criterion may be slightly more difficult to achieve. As our study investigates how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram, it might be difficult to reach the exact same findings in a couple of years. We do not know what the future will hold for the platform, perhaps marketers will work in an entirely different manner, Moreover, other researchers would probably investigate entirely different companies and might hence reach differentiating conclusions. However, by being humble towards that our study may not be dependable enough to work in all times and all places we may still argue that our study may accurately describe how contemporary companies make use of the social media platform Instagram.

The **confirmability** measure evaluate whether the researcher has let own values affect the research to the extent that it can be considered as non trustworthy (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). To monitor this, Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 247) suggests that the qualitative researcher adopts a certain level of objectivity when analysing the gathered data in order to critically scrutinizing the confirmability of the findings. This may include identifying personal assumptions and other biases that one as a researcher have in order to become aware of these and hence try not to engage in this prejudicial behaviour (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 247). During our data analysis we had in constant mind that we have to try to be as objective as possible and not let our prejudice emerge. Hence in order to monitor our level of objectivity the interviews were transcribed with great caution in order to keep the transcript as accurate as possible. During the analysis stage these transcripts were read over and over again, in order to be able to spot relevant patterns. By letting patterns naturally emerge out of the gathered data, we argue we have been able to draw conclusions of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram that may be confirmed as accurately true.

4. Empirical Study/Results

4.1 Interview 1

Time: 52 minutes

Type of Business: Retail - Home Living - B-to-C

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 105k

Type of Instagram account: The company's official Instagram account

Language used on the account: English

First post on Instagram: Juli 2012

The interviewee: market coordinator. The work involves being in charge of social media, taking photographs, press contact etc.

The interviewee explains how social media channels are the main marketing channels for the company. Their main platforms are Instagram, Facebook, and to a smaller extent: Pinterest. The overall marketing goal is described to be *“generate more traffic to their stores”*. The company works with products who are described as very picture friendly and Instagram being an image centred media, the platform seemed as a perfect marketing choice. The Interviewee describes it as a simple and fun marketing channel that is easy to use, something that goes hand in hand with their corporate spirit. One advantage with Instagram is stated to be how Instagram works in real-time *“one can reach customers directly and the response is broad and direct”*. However, the same aspect is described as a disadvantage since the real-time aspect makes it hard to pre-plan and manage posts. Further disadvantages are how one only can upload posts using a mobile phone and that one cannot pre-adjust for pictures to be uploaded per automatic, describes the interviewee. Another disadvantage is brought to light as customer groups are discussed. The social media platform does not allow for much information about gender, geographical location, age and so on. Hence it becomes difficult to evaluate the company's success within certain customer groups.

The company's main ambition is to inspire and keep their content up-to-date; *“The message needs to be direct; It shall feel like the picture has been taken here and now”*. The interviewee describes how they aim to inspire rather than focus on current sale offers. An interesting aspect mentioned was that it might be difficult for a new company to only use Instagram for marketing purposes. The company notices a certain increase in sale for the products they chose to upload on Instagram. However multiple likes and comments do not automatically mean an increase in sales; *“we have been active on Instagram for so long now that we have learned what different reactions mean. For instance: if a picture get many likes and comments, but does not lead to increased sale of the product, we can tell from the comments if people mostly see the product as a fun idea or if it actually will sell.”* The company can see that the number of followers increases each month, which to them is an indication of success.

The company read and try to answer all comments they receive on Instagram. The interviewee explains *“Personally, I think it is very important to respond to questions and comments from customers. However, when we notice that many ask the same thing, ignoring previous comments in the feed, we tend to skip commenting.”* If a picture is uploaded in the afternoon or evening the interviewee make sure to have time to answer questions in direct connection to the post. *“Availability is very important; otherwise there would be no use to employ social media.”* The interviewee states how it is

important to always answer regardless which channel is used; customers service, Instagram or Facebook, and how they notice this philosophy is greatly appreciated among their customers. Comments on old posts are not always commented on, as such may quickly disappear in the feed. The general rule is to never remove comments but the interviewee explains how comments that repeatedly only try to promote themselves are removed. The first days after uploading a new post, the company read all comments, but to ease the burden somewhat they have bought a news coverage service, which scan their feed, sensing if their hashtags are being used. The interviewee explains how the company encourage people to make use of their company hashtag when posting content connect to the company. This is done in order for the company to be able to see the pictures as well as other being able to get inspired as they search for the company hashtag. Additionally they sometimes arrange campaigns where the company encourage people to forward their content, for instance: *“the follower can be required to post a picture with some of our hashtags and furthermore tag two friends in order to participate in the competition.”* However, the company aim is to use rather few hashtags, *“we try to keep it simple as we think it can look rather messy with too many hashtags.”* It is explained that the company sometimes use the ‘at’ function (@username) to highlight some of the pictures tagged with the company hashtag, or simply to highlight a picture that is nice or inspiring. The location function is not used at all since most pictures are taken at the company’s headquarters.

The interviewee admits that they screen their competitors on Instagram for inspirational purposes and have noticed that many other firms look at their post on Instagram. The company mainly choose to follow individual accounts on Instagram and partner accounts in order to support these. *“We follow private persons with nice accounts or that upload fun stuff”*. The interviewee explains how it is noticed that some companies do not follow other users whereas they have made it a thing to follow talented Instagrammers.

The company target different audiences on Facebook and Instagram. The audience on Facebook are described as slightly older than the ones on Instagram. *“We have many young followers, even though we do not especially aim at target these on Instagram”*. It is explained how the company have done a ‘target group journey’ and how their current target is an slightly older audience than the one targeted a couple of years ago. The company’s current main target group are working women. However, as discussed above the company do not receive any info about their customers through Instagram. *“We can find information about which products are more popular, but it is quite difficult to tell if our followers are women or men or where they live”*. The company often use Instagram to pilot test their products in order to see how much interest they generate. *“We use these tests as basis when deciding upon what quantities of certain products we will send to our web shop. It is quite a practical solution.”* The company knows very little about their customers due to that Instagram provide them with no statistics. However, the fact that the company has been present on Instagram for quite a long time, has made them realize certain things, such as that the majority of the company’s’ followers are females. *“We have seen a tendency among women in relationships to tag their boyfriend in posts containing products that they want”*. By instinct they can tell customers interest and what type of products they like, but they have no real facts concerning such things. *“It would have been great if one could receive more statistical facts from Instagram. For instance it would be good to know how many international followers one has and where they are from if one considers future expansion.”* However, as Instagram is taken over

by Facebook the interviewee believe there might soon be more marketing and advertising possibilities on the platform.

4.2 Interview 2

Time: 45 minutes

Type of Business: B-to-C Convenient Store Chain

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 1,618

Type of Instagram account: the company's' Swedish Instagram account

Language used on the account: Swedish

First post on Instagram: February 2013

The Interviewee: is responsible for the internal communication of two convenient store chains digital media channels; involving web pages, mobile applications, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc.

The marketing on social media is conducted in line with the overall marketing strategy. Hence, the campaigns follow the same marketing patterns on each channel. Some smaller individual campaigns in social media might occur but they are always kept within the current marketing focus. The Interviewee explains how the company aims at reaching out to all people that are “on the go” and the increasing popularity of Instagram makes it a very interesting social media platform. One advantage with Instagram is stated to be that pictures holds the main focus, the pictures get a lot of space in the feed, hence they have a great possibility to capture customer attention. The interviewee mentions how their main focus with Instagram is to inspire and create a certain desire among customers for their products. *“For instance, in the afternoon we might upload something sweet, which customers might start crave and can be inspired to buy.”* When further describing the content Interviewee describes ads how it has to represent what is happening right now, whether it is the weather or the latest in the news world.

The interviewee sees no direct disadvantages with the platform. The platform provides consumer feedback and hence assimilation opportunities for the company through for instance comments. It is brought to light that *“The only negative aspect is that it can be difficult to reach out to a user who follows a lot of Instagram accounts, it might be difficult to reach such followers as they are distracted by many other posts.”* The company can measure how successful their marketing efforts have been on Instagram in different ways. Sometimes the most interesting aspect is described as looking at the number of likes a post has received or how many people follow the account. However, the interviewee describes that they cannot see how many people have seen their post on Instagram which additionally can be seen as a disadvantage. After each campaign the company calculate the amount of sold goods and hence see if there is any difference between in sales before and after the campaign. *“Sometimes we even calculate and compare the weekly result with a previous week in order to follow up on activities profitability.”* In such evaluations they take social media campaigns into account as well and evaluates whether those have had impact on sales.

The interviewee explains how they sometimes arrange competitions if it seem relevant. *“Competitions can be a fun way to capture attention”* as *“Competitions can make customers notice our products and hence buy them.”* During previously arranged competitions the company made use of other social media platforms to get their message out. For instance they uploaded information about their Instagram competition

on their webpage. An interesting aspect brought up by the interviewee was that firms could hire Instagram profiles to partake in competitions. The concept was described as a sort of agency, an Instagram profile bank containing different users that could be rented for marketing purposes. Depending on what type of campaign the company conducted, they could choose among certain profiles. The ones who partook in the competition would upload a photo on their Instagram profile with the comment “in cooperation with company name” at the end of their post.

The company uses the ‘location’ function frequently, every time they are at a specific place from where they chose to upload a photo. The ‘at’ function (@username) is used sometimes, when it is relevant, for instance when the company wants to tag a supplier or a partner. *“It is about giving credit to certain people, to show them that we appreciate their contributions”*. Moreover the interviewee explain how they closely keep track of customer opinions. If receiving complaints about a product the interviewee contact the product manager and make sure to answer the customer. The company answer comments on Instagram if they feel it is relevant to do so. Moreover the company listen to all negative comments. *“The customer is ‘our highest boss’, and if they think something is wrong, we need to acknowledge that.”* The interviewee explains it as important that their posts have a high level of customer reach. *“It is more important with likes on Instagram than on Facebook, as Instagram offers little statistics. The ‘likes’ becomes an indication of how many people have seen the picture.”* The company target a general customer segment which includes all ages, however on Instagram they try to reach a younger audience. Thus, the interviewee explains how they know nothing about their Instagram followers, such statistics is not received from Instagram. The company is aware of Instagram have slightly younger users and hence tend to use language that is adapted to younger audiences. The messages the company sends out on Instagram includes in general a lot of emojis and hashtags. However the interviewee explains how the company have a certain code of conduct for how they act on social media which always is followed. The company follow Instagram accounts they think are interesting, accounts belonging to partners, suppliers, or just because it is an account who generally like the company's products. The interviewee explain how they from time to time visit other user accounts on Instagram, as *“it is interesting to see what other do”* and to find inspiration. These account usually belong to competitors but also companies within other industries and segments.

4.3 Interview 3

Time: 45 minutes

Type of Business: B-to-C Retail chain that has specialized in practical products used in their customers everyday life. They sell for instance home supplies, hobby equipment and electronic and technical gear.

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 2,320

Type of Instagram account: the company's Swedish account

Language used on the account: Swedish

First post on Instagram: October 2013

The interviewee: is in charge of social media and online marketing for Sweden.

The company work with reaching customers through the social media platforms: Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and Facebook. Other channels, such as radio, online advertising and television are used as well. The reason the company have an Instagram account is due to the large number of Swedes currently active on Instagram, hence they

felt they too should be present there. The company noticed that people started to use their company hashtag even before they were physically present on Instagram. The interviewee expresses a positive opinion towards Instagram as a marketing channel, however it is pointed out how it is difficult to know what posts people like, as well as to find a clear niche for the company on the platform. *“It’s a matter of finding a clear message, to test, try different variations in order to find ones target customers, what people like. It is all about finding a good balance between: what message the company want to send out, and what type of content works on Instagram”*. The interviewee adds that the company is still in an experimental phase on Instagram. They still try to find a good company signature on the platform.

The interviewee claim that a company can have a policy for what to do and achieve on social media, but it can hard to maintain it, as social media platforms are continuously changing. The interviewee claim it is hard to set a fixed marketing strategy for Instagram; *“one have to continually change as well and experiment some”*. Instagram is mentioned as a good platform, through which the company can both reach and talk to its customers. The interviewee emphasises however, that being actively present on Instagram, has not made them exclude other marketing channels. Instagram has rather become an additional channel to keep track on. One disadvantage with being present on Instagram is the increased amount of work. The interviewee argues that it is important for the company to have an active Instagram account; *“If one create an account on Instagram, one have to dedicate some time and effort, we are present here now and we have to do something.”* The company mention that they make use of something called Iconosquare where they can follow statistics from their Instagram posts. The company can for instance see how many followers they have, how many new followers they have gained and how many followers have disappeared. Different scores are also visible on Iconosquare, there is something called ‘love rate’ where the company can see how many ‘likes’ their posts have gotten. There is also something called ‘talk rate’, which provide data on how many followers ‘talk about’ the company on Instagram, for instance uses company hashtags or write @companyname. There is also something called ‘spread rate’ which tell to what extent content has been spread to other users. The company make use of this tool, as Instagram provide little statistical data. Some goals the company have with its content on Instagram is that it should be engaging, and people should like it. Furthermore it has to be in line with the messages sent out from the company's other channels. It is mentioned that customers make contact through other channels (email, Facebook, phone) if they are in immediate need of help or want to get a direct answer to something. The company express that they want customers to find them on Instagram and moreover that they want customers to like what they do. In order to achieve this the company work hard to show their active presence on Instagram. However, *“If a user would like to personally tell others about us on Instagram, of course we would be very grateful”*.

The company try to use their hashtag and company slogan in all of their posts. The interviewee argues that too broad hashtags disappears in the crowd, and if they are too narrow the company have to evaluate what the hashtag stands for and if they want to be associated with that message. The @ funktion was described as used by the company when they wanted to give cred to a specific follower for having uploaded something fun or especially creative, in order to pass it along. The @ function was also great to use when wanting to answer a question in someone’s feed. *“Yesterday, a customer searched for a specific product and, it was around 40 comments in that feed. In these cases is this*

'search function' great in the way that by using @ I know that the customer will get a notification in their phone." The @ give the company a way of showing that they want to make contact with someone. The 'location' function was described as being used sometimes. The interviewee claim that if one work with social media, one gets driven by likes and comments. Its all about customer reach and acknowledgement, a proof of that one have done a good job. *"At the moment, everything under 100 likes, it is just like 'shit, now we're on the wrong track'".*

The time aspect was mentioned as important to keep track on. *"Which time is the best to upload content on Instagram? Is it in the morning, in the evening or in the middle of the day?"* The company mentioned that they were experimenting with time in order to find what would suit better their Instagram account. The company appreciate it when people like their posts, however they do not go out and tell people to do so. *"However, there are plenty of large and popular Instagram accounts, and if Zlatan Ibrahimovic would recommend us on Instagram, that would off course have been great!"* The company mention that they try to reach out to their targeted customer segment on Instagram, but recognizes as well that they have to adapt their messages somewhat to which customers are present on Instagram (as not all of their customers have Instagram). It was mentioned that the company follow people on Instagram they think are interesting in order to highlight their great work. The company screen competitors, as well as search for tips and ideas on the interviewees separate private account.

The company tries to answer all comments and questions they receive on Instagram both negative and positive in an open and honest manner. The company want to support their customers: *"If a customer have any problem or if a product they bought is broken or something, we tell them that 'we are sorry, but as you know we have a two year guarantee on all of our products, step by our closest store and we will help you'."* The company answers all direct questions they receive on Instagram and find it very important to interact with their followers and to be actively present on Instagram. *"Lets say that we receive a comment on a Saturday evening, no one here is officially working at that time. It goes back to what expectations do our fans have? If they ask something on Instagram, when do they expect to get an answer: is it within 12 hours, 24 hours or 1 hour?"* In order to meet customer expectations the interviewee emphasizes the importance of having a strong organisational support and backup, to be able to handle difficult tasks. The interviewee mention how they can keep track of what their customers say about them to a certain extent with the help of hashtags. However, it is rather difficult to tell who their followers on Instagram are. The interviewee explain it as they can get some hints and glimpses about who their followers might be but any extensive knowledge are they not able to contain. It was expressed that it could possibly be interesting to get more statistical information from Instagram in the future. On the other hand, another source of information would probably lead to additional work. *"Maybe it is better to just let it be. And accept that one do not know everything about everyone on Instagram. It is better to just use the platform for what it is good for: uploading nice pictures. We already receive quite a lot of information from our membership club"*. The company is not concerned by that their messages might reach the increasingly present 12-15 year olds on Instagram as these are not part of their targeted group of customers. They see no direct match with this segment. However, it is pointed out that if they would have had this age group as their target, then they would probably have been extra careful with what content they would post. Moreover *"if 12-15 year olds would chose to follow us, they are free to do so, they are welcome to do so*

by their own free will, but that is it”, hence the company does not encourage them to do so

4.4 Interview 4

Time: 30 minutes

Type of business: B-to-C, retail - outdoor clothes and equipment

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 15K

Type of Instagram account: The company's official, hence international account.

Language used on the account: English

First post on Instagram: February 2014

The interviewee: is in charge of the brand and the corporate online media strategy.

The company's overall marketing purpose is to inspire people, to act responsibly and create great products. The interviewee considers that discussions concerning social media in general focus too much on the different *channels*. What ought to be the main focus is the message itself: what one want to say. The company work with reaching customers as effectively as possible through different channels, based on the strategy set by the organisation. The company use several channels such as for instance Instagram, Facebook, Youtube and Twitter. The company is present on Instagram due to the many consumers actively using the platform. It is explained that on Facebook nowadays a company need to pay to appear in the news feed. Instagram is described as a more organic platform, where one can get a better view of who like ones content. One disadvantage with the channel is that it provides few direct sale possibilities. One advantages with Instagram is that it is easy to use. *“It is quite easy to upload a nice picture, it does not require that much tactic.”*

The company do not really measure their success on Instagram, however they mention that they can tell which content people interact more with, and hence try to post such things. The company do not work with keeping track of statistics and data. *“One goal that we have is to try to use the channels that people use, it is as simple as that”*. Currently, the company still uses quite a lot of traditional advertising. However, they wish to turn more and more to digital means and aim to try to use own channels more in the future. The company claims that Instagram can be used to give a better understanding of how customers perceive their brand or company, however the company does not use such functions. *“We have our own values, a strong foundation that of course is connected to what our customers think, but we do not use Instagram to check what our customers do. We do not check hashtags and such as much, I am kind of the only one that work with Instagram and I do not have the possibility to listen to what all the millions of people that talk to us say.”* On Facebook and YouTube however, the company uses customer services to be able to answer all questions that are posted. They try to answer all messages people send on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube within a day. On Instagram, the company tries to answer all direct questions and comments.

A general goal the company has with the content they upload on Instagram and Facebook is to encourage users to interact with them. However they have no mass messaging aim and do try to upload pictures just to get likes. It is more important for the company to have a clear corporate image. *“Whoever can upload a lot of epic nature pictures, we do not want to compete with that”*. The company do not use hashtags that frequently. The interviewee mention that they possibly might use hashtags in a more campaign based manner in the future. They currently use hashtags for event related

purposes or in order to “gather their content”. The @function is not frequently used by the company “*We have a quite strong corporate image, so we do not need to be so damn tactical. People seem to like our values. We stand for what people think we stand for, which makes us quite strong. People tend to want to listen*”. It happens that the company use the ‘location’ function on Instagram but they have no specific strategy or tactic for it.

The company do not target any specific group of customers on Instagram. The interviewee explain how they acknowledge that Instagram can be used to receive information about customers, by “*searching through hashtags and such*”. However, the company makes no active use of this function. Moreover, if they want to look at competitors and other Instagram accounts they chose to do so from a personal account. A certain wish to be able to interact more is expressed by the interviewee; “*It would have been fun to follow certain opinion leaders, to try to interact with what they say, do and so on. Perhaps that could be something that we could engage more in, but unfortunately it might be a question of resources.*” Customer interaction is of course something the company want to achieve on Instagram. However, as stated, the company know very little about their current followers on Instagram. It might be interesting to find out more about their followers, but that would also lead to increased workload. “*I think it is quite nice that the platform offers little data, that is one of the advantages with Instagram really.*” The company is not concerned by that their messages might reach the increasingly present 12-15 year olds on Instagram. It is not something they think of when marketing. They do not adjust their messages to children.

4.5 Interview 5

Time: 45 minutes

Type of Business: B-to-B and B-to-C food refinery and production - resale - visiting sites

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 283

Type of Instagram account: the company account

Language used on the account: Swedish

First post on Instagram: July 2014

The interviewee: is responsible for the social media, the PR aspects involved with social media, the company's membership club, and other press related stuff.

The interviewee starts out with explaining that four years ago the company was not represented in social media at all. Today the company is present on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and have different strategies for these three platforms. On Facebook they work more in a more communicative manner, on Twitter the company target all press and media and on Instagram the company focus greatly on esthetics with a clear connection to their products lifecycle. In order to send out a clear message to the recipient, the company have chosen to keep a distinct differentiation between the different social media channels they use.

As the company is rather ‘picture-friendly’, the interviewee asserts Instagram to be an excellent tool to strengthen the corporate image. An overall corporate goal is to care about followers and fans that already like them rather than engage in campaigns to increase the level of followers. The interviewee states that it is important to monitor Instagram closely since it is not only the pictures the company post they become associated with. The company has to continuously keep track of what consumers say

when they use their hashtags. The interviewee explains that more and more working hours goes to monitor and see what is written about the company on social media, this involves screening the company hashtags. It is further explained that the company have a 24 hour response rule, when it comes to answering questions and comments on Instagram. The company have as princip to try to answer all posts they see and hope that they do not miss anyone. On Instagram the company use pictures to enhance the brand image, rather than receive likes and comments. With these posts, the company aim at highlighting their corporate values and what the brand stands for. On Facebook, the company holds a more easygoing approach, they make no use of such posts on Instagram. They strive towards a certain feel-good approach on Instagram and aim to “please the eye” with their pictures, and create a certain positive brand feeling.

The company makes no use of the ‘at’ function (@username) as they at the current stage do not want to involve others in their posts. Hashtags they use, however, to spread and gather their posts. The location function is used to highlight the important location of the company’s visiting site and in order to put pictures into context. The company mention that they aim to strengthen their brand image by using this function even more in the future. The company has arranged one competition on Instagram. However the Interviewees opinion is that it lead to no great success, as one of the hashtags that was used was too broad, hence the company posts disappeared in the feed, and greater customer attention was not achieved. The company have learned from this incident and nowadays evaluate which hashtags they use in order to try to keep it “within the family”.

The company has certain core values such as locally produced, which attract customers with a certain type of lifestyle. However the company’s largest consumer group is people buying their products at grocery stores all over the country and the majority of these customers have not visited the site of the company. Hence Instagram has become a way of showing the corporate origin and foundation for those who have not visited the location. Quite recently, the company started working with bloggers who are also active on Instagram, and they currently have a few connected to the company. The company do not pay anyone to write about them, the collaborations aim more at associate the company with bloggers they believe in, in exchange of sponsoring. The interviewee explains that they consider associating themselves with influencers as well, but have not yet initiated any collaboration with such persons. The company is still trying to build up a more frequent dialogue and interaction with customers on Instagram.

The company does not currently receive any information about their customers on Instagram. They receive more information from their membership club. The interviewee mention how they actively visit other Instagram accounts but rather screen their competitors on facebook. The interviewee is aware of that most of their competitors chose to follow many users with the hope that these in return will follow the company. They have however, chosen a slightly different strategy. The company does not actively follow other accounts at the moment and the interviewee explains that they consciously chose to do so. When they start to follow other accounts it has to accounts with values the company can stand for. The interviewee states that anyone who would like to is more then welcome to follow the company's Instagram account. However, as stated, the company only follows account they ‘can stand for’. They currently want to strengthen their brand image befor they start following other Instagram users.

The major part of the company's' interaction with consumer on social media is described to happen on Facebook, however some customer interaction happens likewise on Instagram. Especially now, as the company has started to increase their commenting intensity and like more pictures on Instagram. It is expressed that they know very little about their followers, however, they feel no current need to receive more information about them. The company is more concerned with delivering a message, than receiving information. The company is not concerned by younger audiences increased presence on Instagram, as they are not the company's target group. The company regard themselves to have quite strong values and a moral mindset. They try to keep their messages clear, hence suitable for young audiences as well.

4.6 Interview 6

Time: 60 minutes

Type of Business: B-to-B the company produces foodstuff products which are sold in grocery stores all across sweden.

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 10,9k

Type of Instagram account: the company's official page

Language used on the account: Swedish

First post on Instagram: August 2012

The interviewee: Co-founder and head of marketing. The job involves being responsible for all communication towards end consumers (B-to-C) and to create and implement an overall marketing strategy.

The interviewee is in charge of the company Instagram account and takes the majority of pictures the company uploads. The marketing strategy circulates around digital media and especially social media where branding and PR play a crucial part. The company focuses to a large extent on building a strong brand. The company have set corporate values they want to implement in everything they do. It is important that the pictures they upload on Instagram send out a certain message and certain feeling. In its start-up phase the company had limited monetary means, social media were the most efficient tools to get a broad reach. The company target a younger customer segment who is quite frequent on social media. The two-way communication brought by social media is something the company really appreciates, *"It can create significantly greater brand commitment. Instagram has additionally provided us with a direct link between marketing and sales and has helped us create a national distribution and sales network"*.

Instagram is the company's main marketing channel. *"Through Instagram, we actively told consumers to start ask for our products in their local store"* Today, people all around the country buy their products. The company has continued to ask consumers in order to receive ideas about new products and to get indications of what might work in store. They also keep track of all that is said about them through their company's hashtag. They comment on all uploaded pictures tagged with the company hashtags, as by doing so they can receive a lot of customer feedback. *"We have quite an intimate customer relationship. We even recognise some of our regular customers, due to how actively they chose to interact with us on Instagram."* The company aim at inspire customers with the content they upload. *"We think of our brand as if it was a person, a cool, trendsetter that is always kind and humble. By giving our company certain characteristics it has become quite easy to know which type of messages we want to send out, what pictures we want to upload etc."* Through engaging in customer

interaction the company argues they better understand what their customers want and what the company can improve. The company know that a certain age group follow them on Instagram and claim it crucial to maintain a good customer relationship. Arguably how the company treats customers is directly correlated with how they perceive their brand. *“In a way, Instagram work as our customer service. If someone share an opinion on Instagram, for instance if they are not pleased, we see that and have the opportunity to directly start a conversation with that person.”* It is further described that as the company sell their products to grocery stores, where they get little information about who their customers are. Instagram works as a great channel of getting to know ones customers better. The interviewee mentions that there is a certain fear among marketers, concerning how negative rumours may spread about companies and products over social media. Their experience on Instagram is though; *“that as long as you have an active dialogue with your customers, negative comments are not the end of the world. If someone is unhappy with something and we step in and start talking with them, we can turn the situation around, making the customer pleased again.”*

One challenge mentioned with Instagram is that many companies are present on the platform and it can therefore be a quite a competitive environment. Moreover, it can be difficult to get followers when competing with all other Instagram accounts, both private and corporate. One advantage described for companies on Instagram is that all accounts compete with their content rather than advertisements. *“In that way you have to deserve your followers and moreover you know that the ones that have chosen to follow you have done so by their own free will, which arguably make their connection to our brand stronger”*. The company have certain goals with the information they upload on Instagram. Overall, it has to be inspiring and informative in an informal manner. *“Instagram provide us with the power to be in charge of which situational context we chose to put our company and products in, how we want our consumers to perceive our brand. Instagram is a very fun platform to work with as the focus is not put on WHAT you say, its more about HOW you say it. And how esthetically attractive your pictures are”*. The interviewee mentions however, that there is a great challenge involved with uploading good content. If the message is not clear the company may fail miserably. The interviewee explains how the company put a lot of effort on how they say things. They decide what they want to communicate, and try to build up an account which will transfer their message in an attractive manner.

The company answer all comments on their own posts as well as all pictures that uses the company hashtag. Moreover, the company try to actively interact with all they choose to follow, not only the ones who follow them. The ones they follow are companies, brands and people they want the company to be associated with. It is impossible to follow everyone, the ones the company chose to follow are especially selected profiles. Often they are some kind of informal or formal trendsetters within their network. The company would never follow something that goes against their values. Their job is not like an ordinary full time work: *“we work more here, its not a 9-5, sort of deal”*. Working involves taking pictures and commenting on posts during weekends as well. The company sometimes use hashtags to emphasise what the pictures show, or if they simply want to mediate a feeling. When it comes to competitions they have been more restrictive. *“we believe in keeping it simple, as minor actor, we currently focus more on building a strong foundation, so that it becomes clear for our customers what we stand for”*. The ‘@’ function is mainly use when the company want to give cred to a certain brand or person. The ‘location’ function is used for storytelling

purposes, when the company wants to emphasise a certain place. The interviewee mentions likes as an indication of that the content they upload are engaging and inspiring. However, its rather fascinating what generates likes and what does not. Sometimes random pictures get plenty of likes and it is almost impossible to know on beforehand if something will generate many likes. However, the company can see certain patterns, depending on the picture itself, but also timing, many things have to be in direct correlation. The company have a tendency of posting content at certain points in time, the strategy builds on experience and arguably correlates with what type of products and hence which content they upload. One of the aims with the content the company upload is that customers shall want to spread it forward. The company have a certain strategy which includes taking and posting pictures in which other companies are also present and tagged in order for them to spread the content forward.

"Generally the audience is younger on Instagram, which correlate well with our primary target group." However, the company see no restriction in who can possibly eat their products or not. As the company has become more established they have noticed that different audiences are attracted by different product attributes. *"We can distinguish different customer segments on Instagram. We see tendencies of a bit older audience, people that are quite trend conscious and have a slightly larger budget, that also follow us."* The majority of the companys' followers are girls. The company mentions that they make use of a tool called Iconosquare, that can be used to collect statistics from ones account. However it is more statistics related to their account they can see, not specific details concerning their followers. *"Signing up on Instagram does not involve revealing that much personal information. It is hence very difficult to get by information concerning age etc. However we can see how many of our followers are located in Sweden, based on the geotags, as well as approximately tell which gender our followers have."* It is mentioned that if one actively visit others accounts that comment or like ones pictures one can get a general idea of what kind of people they are.

The company mention that they cooperate with other users, known profiles and bloggers that are also present on Instagram. *"All the way from the beginning, we have actively contacted people that we want our company to be associated with. We handled out product samples and said something like: we would love if you would try our products, do you like it, please write something about it, if you don't like our products, you do not have to write anything. You are free to do whatever you feel like."* The company have worked towards establishing a clear brand image and are hence concerned by which messages they send out. Depending on their audience they might adapt the tone somewhat. However, It can also be dangerous to try to adapt ones message to much. *"We believe in our values and hence we want to stay committed to who we are. We try to attract slightly younger audiences, but we do not want to scare older customers away."*

4.7 Interview 7

Time: 66 minutes

Type of Business: B-to-C Retail - shoes

Number of Instagram followers (at the time of the interview): 4,003

Type of Instagram account: the companys' official account.

Language used on the account: English

First post on Instagram: September 2013

The Interviewee: press and PR responsible. *“Internally my title is head of information, externally my tasks are more PR related.”* The interviewee work with communicating all corporate information that is not considered as direct marketing. The major task is to strengthen all social media channels the company uses.

The company has 4 different business orientations which work almost like individual companies. However, they are all within the same business sector. The different orientations have their own approach: for instance one is more trend driven whereas another one is concerned with brands. All orientations have their own web shop and Instagram account. During this specific interview the main focus was put on one of the branches. A branch that works within the fashion industry, acting both as a retailer selling several brands but also distributing their own brand. On Instagram their different brands can conveniently be market in connection with their own company. The company can actively highlight both their own stores and the brands on the platform. Instagram is considered as a great marketing channel due to its width: the chain can for instance display what’s going on in their stores all over the country. A benefit with the platform is described to be how users chose themselves to follow the company on Instagram, *“It is their own free will to be reached by our marketing messages”*. One negative aspect mentioned by the interviewee is that the company more or less has to update content all the time, a quite time consuming task. The interviewee fear that in October when Facebook will start advertising on Instagram it will become more difficult for companies. On the other hand, if implemented the right way, new advertising opportunities on the platform can be beneficial. However, the interviewee concludes that all companies with an established Instagram account have to deal with these possible changes Instagram is facing.

The company try to roughly plan how they will use social media for the coming seasons. For instance, when they receive information about seasonal delivers from brands, they highlight these dates in their agenda and schedule planned Instagram post in relation to these dates. However, the quickly changing social media climate makes it impossible to plan everything on advance. The company follows certain guidelines such as: posting a varied content and to make sure to upload pictures of all brands. As the company uses external suppliers and partners it is difficult to monitor how successful their Instagram campaigns have been. The company mention they use other sources of media coverage, as Instagram do not currently offer such possibilities. For instance: the company can not pre-schedule posts on Instagram directly, however they make use of an external application in order to do so. *“We can check which products we have uploaded on Instagram and compare with sales figures, but that is something we have to do ourselves, it is not something that happens per automatic.”*

The interviewee claim they get to know their customers better through Instagram, moreover it is mentioned that Instagram can work as a source for inspiring the customers. One can upload pictures of products before they are available in store can hence inspire customers early on to buy the product. Hashtags further offer the company a possibility to connect both the company name and the brand name in one and same post, as well as spreading content for both parties simultaneously.

When arranging Instagram competitions the company use special competition related hashtags, hence anyone that would like to compete may find them through the specific hashtag. All hashtags the company uses have a direct connection to the picture. *“We*

always hashtag our company name in each and every picture and if we cooperate with someone we tag them.” The location function is used sometimes when a picture is taken in a specific store. The ‘@’ function is used to tag other companies or people relevant to the picture. It is important for the company to constantly upload good content and to display their brands, however, to receive many likes is not their main priority. The situation is similar when it comes to customer engagement. The company listens to what their customers say but if they would engage more in discussions on Instagram they would also generate more comments. It is important to answer questions and comments, but if wanting to trigger customers to comment even more one has to step up one’s marketing strategy by uploading content with more attitude in order to create discussions and receive attention. However, the company mentions that they always answer comments on Instagram. “[...] Or, it depends on what customers say on Instagram. If someone writes: ‘that is damn ugly’, it’s no use answering such comments. We see no need in creating a public chat forum on Instagram.” The company does not actively step in and delete anything on their accounts, they want to keep everything open to the public but choose to only engage in what to them seems relevant.

The interviewee explains how they have chosen to follow partners, people who work in their stores, bloggers or private persons who have a nice style on Instagram. It is described that they check what people say about them through their hashtags at least once a day. The company can tell quite a lot from people that use their hashtags. A mixture of experience about which customers normally chose to buy their products along with what their followers upload on Instagram, arguably result in some kind of pattern. *“In general, one can get an idea of what one’s followers’ interests are from other pictures they upload.”* The company has adjusted their content in order for it to spread, for instance through arranged competitions, often created for the sole purpose of becoming brought forward. Sometimes the company encourages their followers to tag a friend in a post in relation to a campaign. The interviewee mentions that the company has, for one of their other accounts cooperated with bloggers where content associated with the company has been uploaded both on their blogs and on Instagram.

The interviewee does not think they reach the increasingly present 12-15 year olds on Instagram, these are not their targeted audience. What the company is concerned with is what they stand for, how they communicate and how their market strategy looks like. The company tries to reach a broad audience and the communication on Instagram is not currently adapted to reach a specific age group. When marketing on Instagram they believe in honesty and clarity. *“We critically analyse all text before we upload anything on Instagram and try to not use any unclear or difficult words.”*

5. Analysis

In this part of the thesis empirical data gathered from interviews will be analysed and presented through the different building blocks in Kietzmann et al., (2011) Honeycomb of social media. Other relevant theories will moreover be involved, and through comparison with our empirical findings three approaches of how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool will be reached in the Conclusion part.

5.1 Identity

In Kietzmann et al.,'s (2011, p. 243) model, the identity block incorporates “the extent to which users reveal themselves” on social media platforms. Arguably different social media provide their users with different identity expression opportunities (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 243). In the study, all interviewees claimed statistical information was a scarce resource on Instagram. Interviewee 6 explained signing up on Instagram involved revealing little personal information in comparison to some other social media platforms. Some interviewees (1, 2, 7) confirmed that many other social media platforms allowed companies to buy customer information, which is not possible on Instagram. Krombholz et al., (2012, p. 176) illuminates that people tend to display more and more personal information on social media, information which companies happily pay to get a grip of. In contrast to Krombholz et al., (2012, p. 176), interviewee 6 explained that signing up on Instagram involved revealing little personal information. Some interviewees (2, 3, 4, 7) were also ambiguous in their judgement whether receiving more customer specific data on Instagram would be advantageous. Interviewee 2, 4 and 7 explained how more customer information could be good, however, the benefits of receiving such information would most likely be outweighed by additional workload. Interviewee 1 and 6 on the other hand considered receiving customer data on Instagram as beneficial. An additional tendency seen was that company 2, 4 and 7 did not use Instagram as their main marketing channel, whereas company 1 and 6 did so. Thus it can be argued it is more desirable to receive customer information for those who use Instagram as their primary marketing channel. However, claiming no information could be gathered from customers on Instagram seemed not entirely true. Company 1 and 6 explained that their long-term presence on Instagram had provided them with informational patterns about their followers. Interviewee 1 had learned from experience that most of their followers were women and Company 6 could approximately tell which age group as well as which gender (women) their followers belonged to. Other companies (1, 2, 5, 7) argued information could be reached by visiting open accounts of followers and fans. Thus, it can be argued that firms can gather information on Instagram through frequent customer contact. However, gathering information on Instagram is arguably more time consuming than gathering the same information on other social media platforms.

5.2 Conversations

The conversations block in the honeycomb of social media comprises of “the extent to which users communicate with each other” (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244). Arguably social media provide great opportunities for individual interaction, however, the nature of conversations taking place in social media might vary, which has implications for marketing managers that aim to engage in these conversations (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244-245). The Grunig and Hunt's 4 PR model have identified different communicational patterns between senders (companies) and receivers (the public)

which hence affect how communication is performed (Fawkes, 2001, p.12). The first two models, will not be the focus of this analysis as they build on one-way communication and Instagram arguably allows possibilities for receivers/customers to respond to messages sent by senders/companies. The third model, *two-way asymmetric PR model*, is model where the sender aims to inform and cause a change in reception or behaviour among the receivers (Fawkes, 2001, p.14). Additionally this model builds on the receiver's ability to answer the senders, hence two-way communication (Fawkes, 2001, p.14). We argue that this communication model is present on Instagram in the form of competitions. Interviewee 1, 2, 3, 7 all describe how they had made use of competitions on Instagram. Interviewee 1 explained how a competition could be carried out *“the follower can be required to post a picture with some of our hashtags and furthermore tag two friends in order to participate in the competition.”*. Thus we argue how companies encourage customers to behave in a certain way goes hand in hand with the communication pattern of the two-way asymmetric model.

The fourth model, *two-way symmetric PR model*, builds on mutual understanding among senders and receivers, relying on the equal ability of both parties to affect each other through two-way communication (Fawkes, 2001, p.15-16). Fawkes (2011, p.16) explains this model as rarely used since few marketing channels allow this dual possibility of interaction between companies and customers. However, we see a clear tendency of this mutual communication as well as the ability of customers and companies to affect each other. A majority of the interviewees (5, 6, 2, 1 & 3) see Instagram as a tool to keep track of customers opinions in order to receive customer inputs. Interviewee 6 expressed that through engaging in customer interaction the company could better understand customers wants as well as what the company could improve. Interviewee 3 claimed however, that it required a certain level of activity from their part in order to achieve this customer interaction.

Dhaoui (2014, p. 213) discuss how feedback on Facebook can be used as constructive clues to how the company may improve. Dhaoui (2014, p. 214) further states that since feedback and comments are visible for all present users on Facebook, other customers may join the conversation, creating lively discussions that may induce viral attention. Interviewee 2, 5, 6 and 7 all explained how they kept track of what people say about the company on Instagram. Company 5 and 7 regularly searched through the company hashtags and Interviewee 2 kept a close track on their comment feed. Interviewee 3, 5 & 1 explained an aim to answer all questions and comments they received on Instagram. Company 6 had taken customer interaction to another level by answering all comments on their own posts as well as all pictures tagged with the company hashtag. By doing so they could receive customer feedback and tips. Thus, we argue that the manner users can comment and spread messages on Instagram are similar to how Dhaoui (2014, p. 213) explain customers comment on Facebook. Additionally we argue that the like function is another tool for companies to receive feedback from their Instagram followers since a couple of our interviewees (2, 3) explained how the number of likes received can be used as a measurement of followers opinion of their content.

Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 359-360) and Kietzmann et al., (2011, p.244) additionally point out that social media also have made it difficult for marketers to pay attention to all viral messages customers forward. We see a tendency among the interviewees (2, 3, 4 & 5) claiming that customer interaction through hashtags, even though it could provide information, also generates additional work. Interviewee 2 and

5 connect this to the time aspect of Instagram, arguing that comments on old post are hard to discover as the feed updates with time. Hence, companies have to be active in order to keep up with the flow on Instagram. Furthermore, Interviewee 4 explained how the company did not actively screen their hashtags as they simply did not have the possibility to listen to what all the millions of people that talk to them say. However, this may arguably relate back to the global status that company 4 holds even though they were founded in Sweden. The company sell their products all over the world and their account has got a myriad of international Instagram followers. Hence, what type of company and how many followers they have on Instagram arguably affect their level of customer engagement on the platform.

Kotler and Armstrong (2011) point out that certain companies fail in their strive to efficiently capture customers attention, as they make use of several channels simultaneously from which they send out contradicting messages. As we have not studied several social media platforms (only Instagram) we cannot argue we know how companies content is spread on other platforms. However, through the interviews we could get an idea of what type of content were spread on Instagram. We see how the companies, when it comes to integrated use versus independent use of marketing channels, are divided into two different directions related to what goals they had with the platform. Company 1, 5 and 6 had specific marketing strategies for Instagram whereas company 2, 3, 4 and 7 more or less made use of the same strategies for all their marketing channels. Interviewee 1 and 6 used Instagram as their primary channel. It was mentioned that they had been present on Instagram for long, and hence learned through experience which customers chose to actively communicate with them and how they prefer to do so. Interviewee 5 used several channels but had entirely different marketing strategies for the different platforms, this in order to keep messages distinctly differentiated for their recipients and hence deliver more clear messages. The majority (2, 3, 4, 7) of the companies used several channels and made sure they sent out a rather consistent corporate message from all of them. Interviewee 2 had during previously arranged contests on Instagram spread news about competitions on other channels such as their webpage. Interviewee 4 mentioned they tried to inspire their companies on all channels where their customers were present. Interviewee 3 discussed how the messages the company send out on Instagram have to be in line with the messages the company send out from other channels. It was mentioned that they still experimented with how they could achieve this in a good manner. When going through the interviews, we noticed that a majority of the companies made active use of several channels and tried to send out consistent marketing messages from these channels. The companies that put more effort on one channel, which in this case was Instagram, did not have to take into account other marketing channels to the same extent.

The overall tendency seen among the companies is how they make use of the conversation opportunities on Instagram to interact with customers and fans. Through this communication they gain feedback and opinions from their customers, valuable information for a platform providing no statistical data. How the companies choose to communicate their specific messages, we argue differ depending on what marketing goals they have for the platform. The majority, using Instagram as a marketing channel among others, sent out consistent messages from all their channels. The two companies using Instagram as a main marketing channel had more specific strategies for Instagram. Another thing making these companies stand out was their long-time presence on the platform. We argue this long time establishment has provided them with information,

which have helped them to develop specific strategies of how to effectively communicate on Instagram.

5.3 Sharing

The building block of sharing is discussed by Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 245) as “the extent to which users exchange, distribute, and receive content”. The sharing block emphasises how marketers arguably could profit from knowing what type of content their customers share and in what manner (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 245). Kaplan and Haenlein (2011, p. 257) further argue that some ingredients relevant to achieve fruitful marketing content include presenting something new, which provokes the recipient to feel positive or negative emotions. The strongest tendency among the Interviewees when talking about the content they upload on Instagram was inspiration. We argue that the aim to inspire is in line with Kaplan and Heinlein's (2011, p. 257) claim it important for firms to engage with customers through presenting content that evokes feelings. All companies investigated expressed an aim to inspire customers with their Instagram content. Interviewees 1, 2, 4 and 6 state inspiration as one of their main ambitions with Instagram, they want to inspire their customers rather than promote sale offers. Interviewee 4 mentioned their overall marketing goal was to inspire customers with the content they upload on Instagram.

Kellers (2010, p.827) marketing communication tetrahedron can arguably provide marketing managers with greater insight into individual customer responses to specific marketing messages, through highlighting the effect of differentiating customer characteristics. This information can be used by firms when designing consistent and relevant marketing messages (Keller, 2010). A tendency seen among the interviewees was how companies could not not always tell what type of content their followers wanted to see, mainly due to that Instagram provided them with no statistical data which otherwise could have worked as guidance. Hence companies need to rely on other measures such as ‘likes’ in order to judge their content as interesting. Interviewee 3, 5, considered themselves as being in an experimental stage on Instagram, where they tried to upload different content in order to see which reactions they would provoke among their customers. On the other hand, some companies (6, 1, 4) seemed to know what type of content to post in order to attract customer interest. Those companies had gained valuable customer knowledge through experience. Company 6 and 1 mentioned they had observed and hence learned through time what type of content their customers connected with. Interviewee 4 on the other hand mentioned that they had a strong brand image which made their customers feel closely connected to the type of content they chose to upload. They did not try to adapt their content, as they knew their customers followed them due to that they liked their posts. Customers knew about their strong brand before. We argue a clear connection to Kellers (2010, p.827) view of that the customer characteristics prior knowledge and processing goals affects how marketing messages are received among customers can be seen here.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) discuss in their study that customers tend to forward viral content when certain circumstances are achieved, for instance when marketing messages engage customers somewhat. We argue Instagram competitions works as corporate means to enhance customer engagement, making them forwarding company content. Company 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 all explained how they had made use of competitions on Instagram. Interviewee 7 explained how competitions had been created for the sole purpose of forwarding company content. Interviewee 1 described how the company

sometimes arranged campaigns where people were encouraged to forward their messages through “*post a picture with some of their hashtags and furthermore tag two friends in order to participate in the competition.*”.

Jadhav et al., (2013, p.45) describes that social media platforms allow the recipient of a message to interact with the author as well as pass the message through to a whole community. Kietzmann et al., (2011) argues knowing how social media platforms are built and in what manner content is shared are essential clues to be able to create a forward friendly message. We argue that the ways of forwarding content on Instagram becomes possible through the @-function (forward to a specific user) and the hashtag function (forwarding to a whole community). All companies had their own company hashtags which they used to both gather and spread their content. Interviewee 7 stated that they always hashtagged their company name in each and every picture. Interviewee 4 on the other hand currently used hashtags for event related purposes or in order to “gather their content”. Interviewee 1 mentioned how they encourage their followers to use their hashtag if they post anything that has to do with the company. Why they do so is because they want to be able to see all pictures associated with their company name. Moreover other users searching for their hashtag will hence also be able to see the content.

Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 358-359) claim social media do not only provide means for customer-to-customer interaction but also for customer-to-business interaction and business-to-customer interaction. This tendency was clearly emphasised by Interviewee 7 who argued hashtags could hold a dual capacity of connecting both the company and its suppliers in the very same post, hence spreading content for both parties simultaneously. Moreover, some companies (2, 3, 6) claimed they used the @username function when they wanted to ‘give cred to’ or highlight certain accounts on Instagram. It could for instance be a supplier, partner or individual account the company wanted to forward in order to bring attention to these people’s contributions or for having uploaded something fun or especially creative.

We argue Instagram is a social media platform where users main purpose is to share content. The read thread among the interviewed companies was the intention of using Instagram to share content aimed at inspiring. To further reach out to their customers, companies seemed to apply the technical functions (# and @) in various manners. However, we argue that the @ and # functions moreover allow both companies and customers to share content. All interviewed companies arguably made use of both the @ and the # functions. However, the way in which it was used varied due to underlying marketing aims. If the corporate aim was to encourage followers to share content, this could be achieved by the @username function, providing all users (both companies and customers) to ‘tag’ another user (both companies and customers). Hence the ‘tagged’ user would receive an instant message connecting right back to the specific post or comment in which the user had been tagged. If the corporate aim was to highlight a certain person in the feed they could moreover tag other users through the @function, promoting these users and hence spreading their content along.

5.4 Presence

Kietzmann et al.,s (2011, p. 245) building block Presence incorporates “the extent to which users know if other users are accessible”. According to Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 246) it is important for marketing managers to understand when customers are

presently available on social media platforms, if they want them to become affected by corporate messages. Keller (2010) moreover argue that situational context in terms of time and place might have great external importance for customer responses to marketing messages. In accordance with this statement, many of our interviewees (1, 2, 3, 6, 7) recognized that the timing of their posts arguably matter on Instagram. Interviewee 1 emphasised the importance of posting up-to-date content. Interviewee 1 moreover claimed they could receive instant responses from a broad customer audience on Instagram. Interviewee 3 mentioned that they were experimenting with uploading posts at different times in order to find which time would better suit their marketing messages. Interviewee 6 mentioned this strategy built on experience and correlate with what type of products and hence which content they chose to upload. A discussion concerning when and how often firms answer customer comments on Instagram was brought to surface. If a picture is uploaded in the afternoon or evening interviewee 1 make sure that there is time to answer questions in direct connection to the post. Interviewee 1 mentioned that if the firm would not be available to their customers on the platform, there would not be any need for them to be present on Instagram. Interviewee 3 claimed that success could be achieved on Instagram through hard work and by being actively present on the platform.

For some managers the real-time aspect seemed to involve additional work. Interviewee 6 explained that their job was not like an ordinary full time work. Working involved taking pictures and commenting on posts during weekends as well. Interviewee 5 explained that more and more of the work time was dedicated to monitor what was written about the company on social media. Interviewee 7 mentioned one negative aspect with Instagram is that the company continually has to update new content. Sometimes the marketer's effort were simply not enough, interviewee 4 mentioned that they did not check hashtags as much, *"I am kind of the only one that work with Instagram and I do not have the possibility to listen to what the all the millions of people that talk to us say"*. Interviewee 1 mentioned a certain difficulty to keep track of new comments they received on old posts, due to the rapidness of the platform, notifications tended to quickly disappear in the feed. Interviewee 3 brought to surface reflections concerning the future of social media marketing, moving closer and closer towards work-days realities of 24/7. Arguably, as Instagram being a platform building on displaying what is happening right now, it puts a pressure on companies to be present and constantly active. Both in posting content, and by answering comments and question since they otherwise will disappear in the constantly renewable feed. However, we have seen tendencies of some companies making positive use of the real-time aspect of the platform as it allows them to promote something relevant just for the moment.

Furthermore, Kietzmann et al., (2011) claim users physical presence (geography) and virtual presence (online) are equally important for companies wanting to efficiently reach out with their messages. Keller (2010) claim in a similar manner that place together with time build up a situational context, which may greatly affect how marketers messages are perceived by customers. In fact, Interviewee 5 and 6 mention that they use 'geotags' or the location function on Instagram when they want to build up a story around their content. Interviewee 6 mentions they tag the location for storytelling purposes, when the company wants to emphasise a certain place. Interviewee 7 moreover expressed how the location function was used sometimes to emphasize when a picture was taken at a specific store. Interviewee 2 used the function quite frequently, every time the company was represented at a specific place from

where they chose to upload a photo. Interviewee We argue the geographical aspect of presence is used in two ways; firstly to enhance corporate content with context which customers more easily can relate to. Secondly it can be used to promote company locations and stores.

5.5 Relationships

“The extent to which users can relate to other users” is the main idea captured within the relationships honey block (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 246). The block concerns which social connections individuals have in social media (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Despite Instagram being a platform with limited abilities to form relationships between users, we argue that relationships are created when users choose to follow other users. All interviewed companies followed other on Instagram, hence they did not only have followers. We argue that the tendency to follow people form relationships or social connections between users on Instagram. Interviewee 1 followed individual accounts on Instagram and accounts for which the company have cooperated with in order to support these. Interviewee 1 explained having noticed how some companies choose not to follow other users, whereas they had made it a thing to follow talented Instagrammers. Company 6 follows certain customers, or fans rather. *“It is impossible to follow everyone; the ones we choose to follow are especially selected profiles”*. Interviewee 6 tries to actively integrate with everyone they follow, not only their followers. Interviewee 5 argued that they used to follow more people on Instagram, however they had started to rethink that strategy somewhat, wanting to build up good content and a strong brand image on Instagram page before following other users again. When interviewing marketers active on Instagram it was found that these choose to virtually interact with their followers in different manners. For instance companies tried to answer customers comments and questions, and moreover followed certain users in order to interact and receive information.

Kotler and Armstrong (2011, p. 139) describes *opinion leaders* as influential people with broad networks chosen for the sole purpose to represent for example a company or a product. When analysing our interviews it was found that certain companies (2, 5, 6) collaborated with so called influencers (bloggers and Instagrammers with many followers which hence have the possibility to affect many) on Instagram. Booth and Matic (2010, p.19) discusses the importance of finding appropriate influential users that will associate the company with wanted values. Interviewee 2, 5 and 6 all stated how these influencers share the company values and strengthen the corporate image. The usage of influencers might hence relate to the Reputation block as well, since whom the companies chose to be connected with affect the public view and reputation of the companies. Another way of using Influencers was explained by Interviewee 2 which through an intermediary service had hired known Instagram users in order to spread the news about a specific competition. Interviewee 5 and 6 explained how they choose their relations with care, the influencers ought to share the values of the company in order to be able to represents these to the public. Both companies argued they only cooperated with people they “could stand for”. Neither company 5 or 6 paid these affiliates for writing about their products.

Arguably, companies do not use Instagram in order to build deep relationships. However, some of them make use of relationships in order to spread their content. Knowing what type of audience an influencer has can provide the opportunity to reach this audience by simply creating a relation/collaboration with the influencer. Another

clear tendency among some of the investigated companies was the usage of relationships to build and/or enhance the corporate values by carefully choosing which users to become associate with. Last but not least, depending on the corporate strategy, or absence of one, companies either thought through which users they wanted to receive inspiration from, or did not follow any users at all.

5.6 Reputation

Reputation is “the extent to which users can identify the social standing of others and content” on social media (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 243). Kietzmann et al. (2011, p. 247) further argue that by monitoring customers’ perception of the company or brand firms can evaluate their marketing impact on social media. Booth and Matic (2010 p.16) argues companies have to engage in social media in order to be able to affect their reputation, this is done by carefully managing customers and relationships through constantly consideration of what type of messages the company want to send out.

Keller (2010, p. 828) moreover argue that customers know about a certain brand in combination with what they aim to achieve with a targeted marketing message, will possibly affect customers perception of the messenger and how customers chose to respond to marketing messages. In line with these claims Interviewee 6 mention they have a clear focus of how they chose to formulate their marketing messages, for instance great focus was put on how esthetically attractive their pictures were. It was further described that through being in charge of the pictures they uploaded they had the power to form what type of context their company wanted to highlight to customers. Interviewee 5 discuss in a similar manner how they through the pictures they chose to upload enhance their brand images and corporate values. Thus, the companies are aware of how the content they share on Instagram affects the public picture of the company. Booth and Matic (2010, p. 17) argues that companies in general put too much focus on technical functionalities of social media platforms rather than on relationship building and what type of image the firms sends out. However, the majority of the interviewees (3,4,5 and 7) all highlighted the importance of delivering clear messages and content on Instagram, hence we argue how the claims of Booth and Matic (2010 p.17) seem to be less relevant when it comes to Instagram. We hence argue that Instagram is a unique **platform** which through its simplicity and limited possibilities to share extensive information has forced the companies to carefully consider the messages they chose to send out. This can be further related to the previously discussed possibility for customers to openly share their thoughts and thereby affect corporate image and reputation.

Kietzmann et al., (2011, p. 247) explain how reputation involves building trust among users by content the company chose to forward. The authors further state the importance for companies to have some kind of way of measuring their reputation on social media (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). Instagram is a rather simple platform, which does not provide companies with many possibilities to measure success. However, the like function we argue can be used in line with Kietzmann et al.,’s (2011, p. 247) discussion regarding tools to measure company reputation. As mentioned by the majority of our interviewees (2, 3, 6 & 7) measuring one's reputation through Instagram seemed to be a difficult task. The like function was mentioned as one way of receiving an indication of how well the company was doing (interviewee 2 and 3). Interviewee 3 explains how everything under 100 likes is more or less count as a failure. Interviewee 2 further states *“It is more important with likes on Instagram than on Facebook, as Instagram offers*

little statistics. The 'likes' becomes an indication of how many people have seen the picture.” In order to monitor statistics and likes, company 3 and 6 make use of a service called Iconosquare, which provided certain statistical data concerning likes, comments and usage of company hashtags. This service provides statistical data from Instagram but is not directly connected to the Instagram application, it is an external service. Moreover it was not evident if interviewee 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7 were aware of its existence.

Reputation is important for all companies and Instagram, despite some downsides, seem to be perceived as a good tool to promote the company image and values. As discussed by the more established and active companies, (Interviewees 1, 5 & 6) to share attractive and inspirational pictures seemed to be highly important, as by doing so their corporate image could be enhanced. Among the rest of the investigated companies, inspiration was highlighted but no clear strategy of controlling or building company image was spotted. However, using Instagram to measure company reputation seem to be popular among these companies through keeping track of comments and hashtags.

5.7 Groups

The group block of the Honeycomb involves “the extent to which users can form communities” on social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 247). Arguably groups on social media hold different characteristics, comprise different people and tend to function in different manners. This knowledge can firms profit from in order to better understand how to engage with groups of customers on social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 248). According to Keller (2010, p.827) customers hold different demographic, psychographic and behavioural characteristics. We argue that the fact that customers are different might affect how they choose to engage in social media communities. Many of the interviewees (3, 6, 7) pointed out that customers chose themselves who to follow on Instagram, hence the manner customers network on Instagram arguably depend on which connections individuals choose to make on the specific platform. Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 361) expresses that individuals sharing common interests like to get together, hence by providing their customers with group forming, or networking possibilities, marketers can find a way to please their customers. Instagram itself does not offer any technical group forming function. The platform circulates around uploaded pictures and not forum discussions. However, we argue the way in which customers choose whom they want to follow on Instagram as well as whom they have accepted can follow them, can be classified as indirectly grouping individuals into interest groups, communities or networks. The @function was mentioned by certain interviewees (2, 3, 6) as a mean to highlight certain profiles in order to share these with other people. Some interviewees (1, 6) claimed they followed specific people in order to highlight their work, to their followers, as if they knew their followers would screen through their followers. In this manner are social connections arguably indirectly achieved on Instagram even though the platform has no formal group function. Interviewee 6 recognized certain customer groups seemed to follow them on Instagram and moreover admitted they had certain trend setters in their Instagram network. As the company's followers as well as the users they follow, are not hidden on the platform, other users may click on these and thereby find other like-minded profiles. This is in line with Kietzmann et al.'s (2011, p. 244) view related to the conversations block of the honeycomb of social media, claiming that the reason why

individuals chose to interact virtually to begin with could be in order to exchange ideas with people that think in a similar way as oneself. Arguably the investigated companies, through their usage of company hashtags create groups on Instagram in which they, as they encourage customers to make use of these hashtags, group together all the content connected to the company. An additional usage of groups created around the usage of certain hashtags. When the companies tag their content with such hashtags they thus reach out to a large group who most likely share an interest connect to the specific hashtag.

5.8 The Ethical Analysis

The purpose of the thesis is to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover investigate the awareness and concern among marketers involved with the potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram. According to Hunt (1976, p. 6) the sole purpose with advertising seemed to be to persuade customers. Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) moreover illuminate the view of certain critics claiming stealth marketing as manipulating, questioning the ethics in not making marketing aims obvious for the customer. According to the Swedish Marketing Act (Marknadsföringslagen)(SFS 2008:486) it is not allowed to target children under 16 years old with direct marketing (The Swedish Consumer Agency, 2015). However, we question if marketing present on Instagram can be considered as direct marketing? We wondered if marketers present on Instagram had any ethical concerns involved with marketing on Instagram. However, as brought to surface in the interviews, no general ethical concern seemed to be present among the marketers.

What we noted during the interviews however, was that marketers did not seem to have ethical concerns regarding how they chose to market themselves on Instagram. Hence they did not believe their marketing efforts on Instagram could be considered as deceptive. Interviewee 3 mentioned their followers have chosen to follow them by their own free will and that the company does not encourage anyone to follow them. Interviewee 3, 5, 7 were not concerned with, and moreover did not think they reach the increasingly present 12-15 year olds on Instagram as these are not their targeted audience. Company 4 was not concerned by that their messages might reach the increasingly present 12-15 year olds on Instagram as they do not adjust their marketing messages to children. Interviewee 3 however, pointed out that if they would have had this age group as their target, then they would probably have been extra careful with what content they would post. Company 5, 6 and 7 mentioned working towards establishing a clear brand image and were hence concerned by which messages they chose to send out. Company 1 expresses their audience on Facebook as slightly older than their audience on Instagram. It was mentioned that the company had many young followers, even though they did not especially aim at target these on Instagram. Interviewee 2 mentioned that the company targets a general customer segment which includes all ages, however on Instagram they try to reach younger audience, as they are aware of that Instagram have slightly younger users. Company 7 tried to reach a broad audience and the communication on Instagram was not currently adapted to reach a specific age group. Interviewee 5 tried to keep their messages clear, hence suitable for young audiences as well. Interviewee 6 mentioned that depending on their audience they might adapt the tone somewhat. They mentioned they wanted to attract slightly younger audiences on Instagram but did not want to scare older customers away.

To conclude, the marketers interviewed seemed to have no ethical concern regarding the increasingly present 12-15 year olds as they do not believe they reach this group of young users. As stated above, the companies cannot choose their followers on Instagram and has thereby little power of who is reached by their messages and content. Even though certain critics may claim less evident marketing tendencies manipulating, questioning the ethics in not making marketing obvious for the customer (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004), marketers on Instagram seem to have no current ethical concern related to their marketing efforts on the platform. Perhaps Haefner (1972, cited by Gardner, 1975, p. 40 – 41), hence was right in his view, claiming the definition of what is deceptive or not is in the eye of the beholder. The beholder in this case is the marketer, and whether other people claim marketing on Instagram as deceptive remains unexplored.

6. Discussion/Conclusion

As seen in the analysis, all the different blocks of the honeycomb were of some relevance for Instagram. However, three of the blocks capture the main features of Instagram; *Conversations* (conversations, or rather comments are one of the main ways of communicating and interacting on the platform), *Sharing* (the main function and feature of Instagram allows users to share pictures and videos with their followers) and *Presence* (Instagram is a platform created for showing and sharing what is happening right now). When analysing the empirical data we discovered two main themes/approaches, and a third approach used only by one company, of how the investigated companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool. These approaches are represented in all of the honeycomb blocks and display three different ways of which Instagram can be used as a marketing tool. The two main approaches are connected to the amount of time the company has been present and how active they have been on Instagram. In order to clearly answer our research question this chapter is divided into sub-headings discussing different approaches of how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool. In the end there will be a concluding part where the research question: how companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool and the purpose: to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, and moreover to investigate the awareness and concern regarding the potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram will be answered. Additionally managerial implications along with suggestions for future research and social and ethical issues will be evaluated.

6.1 The “Rookies” (Company 2, 3, 7)

The first approach of Instagram marketing includes companies which we have decided to call the “rookies”. We have identified that these companies are **relatively new to Instagram** and/or have not been distinctively active in the way they interact on the platform. The rookies share characteristic of being **in an experimental stage**, trying to find how to optimally make use of Instagram as a marketing tool. As explained in the “Identity” part of the analysis, Instagram provide marketers with limited statistical data about its users. This is recognized among the rookies, which to some extent are trying to gather as much information they possibly can through customer interaction. To gather information about customers however, is not the main aim the rookies have with their presence on Instagram. The content these companies upload on Instagram tend to follow the same pattern as messages sent out from these companies other marketing channels. Instagram is arguably used in an **integrated marketing communicational manner**. The rookies tend to actively engage in conversations with their followers as they thereby receive feedback on their content. We claim these firms use Instagram in order to be able to interact and hence receive information from their customers. Furthermore, these companies use Instagram with the aim to **reach as many users as possible**. The rookies **make use of functions such as # and @ in order to be able reach a larger audience** with the content they upload on Instagram. Another common trait among the rookies is the **lack of a clear strategy when it comes to which Instagram accounts they choose to follow**. The companies seem to have no underlying goal to why they choose to follow other users. Furthermore they seem to have **no distinct way of expressing their corporate image** in order to possibly affect the public opinion and hence reputation of the company. The companies were aware of consumers’ possibility

to express their thoughts about the company on Instagram. They made active use of the platform in order to find out what was said about them on Instagram.

6.2 The “Oldies” (Company 1, 5, 6)

A second approach of Instagram marketing includes companies which we have decided to call the “Oldies”. A characteristic identified among these companies is a rather **extensive Instagram experience**, gained either through long-term presence or through distinct active presence during a shorter period of time. Another mutual characteristic visible among the Oldies is how they use Instagram as either their main marketing channel or holds an exclusive marketing strategy for the platform. In contrast to the “Rookies” these companies expressed a **desire to be able to receive more statistical data** concerning their customers on Instagram, even though these companies currently managed to receive certain information about the customers and followers. Through experience and evaluation they had learned how to **interpret different situations** in which they interacted with their customers (through comments, likes, hashtags, and questions). From these situations, they could draw informational conclusions about these customers. The Oldies seem to make use of **two-way communication** to an even greater extent than the rookies. Both groups are active in conversations with their customers, however the oldies seem to have more clear-cut strategies concerning which messages to send out and how to specifically communicate on Instagram. They tend to **use the platform to search for customer opinions** and certain strategies were adapted for this sole purpose. The Oldies seem to **upload content on Instagram that followed their corporate spirit and brand related intentions**. Brand values are especially enhanced, some firms even mentioned they are telling their customers their story. The geographical function is used among this group to put certain post in a context and hence further enhance their brand image. Additionally, the oldies do not use a frequent amount of hashtags, **the hashtags they used held a specific purpose**, for instance to illuminate or emphasise something specific in a post. The Oldies do not consider the real-time aspect of Instagram as something bad. It provides them with a possibility of promoting goods during relevant times, such as for instance when people crave their products the most. The oldies have **underlying marketing strategies for which users they chose to follow** on Instagram, for example some companies tend to follow accounts from which the company can gain inspiration. Another distinct plan present among oldies includes delivering a consistent brand image. Through the content they upload they can more or less control which public image they wanted to send out.

6.3 The “Exception” (4)

The Instagram usage of one of the investigated companies, company 4, can not be included in any of the above identified approaches, as their marketing tendencies on Instagram follow a slightly different character. Company 4 has got an international account with followers from all over the world, hence the language they use in connection to their posts is English. All of the above discussed companies have accounts where the language used is Swedish, hence their marketing messages can be argued to target mainly the Swedish market. Company 4 make use of Instagram mainly in order to inspire their customers and followers. The content they share is consistent with their strong corporate values and brand image. The company does not use Instagram to interact with, or gain feedback from customers.

6.4 Similarities among the groups

Some marketing tendencies present on Instagram can not be connected to how long the companies have been actively present on the platform. Some companies (2, 5, 6) use Instagram to promote themselves by making use of Influencers. However, we have not been able to spot any clear patterns among the companies conducting this behaviour. Some interviewees (5, 6) use Influencers to strengthen their brand image whereas others (2) aim at reaching out to a certain target groups by the help of these collaborations. All companies make use of company hashtags, additionally some companies (2, 6, 7) use other sorts of hashtags, however we have not been able to distinguish any clear pattern of why and how they chose to do so. Some companies use more (6, 7) hashtags in their posts, others use less (4, 5). We argue this is likely connected to either which target group the company aim to reach or simply the individual preferences of the person in charge of uploading company content, however no conclusions can be drawn from this. An additional approach that both connect and separate the two groups of “Rookies” and “Oldies” is the awareness and concern regarding the potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram. The majority of the companies (1, 3, 4, 5) are not aware whether they reach this group, nor are they concerned about the increasing number of young Instagram users as they do not believe their company content reach such a young audience. One company (2) saw possibilities in the increasingly present young audience and aimed at using a language which attracts younger generations. The last company (7) is the only one who have in mind the possibility of reaching young users and hence make sure to use clear and appropriate language. However what all companies have in common is that none of them actually know whether they reach a young audience as the age of Instagram users is not displayed.

6.5 The overall conclusion

Purpose

The purpose of the thesis is to get a deeper understanding of how companies currently make use of the social media platform Instagram for marketing purposes and activities. Moreover, the thesis aims to investigate companies awareness and concern regarding the potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram. The thesis aim to provide new insights that can be added to contemporary research within the field of social media marketing.

Research question

How do companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool?

We have found that Instagram is used in rather different ways, however, the way Instagram is used by companies for marketing purposes and activities is affected by certain characteristics making Instagram a unique marketing tool as well as a rather special social media platform. Instagram is to be considered a relatively new platform that provides an unique way for companies to be able to form their marketing messages from their own, as well as their customers preferences. Some firms seem to have actively used Instagram as a marketing tool for quite some time, whereas other firms consider themselves as rather new to the platform. A clear tendency seen among companies marketing themselves on Instagram was how they successively learned how to build up a suitable marketing strategy from trial and error. This way of “learning by doing” makes it hard to fully understand how companies currently make use of Instagram for marketing purposes and activities, as the platform constantly changes.

However, we argue Instagram have certain unique characteristics which holds great impact on the way companies make use of Instagram as a marketing tool. One of the main characteristics of Instagram is the real-time aspect, clearly visible in the Instagram 'feed' which is constantly updated as new posts appear. This generates the need for companies to be constantly active if they want to reach out with their content. All interviewees expressed this aspect affected the way in which the companies made use of Instagram as a marketing tool. For instance, companies use Instagram to regularly post messages with new, inspirational content. Another characteristic feature is the lack of user information available on the platform, making companies learn rather how to creatively gather information about their customers on Instagram. The low level of statistics available on the platform generates low awareness among companies concerning which age groups they potentially reach on Instagram. A third unique characteristic of Instagram is that focus is put on what type of content is shared; pictures and videos. All of the interviewed companies claimed their main ambition with Instagram was to inspire customers, rather than promote offers. Additionally the most effective way of continuously reaching out to customers with marketing content on Instagram seem for companies to get users to follow their accounts. Thereby will content start appearing in these users feed. Arguably, no one wants to follow an account with boring content, hence the companies may possibly profit from choosing a more inspirational marketing strategy for Instagram.

6.7 Managerial Implications

When analysing, discussing and concluding our findings some interesting reflections seemed to emerge. In this part of the thesis we would like to illuminate some of the implications we believe might be of relevance for marketing managers and firms who in the future aim at either customize their marketing tactics on Instagram or, aim at start using Instagram as a marketing tool. In the summarizing conclusion it is stated how the platform characteristics of Instagram play an essential part of how marketers make use of Instagram. We would like to encourage firms planning to create an Instagram account to embrace some of these characteristics. One of them is the real-time aspect. That Instagram users feed constantly updates with the latest content, creates an excellent opportunity for marketers to **promote goods and products at a relevant and specific point in time**. Another Instagram specific feature are the hashtags. As Instagram allow for little statistical information we argue that **hashtags are great tools for reaching out to specific customer groups**. By using hashtags that connect to certain topics of interest among ones targeted users, companies can arguably attain enhanced customer interest. Moreover, we claim the hashtag holds the possibility to give an indication of consumer characteristics and hence different types of indirect networks existing on Instagram. How this can be achieved lies in the manner Instagram offers customers the possibility to screen through specific hashtags. By searching through these hashtags one can arguably be able to identify users which hold specific interest. By further browsing through their profiles, companies can observe which users they follow and are followed by. Hence, firms can possibly manage to reach out to certain customer networks on Instagram and quite easily build up broad customer network of their own.

Firms evaluating to use Instagram as an Independent channel or as one of their integrated marketing communication channels can arguably profit from first, analyse which corporate characteristics their company hold, second, what goals they want to achieve on Instagram. If the company have a strong brand image, the arguably want to find a good way of telling their story on Instagram. If the company strive is to start marketing on Instagram in order to reach out a broader customer audience, they

arguably need to know how they can manage to achieve this on Instagram. Hence, depending on whether they choose to follow the “oldie” path, the “rookie” path or a distinct path of their own we argue their marketing strategies on Instagram will look slightly different. Hence, Instagram seem to be the platform that holds the greatest possibilities for marketers to develop strategies that fit their needs, and furthermore can, most efficiently help them reach out to a broad customer audience.

6.8 Limitations/Further research

Due to certain time constraints we were not able to investigate all interesting aspects which emerged during the research process. In this part of the thesis limitations of the study will be brought forward together with suggestions for future research.

As discussed in the discussion/conclusion, one of the companies could not be included in the two identified major themes/approaches as their marketing strategy on Instagram differed substantially from the other investigated companies. Arguably the very nature of this company (4) varied greatly in comparison to the other companies. The company's Instagram account held an extensive international character, with followers from all over the world, which was in great contrast to the other accounts, which did not have as many followers on Instagram and more or less targeted Swedish customers. Our recommendation for future researcher is hence to conduct research on how different types of companies (in terms of size, business sector etc) make use of Instagram as a marketing tool. In order to be able to compare even greater differences which might arguably lead to even more valuable insights into the world of Instagram marketing.

Another proposal for future research that have risen from the discussion/conclusion was that our second aim of our purpose: to investigate the awareness and concern regarding the potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram, did only graze at starting an ethical discussion. As brought to surface in the analysis, no general ethical concern seemed to be present among the companies. However, the fact remained that the marketers interviewed seemed to have no ethical concern regarding the increasingly present 12-15 year olds as they do not believe they reach this group of young users. As stated above, the companies cannot freely choose their followers on Instagram and has thereby little power of who is reached by their messages and content. However, we find this matter could be of great relevance and interest to investigate, from a customer perspective instead of a managerial one. Our recommendations for future researchers is hence to evaluate the awareness and concern among 12-15 year olds regarding their potential reach by marketing messages on Instagram. It would be interesting to conduct research investigating whether these children are aware of marketers’ presence on Instagram and whether this could be something of their concern. In order to be able to compare even greater differences which might arguably lead to even more valuable insights into the world of Instagram marketing.

6.9 Social & Ethical Issues

One of the aims of this thesis was to investigate the awareness and concern among companies regarding their potential reach of 12-15 year olds on Instagram, which has brought to surface a potentially interesting social and ethical issue. As discussed earlier, the majority of the companies did not know whether their marketing messages reached this group of users as no information about their followers is available on Instagram. Additionally, as the companies cannot control who follow them on Instagram they were

not concerned by whether or not they reach this young group of users. It all boils down to a question of; whose responsibility is it to make sure that the young generations are not reached by inappropriate marketing messages? And furthermore, how do Swedish authorities legislators keep up with the vast technological development and marketing present on new social media channels? The thesis itself does not answer these questions, however, we argue that by illuminating these important topics the thesis contributes to an important social discussion regarding how society is affected by the use of new marketing channels.

Additionally, both companies and private users can post content on Instagram, and marketing messages do not look like traditional sales ads used to on the platform, it can arguably be hard for people to distinguish which posts are marketing messages in their feed. Moreover, all interviewed companies claimed they uploaded content in order to inspire customers, hence it can arguably be rather difficult to discern what content in the feed has the underlying aim of forwarding company values and/or inspire to consumption. Our thesis can arguably contribute to illuminate for people that marketing messages are present on Instagram, thereby making it possible for people to avoid being exposed to marketing content without their knowledge.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

Partaking in the interview is voluntary and you may end the interview at any time. You and your company have the option of being entirely anonymous if you would like. The interview will be recorded but we will be the only ones listening to the recordings. The answers will be used solely for the purpose of investigating our research questions. If you do not feel like answer any particular question just tell us and we will continue with the next one. You will be given the opportunity to read the transcript of the interview before publication. If this feels okay for you we will now start.

Questions

Introducing Marketing

Describe your (personal) work duties
Beskriv dina arbetsuppgifter?

Tell us about how you work with marketing at your company?
Berätta hur ni jobbar med marknadsföring på?

Tell us about how you work with social media marketing at your company?
Berätta hur ni på jobbar med sociala medier?

Describe the overall marketing strategies of your company?
Beskriv företagets generella marknadsföringsstrategier?

What are your corporate marketing goals?
Vad har ni för generella marknadsföringsmål på?

Instagram marketing

Why does your company have an Instagram account?
Varför har ... ett Instagramkonto?

Describe your opinion of Instagram as a marketing channel?
Beskriv din uppfattning av Instagram som en marknadsföringskanal?

In general, what pros & cons do you see with Instagram (as a marketing channel)?

- Why?

Överlag, vilka för- respektive nackdelar anser du att Instagram har i marknadsföringssyfte?

- *Varför?*

Do you have specific marketing strategies for Instagram?

- How come? /Why not?

Har ... specifika marknadsföringsstrategier för Instagram?

- *Hur kommer det sig?/ Varför inte?*

How do measure the success of your marketing on Instagram?
Hur mäter ni framgången i er marknadsföring på Instagram?

What goals do you have with the content you post on Instagram?
Vilka mål har ni med innehållet ni lägger upp på Instagram?

Can Instagram better help you understand how customers perceive your company/brand?

- How?

Kan instagram hjälpa er att få en bild av vilken uppfattning kunder har om er?

- Hur?

Do you adapt the content you upload on Instagram in order to encourage other Instagram users to forward your message?

- How?

Anpassar ni innehållet ni lägger ut på instagram med avsikten att uppmuntra andra Instagram användare att vidareförmedla ert innehåll/budskap?

Instagram functions

Describe how you make use of the # function on Instagram?

Beskriv hur ni använder #funktionen på Instagram?

Describe how you make use of the 'forwarding function' (@) on Instagram?

Beskriv hur ni använder @funktionen på Instagram?

Describe how you make use of the 'location' function on Instagram?

Beskriv hur ni använder funktionen på Instagram?

Do you arrange any competitions on Instagram? Describe

Arrangerar ni tävlingar på Instagram? Förklara hur ni går till väga?

Is it important for you to get 'likes' on the content you post on Instagram?

Är det viktigt att det ni lägger upp på Instagram får många gilla markeringar?

Do you use any other functions on Instagram? How?

Använder ni er av andra funktioner på Instagram? Hur?

Do you encourage Instagram users to relate themselves with your Instagram content, company related hashtags or other company related info you post on Instagram?

- *(if yes)* Any specific users? Why those? How?
- *(if no)* Why not?

Uppmuntrar ni andra Instagram användare att sprida vidare bilder, videos, hashtags och övrig information ni lägger ut på Instagram?

- *(om ja)* Hur gör ni det? Några särskilda användare? Varför dem?
- *(om nej)* Varför inte?

Interaction on Instagram

Do you use Instagram to target any specific customer segments?

- Which?

- How?
- Finns det något specifikt kund segment ni försöker nå via Instagram?*
- Vilket?
 - Hur?

Do you use Instagram in order to receive information about customers?

- if yes: How?
- What type of information?
- if no: why?

Använder ni Instagram för att samla information om kunder?

- om ja: Hur?
- Vilken typ utav information?
- om nej: varför?

Do you use Instagram to look at other Instagram accounts?

- Why / Why not?

Besöker ni andra Instagram konton?

- Varför/varför inte?

Do you see any advantages/disadvantages with following people on Instagram? *Explain*
Ser ni några för eller nackdelar med att följa andra användare på Instagram? Förklara

Do you answer comments and questions from customers on Instagram?

- why/why not? explain
- In what manner? Do you have any answering strategy?
- how do you deal with negative comments?

Svarar ni på kommentarer och frågor från kunder på Instagram?

- Varför/varför inte?
- På vilket sätt, har ni något särskild strategi?
- Hur hanterar ni negativa kommentarer?
- Hur mycket tid?

Do keep track on what customers say about you on Instagram?

- How? Why?

Håller ni koll på vad som sägs om er på Instagram?

- hur då? varför?

Is customer interaction something you want to achieve on Instagram?

- why is that important/not important?

Är konsument kontakt något ni vill uppnå på Instagram?

- Varför är det viktigt/oviktigt?

Describe what you know about your Instagram followers?

Beskriv vad ni vet om era Instagram följare?

Recent statistics have shown that young users, especially in the age group 12-15, are increasingly present on Instagram

- Is this something you are concerned by when marketing on Instagram?
- (Is this something you take into account in your work? How?)

Statistik har visat att antalet unga användare, särskilt gruppen 12-15 år, ökar på Instagram

- *Är det något ni har i åtanke när ni marknadsför på Instagram?*
- *(Är det något ni tar hänsyn till i ert arbete? På vilket sätt?)*

Do you have anything you would like to add?

Är det någonting du skulle vilja tillägga?

Thank you for your participation!



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