

Social Networking

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Social Networking
Social Trends and Consumerism (M5X01285)
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Abstract: In society today, the emergence and continuous expansion of social networking has been influential in providing businesses with strategic ways of using social platforms to connect with core investors, affiliates and the international marketplace instantaneously, via the click of a button.

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1.0. Introduction

The brief is to critically evaluate the opportunities and challenges being presented to the Logistics and Transport industry by the growth of social networking.

There have been considerable developments in digital media and marketing technology since the inauguration of the world wide web, which was founded by Sir Tim Berners some thirty years ago (Conroy, D et al 2019). One such digital platform that has gathered a considerable amount of momentum through increased popularity over the years has been social networking, as highlighted by **fig 1**. Assaad and Gómez, (2011) define social networking as *"the convergence of technologies that make it possible for individuals to communicate, share information and form new communities online easily"*. The significant growth in social media has been startling and has enabled 3.8 billion people, over forty-five per cent of the world's population to stay connected digitally (Atherton, I. 2019). It is through these social media platforms that businesses have been able to capitalise, as has presented them with the opportunity to advertise their products and services. Through the implementation of digital ads, businesses can engage with customers and obtain feedback instantaneously. This, in turn, allows companies to obtain a clear understanding of how consumers think and what their interests are. For businesses, this has provided them with vitally important information to enable necessary changes to improve their products and services. Recently addressed in a survey conducted by Social Media Today, it states that "71% of social media users are more likely to buy products from brands that are digitally connected through a social media platform (Express, 2019).

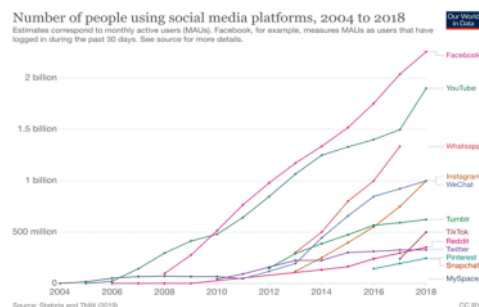


Figure 1- Total number of global social media users
(Ortiz-Ospina, 2019)

2.0. Social media platforms

Social networking sites are a series of web-based service instruments for the creation of digital communities, whereby individuals of similar interests and lifestyles can express themselves through photos, videos and ideas (Kietzmann et al., 2011). From the information gathered from an individual's online profile and their recent activities, businesses can extract vital information to facilitate them in producing advertisements that directly target the wants, needs and interests of

the individual (Thomas, 2018). Moreover, this interaction between B2C allows a company to build relationships with their consumer, which can be an extremely effective way to build their brands image, create greater visibility and improve its reputation. However, this engagement between both a business and its target audience should not just be to promote and achieve sales but be used as platform to install a level of brand loyalty. This is further reinforced by (Express, 2019) who stipulates that a business can significantly increase its profits by between 25% - 85% simply by improving its customer retention rate by 5%.

2.1.1. Facebook



As it is currently, Facebook is the largest social networking platform, which has amassed a colossal following of more than 2 billion monthly users worldwide (Appel et al., 2019). The company prides itself in its ability to "give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected" "However, Facebook is not only considered as a means of social interaction; it has presented numerous opportunities for businesses to use digitised advertisements and promotions to reach a much greater target audience which helps to facilitate in the purchasing of their products and services (Sehl, 2020).

2.1.2. LinkedIn



LinkedIn is a professional social networking platform that is used by some 30 million companies and 690 million individual members as a means to communicate, build relationships and obtain more effective insider skills and knowledge from other major players within their industry. These corporations utilise the site as a way to promote potential job opportunities whilst allowing individuals to create a polished and professional profile and upload a CV, as a way of "putting their name on the professional map" (Kohler, 2020).

2.1.3. Trustpilot



Trust pilot is a robust platform that gives businesses a compelling way of showing how they appreciate their customers and how their customers appreciate them through feedback reviews. At present, Trustpilot is accountable for more than 100 million reviews spanning across four hundred thousand companies (Trustpilot, 2020). Addressed recently in a study conducted by Dimensional Research, it concluded that some 90% of individuals are enticed into purchasing products that have received positive reviews and a further 72% of people consider online reviews just as important. (Kaemingk, 2020) Additionally, A survey conducted by Survey Monkey Audience revealed that A survey conducted by Survey Monkey Audience revealed that eight seven per cent of consumers find that those adds that include a Trustpilot star rating, to be significantly more reputable than those adds that do not.

2.1.4. Lyft



Lyft is an American based, multi-vehicle rental service that makes the use of mobile technology in the form of an app to fulfil customer travel requirements. The company's primary focus of app integration is to make the process of making and coordinating bookings as hassle-free as possible for both the rider and driver. Due to its slick and simplistic design layout, the app itself can be utilised to enable swift and effortless payment transactions. When Lyft was first launched, they were seen as a wishful rival to Uber. From the stiff competition they received, Lyft conducted an innovative and noticeable marketing strategy where the company started a pink moustache campaign, where pink moustache emblems were placed on every one of their vehicles, this was a significant branding move that can significantly accelerate consumer awareness (Erica, 2018).

3.0. The impacts of the internet on the marketing mix

Although there has been a sudden shift to new marketing strategies used within eCommerce from a steep rise in technology, many of the conventional marketing concepts can still be applied such as the four Ps (**product, price, place and promotion**) as they are as pertinent to online businesses as they are with offline ones (Nezamabad, 2011). Many E-businesses utilize many forms of technology innovations from artificial intelligence, apps and widgets within their marketing strategy, these useful tools provide an effective way of reaching greater target audiences and obtain a level of competitive advantage (Stephenson, D. 2018).

3.1. eBay's marketing mix strategy

eBay's marketing mix strategy can be considered as a prime exemplification of how an ecommerce business can successfully maximize its online assets. The main focus of eBay's marketing mix strategy is on the services that it provides to its global market of buyers and sellers. eBay's marketing mix is described by (Mitchell, 2017) as :

3.2. Price

The organisations price strategy is directly focused on competitive pricing to ensure that the company can effectively compete by ensuring the lowest price of a product against their other main rivals such as Amazon. eBay implements a dynamic pricing strategy which is used to allow them to remain versatile in setting out the product price. Which helps them to handle customer expectations.

3.3. Product

Products are considered as either a physical item or service that is inputted into the market to satisfy the desire of a consumer. In the case of eBay, the products are their online/retail auction services. eBay's services can be categorized in three main elements, Marketplace services - which allows consumer to bid for, "buy now" or sell either used or new products. Ticket exchange services where customers have an option to resell or purchase event tickets services and finally a classified service which enables customer to post localised advertisements.

3.4. Place

eBay's place strategy comprises of places where the company can disperse its products to a target market. The relevant places are categorized as :

3.4.1. eBays official webpage and mobile app - is the main places where customers can obtain full access to the full range of services that the company offers.

3.4.2. An Application programming interface (API)

The company makes use of API which has been an effective way for eBay to distribute its goods whilst simultaneously allowing other company websites and apps to obtain access to eBay's many products and services. By having a series of alternative places to sell their many products, it has helped eBay to not only increase their efforts to be able to reach a wider target market but has supported the company's overall strategy to maintain a level of competitive advantage over other eCommerce-based businesses.

3.5. Promotion

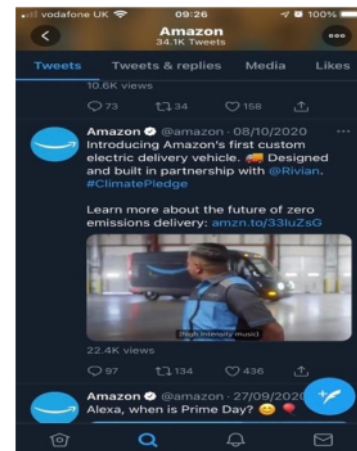
eBay's promotes its products through a series of different strategies. Firstly, through effective sales promotion eBay is able to fulfil customer expectations and entice them with discount coupons. Secondly, the use of advertisements is a persuasive way to allure in bigger audiences to make use of their online platform and finally by incorporating public relations it can elevate the company's business and brand awareness.

4.0. Advantages of using social media in logistics

4.1. Breaking down communication barriers

Individual logistics companies often feel it is challenging to exhibit a more human side of their business, as they are aware of the changes in consumer behaviour, where buyers are consistently after a more personal connection to brands. This has caused many B2B logistics companies to become more innovative in their approach, and this where social media can play a crucial role in achieving just this (Agnihotri et al., 2016). Social media can help an organisation to communicate with their clientele through the use of images, videos and sound which provides an insider look, which allows them to keep actively engaged with their followers, build relationships and construct a lively community. *Fig 2* shows how the global online retailer giant Amazon, has been able to effectively make use of twitter as a way promoting their services whilst also using it as means to show what the company is doing to lessen their global impacts regarding environmental sustainability issues (Twitter,2020).

*Figure 2 - Amazons use of twitter
(Twitter,2020)*



4.2. Providing vital real time information

Real-time tracking between a business and a third-party logistics company can be improved through social media integration. As it can help with both parties in amending their shipping and delivery schedules much more quickly, which helps to improve the transparency of the supply chain drastically. Moreover, companies can make use of the information on accidents, sudden changes in weather conditions and shipping transportation issues from social media to make necessary changes to re-route a delivery, alter a delivery schedule and notify a customer about the change in the situation (Jordan, 2018).

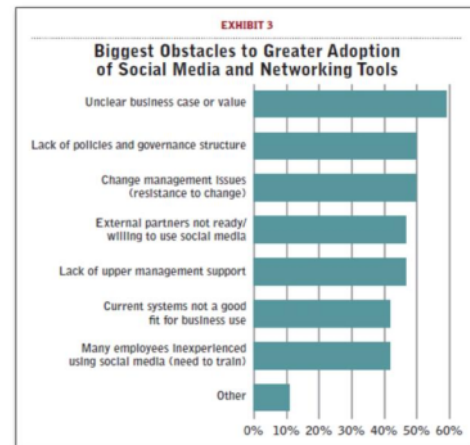
5.0. UP's Effective use of social networking

The Universal Parcel Service (UPS) is one such organisation that demonstrates how social media can be effectively integrated to ensure that its supply chain is running smoothly. The company makes use of social media in the form of blog posts to help to increase the company's transparency and visibility. These blogs can appear in the forms of case studies and stories from different employees throughout the whole of the supply chain. Subsequently, the sharing of usually obscured information on these blogs allows the company to increase the awareness of their supply chain undertakings for not just their customers but more crucially for their employees across the supply chain (Baker, 2018).

6.0. Disadvantages of social media in logistics

From a negative sense, many logistics companies feel that social media networking is not a vital asset to have included in the day to day running of their business. (Gonzalez, 2015) states that many companies see these public social media sites such as the likes of Facebook and Twitter lack any supply chain and logistics context. Moreover, logistic companies also see the biggest problem of all is their inability to evaluate the business value of using social networking. This, in turn, presents them with a series of questions like how much money could the company realistically save, and will it improve the productivity of the company? Further drawbacks within logistics are highlighted by *fig 3*.

Figure 3 - Associated disadvantages of social media (Gonzalez, 2015)



7.0. Conclusion

To summarize, this report has in detail, highlighted the many advantages and disadvantages that are being presented to the logistics industry due to the growth of social networking. It is and will continue to remain vitally important for the logistics sector and associated businesses to be fully in tuned within social media to not only continue to remain relevant with their customer base, but also as a means to mitigate against the chances of their competitors in gaining the upper hand.

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Social Networking

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

78 / 100

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3



Comment 1

You should formulate a short title for this section

PAGE 4



Comment 2

You have used both terminologies as social media and social networking and I agree with the distinction and explanations. It should be interesting to have more insights but this has been a shortcomings of the assignment task



Comment 3

This reference is not correctly applied Harvard style. It is correct without "D" only the surname et al., year



Comment 4

same here regarding in text references using Harvard style

PAGE 5

PAGE 6

PAGE 7



Comment 5

The references list is correct and very comprehensive

RUBRIC: BACHELOR'S ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**RES-INF LIT****Excellent 70-79%**

Research-informed Literature. Extent of research and/or own reading, selection of credible sources, application of appropriate referencing conventions

OUTRIGHT FAIL 0-29%	Little or no evidence of reading. Views and findings unsupported and non-authoritative. Referencing conventions largely ignored.
UNSATISFACTORY 30-39%	Poor evidence of reading and/or of reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Referencing conventions used inconsistently.
SATISFACTORY 40-49%	References to a limited range of mostly relevant sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied consistently.
GOOD 50-59%	Inclusion of a range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Referencing conventions mostly consistently applied.
VERY GOOD 60-69%	Inclusion of a wide range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Very good use of referencing conventions, consistently applied.
EXCELLENT 70-79%	A comprehensive range of research informed literature embedded in the work. Excellent selection of relevant and credible sources. High-level referencing skills, consistently applied.
EXCEPTIONAL 80-100%	Outstanding knowledge of research-informed literature embedded in the work. Outstanding selection of relevant and credible sources. High-level referencing skills consistently and professionally applied.

SCALE 8

K & U SUBJECT**Excellent 70-79%**

Knowledge and Understanding of Subject. Extent of knowledge and understanding of concepts and underlying principles associated with the discipline.

OUTRIGHT FAIL 0-29%	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of material at this level. Substantial inaccuracies.
UNSATISFACTORY 30-39%	Gaps in knowledge, with only superficial understanding. Some significant inaccuracies.
SATISFACTORY 40-49%	Evidence of basic knowledge and understanding of the relevant concepts and underlying principles.
GOOD 50-59%	Knowledge is accurate with a good understanding of the field of study.
VERY GOOD 60-69%	Knowledge is extensive. Exhibits understanding of the breadth and depth of established views.

EXCELLENT 70-79% Excellent knowledge and understanding of the main concepts and key theories. Clear awareness of challenges to established views and the limitations of the knowledge base.

EXCEPTIONAL 80-100% Highly detailed knowledge and understanding of the main theories/concepts, and a critical awareness of the ambiguities and limitations of knowledge.

SCALE 8

ANALYSIS

Excellent 70-79%

Analysis. Analysis, evaluation and synthesis; logic, argument and judgement; analytical reflection; organisation of ideas and evidence.

OUTRIGHT FAIL 0-29% Unsubstantiated generalisations, made without use of any credible evidence. Lack of logic, leading to unsupportable/ missing conclusions. Lack of any attempt to analyse, synthesise or evaluate.

UNSATISFACTORY 30-39% Some evidence of analytical intellectual skills, but for the most part descriptive. Ideas/findings sometimes illogical and contradictory. Generalised statements made with scant evidence. Conclusions lack relevance.

SATISFACTORY 40-49% Evidence of some logical, analytical thinking and some attempts to synthesise, albeit with some weaknesses. Some evidence to support findings/ views, but evidence not consistently interpreted. Some relevant conclusions and recommendations, where relevant.

GOOD 50-59% Evidence of some logical, analytical thinking and synthesis. Can analyse new and/or abstract data and situations without guidance. An emerging awareness of different stances and ability to use evidence to support the argument. Valid conclusions and recommendations, where relevant.

VERY GOOD 60-69% Sound, logical, analytical thinking; synthesis and evaluation. Ability to devise and sustain persuasive arguments, and to review the reliability, validity & significance of evidence. Ability to communicate ideas and evidence accurately and convincingly. Sound, convincing conclusions / recommendations.

EXCELLENT 70-79% Thoroughly logical work, supported by evaluated evidence. High quality analysis, developed independently or through effective collaboration. Ability to investigate contradictory information and identify reasons for contradictions. Strong, persuasive, conclusions, justifiable recommendations.

EXCEPTIONAL 80-100% Exceptional work; judiciously selected and evaluated evidence. Very high quality analysis, developed independently or through effective collaboration. Ability to investigate contradictory information and identify reasons for contradictions. Highly persuasive conclusions.

SCALE 8

PRAC APP&DEPL

Excellent 70-79%

Practical Application and Deployment. Effective deployment of appropriate methods, materials, tools and techniques; extent of skill demonstrated in the application of concepts to a variety of processes and/or contexts; formulation of innovative and creative solutions to solve problems.

OUTRIGHT FAIL 0-29%	Limited or no use of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application.
UNSATISFACTORY 30-39%	Rudimentary application of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application.
SATISFACTORY 40-49%	An adequate awareness and mostly appropriate application of well established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Basic appreciation of the context of the application.
GOOD 50-59%	A good and appropriate application of standard methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Good appreciation of the context of the application, with some use of examples, where relevant.
VERY GOOD 60-69%	A very good application of a range of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive use of examples, where relevant. Evidence of some innovation and creativity.
EXCELLENT 70-79%	An advanced application of a range of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, with extensive use of relevant examples. Application and deployment extend beyond established conventions. Innovation and creativity evident throughout.
EXCEPTIONAL 80-100%	Outstanding levels of application and deployment skills. Assimilation and development of cutting edge processes and techniques.

SCALE 8

SKILLS PROF P	Excellent 70-79%
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Skills for Professional Practice . Demonstrates attributes expected in professional practice including: individual initiative and collaborative working; deployment of appropriate media to communicate (including written and oral); clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation.

OUTRIGHT FAIL 0-29%	Communication media is inappropriate or misapplied. Little or no evidence of autonomy in the completion of tasks. Work is poorly structured and/or largely incoherent.
UNSATISFACTORY 30-39%	Media is poorly designed and/or not suitable for the audience. Poor independent or collaborative initiative. Work lacks structure, organisation, and/or coherence.
SATISFACTORY 40-49%	Can communicate in a suitable format but with some room for improvement. Can work as part of a team, but with limited involvement in group activities. Work lacks coherence in places and could be better structured.
GOOD 50-59%	Can communicate effectively in a suitable format, but may have minor errors. Can work effectively as part of a team, with clear contribution to group activities.

Mostly coherent work and is in a suitable structure.

VERY GOOD 60-69% Can communicate well, confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Can work very well as part of a team, with very good contribution to group activities. Work is coherent and fluent and is well structured and organised.

EXCELLENT 70-79% Can communicate professionally and, confidently in a suitable format. Can work professionally within a team, showing leadership skills as appropriate, managing conflict and meeting obligations. Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally.

EXCEPTIONAL 80-100% Can communicate with an exceptionally high level of professionalism. Can work exceptionally well and professionally within a team, showing advanced leadership skills. Work is exceptionally coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally.

SCALE 8