

Disertation

by William Luke Parfitt Edwards

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**Investigation and evaluation of social media
promotion strategies for organisations and their
increase in popularity**

by

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Project submitted as part of the requirements for the
award of BSc(Hons) Business Information Technology

April 2016

DECLARATION

I, **William Luke Parfitt Edwards** declare that I am the sole author of this Project; that all references cited have been consulted; that I have conducted all work of which this is a record, and that the finished work lies within the prescribed word limits.

This work has not previously been accepted as part of any other degree submission.

Signed :

Date :

FORM OF CONSENT

I **William Luke Parfitt Edwards** hereby consent that my Project, submitted in candidature for the BSc Business Information Technology degree, if successful, may be made available for inter-library loan or photocopying (subject to the law of copyright), and that the title and abstract may be made available to outside organisations.

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Abstract

The purpose of this project is to identify the social media platforms that are being used by companies and organisations from across the world, to look at the amount of money that is being spent and made on advertisements, to recommend the most effective social media platform through the use of the survey. Alongside this the methods in which the advertising is carried out is looked at. Each social media platform differs from another in some form or another. This comes down to the way in which the individual platforms operate and the different content they provide. An example of this is YouTube uses video advertisements before videos and during videos were as Facebook shows still image advertisements that link to products. Both of these methods contain hyperlinks so any click on the image/video will lead to the company/organisation the advertisement is for.

This document is also looking at the amount of money that is being spent on social media advertisements as well as the revenue being made. The report comes to the conclusion through the literature that there is an increase in money being spent and money being made from the advertisements and that this pattern is set to increase over the years.

To gather secondary information a survey was created. This survey's purpose was to identify any the effectiveness of social media advertisements and to discover if there was any trends between age and gender. Below are some facts that were discovered from analysis of the survey;

- 74% percent of people overall follow a company on social media and 58% of women follow a company.
- 69% of social media users use the platforms daily with females accounting for 55% of the daily users.
- 64% of Snapchat users are 30 years old or younger
- 67% of users have seen an advertisement for a product on social media that they viewed on another website

In conclusion it was found that Facebook is the best platform to advertise products on due to it being the most popular and having the most products purchased on. The conclusion also came to that users aged between 10 and 50 are the most likely to purchase a product after seeing it advertised on social media.

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1.0 Chapter 1 - Introduction

In the modern world there are many different means available to companies to advertise their products and reach their target audiences. One method in particular has been increasing over the years due to sites such as Facebook and Twitter gaining popularity. Facebook in particular has over 1.5 billion active users each month(1). For organisations this provides a worldwide target audience with a range of different demographics within easy reach. Organisations can single out individuals to target their products, whereas if they used an older method such as TV adverts they would be aiming at a much multiple demographics at once, this can make adverts crammed with too much information or loose the attention of the viewers as the product may be aimed at someone else.

This report will be looking at how organisations are using social media to advertise their products and the increase in this method compared to the more traditional ways over the last 10 years. The different types of online social media advertising methods will be examined and reviewed such as advertising on YouTube with short adverts before a video and other methods such as displaying products and their deals/prices on individuals Facebook timelines or on their Twitter feeds. There is a range of different areas where organisations can advertise due to the increase in smart devices, particularly smart phones.

With the increase of smart phones people are able to access their social media platforms from anywhere which means they can be targeted at any time of the day no matter where they may be. Smart phones have a range of applications and most of them can be used by organisations to target you. The most popular are social sites but they can even target you when you are playing a game on a smart device if there are adverts enabled.

The aims are;

- Examine the increase in social media marketing over the last 10 years.
- Evaluate the different strategies that are being used on social sites.
- Discover the effectiveness of social media advertising using published literature and by carrying out a survey.
- Look at the different platforms in which organisations can reach their audiences.

The next chapters of this report will be looking at the current platforms that are being used and the techniques that are being used on these platforms.

The objectives are;

- Examine the increase in social media marketing over the last 10 years.
- Look at the different platforms in which organisations can reach their audiences.
- Examine the platforms to find the most viable option for a marketer.

2.0 Chapter 2 – Social platforms

This chapter is looking at the most popular platforms that are used by organisations and the techniques that are used. Each section will be looking at individual platforms with a brief description of how the platform is used and then looking at the techniques that are being used.

2.1 Facebook

Users use this site to share their thoughts, images, videos and to talk to their friends and family. They can see all of their friend's posts in their "Facebook Wall" and they can see their activity such as liking someone's post.

2.1.1.2 Company pages

Organisations use different methods on this platform. The first method is to create their own Facebook page(2). This page can be used to display adverts for their products and anyone who has liked their page will be able to see these on their timelines(3). The majority of people that have liked the page will have done so because they like the company or have bought a product from them previously before. There are other ways for companies to get followers of their company page and that is to hold a competition. When a competition is held on Facebook the requirements are mostly to like their page and then to share their post. This means that they gain more followers on their page and their company name is being spread around all for the cost of a single item being given away(4). These posts have the ability to be seen by thousands of individuals.

The amount of pages can vary for each company as they may have multiple pages for different areas of the world such as North America and the United Kingdom.

2.1.1.3 Advertisements

Organisations also use Facebook to target their audience by displaying adverts. These adverts are placed on user's timelines and they do not require them to have a company page. These are placed by Facebook themselves by them gathering information on its users

Facebook has control over what they can view on a smart device. When their application is installed they are able to carry out certain actions. These actions are made aware to users but they are ignored as they want and need the application. Facebook is able to access your location so they can see where you go and spend most of your time. They are able to see what websites you have visited by accessing the applications data on

your smart device. This information can show what products you have been viewing and on what site. If Facebook has got a partnership or a deal with that company they will place their advert on your timeline. (5, 6)

The information that is provided just from users profiles can be used such as their favourite band. With that information alone a record label can aim their products directly to that user with the help of Facebook.(7)

2.2 Twitter

Twitter is similar in many ways to Facebook. The major difference is users do not have friends but followers and users follow people who are of interest to them. Pictures and videos are also able to be posted. There is a trending feature within Twitter and this shows the most popular hashtags that are being used. Viewing on of the top tending hashtags will show any of the tweets by users that contain that tag. (8)

2.2.1 How companies use Twitter

The majority of major companies will use Twitter for more than just marketing. As anyone may contact anyone they desire, companies will set up support accounts. These accounts are used to answer any questions or assist anyone with one of their products. These accounts can also be used as marketing. An example of this is when one mobile telecoms company noticed a tweet to a rival company from one of their customers complaining about their service. The company then decided to tweet that customer and offered him a better deal, stealing a rival's customer and then going somewhat viral. All of this gained exposure for both companies and one company made money from the whole ordeal. (9)

Celebrities populate Twitters most popular accounts list. With the millions of followers an A list celebrity may have they can easily Tweet out about an upcoming album, film or tour they are going on. This will reach the celebrities target audience as if a user's is following them there is a great chance they are a fan and would like to purchase/watch what is on offer. All of this comes at no cost compared to doing a radio and or television advertisement. Most of the Twitter accounts will be managed by a celebrity's management team who will decide what is appropriate and the best time to put out a Tweet about one of their products.

2.2.2 Trending

A company can easily benefit from the 'Trending' feature on Twitter. This feature is similar to going viral but on a smaller scale and for a shorter period of time. Companies may start of a trend simply by placing a hashtag on one of the products. An example of this is a television program, the majority of channels will show a hashtag at the start of an episode and tell the audience to tweet using the hashtag. If so many people do so it will make the trending list and will be seen by all who use Twitter gaining free exposure.(11)

2.3 YouTube

The popular video sharing site was founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim in June of 2005.(10) The website has over a billion users each month(12) and each day there are over 4 billion video views.(13) Users are able to upload their own videos which are checked by staff once uploaded to make sure they are appropriate and do not feature any copyrighted content. These videos can be viewed by anyone on the internet as registration is not required to view content. Users have their own channel where all of their videos can be found and if a user wants to see more of their videos they may subscribe for free to see their videos in their subscriptions list. Some channels have millions of subscribers and the majority of the owners of the channels have made a career from uploading videos.(14) Product endorsement/placement and advertising are the main revenue incomes for the users.(15)

2.3.1 Adverts

There are five methods in which adverts may be seen when watching a video depending on the device being used. They are;

- Display ads (Desktop)
- Skippable videos (Desktop, mobile devices, TV, and game consoles)
- Non skippable videos (Desktop and mobile devices)
- Sponsored cards (Desktop and mobile devices)
- Overlay ads (Desktop)

(7)

These methods are used by a range of companies and the 95% of the top 100 global companies have used YouTube to advertise their products.(17)

2.4 Games

Games are used by companies to advertise on many different platforms. Games count as a social media platform as they allow for communication between players.

2.4.1 Logo placement/virtual advertisements

Games are getting more realistic over the years and the graphics quality has been increasing along with it. This opens up games to companies that want to advertise to gamers. Taking a game like FIFA 15 a football game, companies that can be found advertising along the side of the pitch in real life can sometimes be seen doing exactly the same within a game(Appendix A). Another example is a racing car game where companies allow for their vehicles to be used as it gains them free exposure and gamers can get to drive their cars and maybe think about going on to purchase one in real life.

President Obama when running for president used games for advertising his presidential campaign. His advertisement were featured in over seventeen games and encourage users to vote for him to become president (Appendix B).

A report found that gamers remember the advertisements that they have seen in a game over and advertisement they have seen in real life. This shows that using games is a great strategy and is clearly working on capturing its target audience's attention.

2.5 Instagram

Instagram is a picture sharing platform that was purchased by Facebook in 2012 for one billion dollars.(18) The platform works similar to Twitter in which it allows it's users to follow others and be followed. The main feature is the ability for users to upload pictures and slightly modify them by the use of filters. Other users can like another's picture and users are able to add hashtags to their photo.(21)

2.5.1 Product placement

Product placement is when a company pays for their product to be featured in someone's

Users that have a certain amount of followers can benefit from making money on Instagram. This can be done with product placement. A company can benefit from a user with thousands of followers as they can pay that user to simply advertise their product by getting them to take a picture and let them post it to their account. This will be visible to all of the account's followers and to the user it will simply be the user showing a product

they use where was the truth is they are being paid to show the product. This also allows for companies to target its audience without them even realising they are being targeted. Another benefit of this strategy is that users may want that product simply because they trust that it is of good quality and standard simply because they trust the user's opinion. It has been reported that a user with over ten thousand followers can make over fifteen thousand pounds a year by using their influence to get their followers to buy products by product placement.(19)

2.5.2 Ambassadors

A company can tailor who and what products are being advertised. To make the method more affective a company may wish to have ambassadors. This is when a person uses their product and only their product. An example of this would be someone who is into sports using only Nike sport equipment and clothing. This can be done with Instagram users. If there is a user who has an account that is all about keeping fit then a company like Nike may want to make them an ambassador. The same could be done for an account about cooking. A cooking company may want to make them an ambassadors so that they can advertise their equipment.(24)

3.0 Chapter 3 – The effectiveness of social media advertising and increase in usage

This chapter will be examining the effectiveness of social media. To do this two factors will be looked at which are the amount of revenue from advertisements and the amount of money that is being spent on advertisement's. Viral marketing will also be examined as a means of effective marketing.

3.1 Revenue from advertisement on social media

The best way to determine the effectiveness of social media advertisements is to look at how much money is being made from them. In 2010 Twitter made 45 million dollars from advertisement's alone(20). It is no secret that social media websites main form of income is from advertisements(22). The reason for this is that social media platforms are free to use and need a way to make money and with their large database of users means creating adverts to target their users is easy.

Below is a graph that shows the amount of revenue made from social media advertising from 2014 to 2020. As the graph shows there is over 1.1 billion dollars being made in 2014. This shows that the advertisements are clearly effective as there is over a billion dollars being made in revenue. The graph also shows that the amount is expected to decrease after 2016. This is only a prediction and may not be the case but for the time being using social media can be seen as an effective method of advertising.

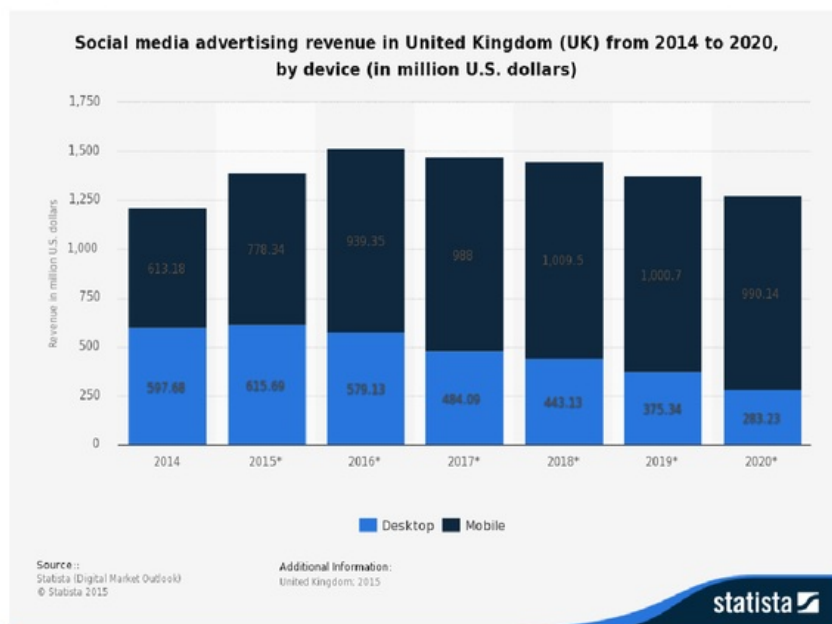


Figure 1 – Social media advertising revenue in the United Kingdom(23)

Facebook is the largest of all of the social media platforms. For the year 2014 they made a total of 14.7 billion dollars worldwide from advertisement revenue(25). This is set to increase over the next few years which shows that social media advertisements are here to stay and may one day become the go to method for advertisements.

Another figure that shows the effectiveness is that the social media platform LinkedIn made 32% of their revenue from advertisements. This number was higher than the fees they were receiving from users that pay to use extra features on the site.(20)

3.2 Advertisement spending

The amount of money that is being spent on advertising comes down to the amount that is being made back in return and the reach of the social media platforms. Companies are aware of the importance of being on these social media platforms and are aware of the benefits or spending money to advertise on them. The reason for this is that social media advertising is being set up to be the best and most effective methods to advertise(26).

The amount of money that has is being spent on social media platforms particularly on mobile platforms has reached a point in which it will surpass the amount spent on any other means of advertising. The amount of spending is dramatically increasing with an increase of 40% in 2015. By 2018 it is estimated that spending will reach 8.5 billion dollars just on advertisements on the smart phone applications.(27)

Looking at digital advertising on a whole it can be seen that in 2014 28.7% of the spending was spent on social media. This figure is set to rise to 34.5% in 2017.(28)

3.3 Word of mouth (Viral marketing)

Social media platforms are used by those who want to interact with people around them such as their friends. The actions that they make on social media usually consist of sending friend's posts or linking them to a post by tagging them. This can be used to make the effectiveness of social media advertisements much more effective for a company/organisation.

One way to take advantage of the word of mouth is through viral marketing. To discuss how viral marketing works an example will be used such as a video. To make a video go viral there are many different factors that need to be looked at. The first factor is how to gain the attention of the viewers, this is all about making the video eye catching or making it start with a bang to quickly grasps a viewer's attention. Once the attention of the viewer

has been acquired the next step is connecting to an emotion, there are a range of different emotions that a video can target such as sadness, happiness or laughter. This can be seen in advertisements from companies such as Compare The Meerkat(29) who use a meerkat in their videos as viewers find the meerkat funny and want to see more of him. The next and final step is to make the video catchy. This means that there needs to be a tune or a saying that viewers can repeat and can easily get stuck in their heads. Once all these steps are taken a viral video can be launched into the realm of social media.

3.3.1 Effectiveness on social media

By uploading the viral video that has been created to a social media platform such as Facebook the amount of users that it can reach can be endless. If the video meets the discussed steps then it will be possible to make the video go viral as viewers will find the video catchy and memorable.

Hopefully this will spark a discussion between friends on social media platforms and the video will start to spread from users sharing and linking the video. If the video has gained a large amount of attention it may be possible to start trending moving onto different platforms such as Twitter. If the video starts trending then millions of people will be able to see it and may get curious and view the video.

The best part of viral marketing is the major expense is on the production of the advertisement. The amount of money to host the advertisement could be nothing or very low on social media websites. Uploading to YouTube is free for anyone so the advert could easily be uploaded there and linked to on Facebook. Once the video is uploaded there is no more work that needs to be done as the users on social media platforms will be doing all of the work passing around the advertisement.(20–25)

4.0 Chapter 4 – traditional methods of advertisement comparison and users on the social media platforms

This chapter will be looking at the traditional means of advertisements and compare the methods used to the current methods that are being used on social media. This chapter will also be looking at the range of users that can be found on social media platforms, such as different demographics.

4.1 Traditional advertising

Before the increase in popularity of social media and the internet the most popular method of advertising was televisions. The reason for this was that the majority of homes in first world countries owned a television set.(35) To reach their customers companies would use advertisements during the breaks in during and between programs(36).

There is also another range of methods that are traditionally used. One of these methods is the use of billboards and posters. Posters and billboards are static images that tend to provide information about an event or product. A disadvantage to using this method is that there is a limited amount of information that can be displayed. Another disadvantage is that these two methods can get damaged by the weather or be taken down by a passer-by. This means that the money that was spent to create and make the poster/billboards is wasted.

Another form of traditional advertising is radio stations. Radio stations like television channels have breaks which are filled up with advertisements. The target audience for a radio station is the listeners which once again is a large range of people which means that there is also a proportion of money that is being wasted on listeners who will take no notice of the advertisement.

The methods that have been traditionally used are to create an advertisement that can be seen by all. These advertisements are targeted to a particular audience but can be seen by all audiences. This means there is a vast amount of money being spent and in return a proportion of the viewers of the advertisements will take no notice or will not be interested as they are not targeted to them.

4.2 Traditional advertisements vs the modern social media advertisements

The traditional methods of advertisements cannot stack up to social media advertisements. There are many factors for this. One of these factors is that social media is a far cheaper method. It can cost as little as \$5 and reach up to 200 users.(37) Advertisements on a television can cost hundreds of thousands of pounds as they need to be filmed and in some cases animated. The price also differs for the time slots and the reach of the advertisement. During the Super Bowl in America it can cost up to 3.5 million dollars for a 30 second advertisement due to the amount of viewers. The amount of viewers in America alone was almost 112 million(38). This does not compare to the amount of users that could see an advertisement on social media especially if it went viral. Televisions adverts do have a benefit that can be a deciding factor to certain companies, this is the amount of people that watch television programs from the older generation. The older generation is far more likely to own a televisions than use social media and they are most likely watching television not browsing social media sites.

4.2.1 Conclusion

In conclusion social media methods can reach a larger audience and benefit different companies differently. If there is a company that want to reach older generations then the use of television advertisements should be used. However the cost for advertising overall outweighs any benefits traditional methods provide.

4.3.1 Demographics

There is a wide range of information that can be obtained from a social media platform. For example Facebook can see a user's interests as they will have added them during the creation of their profile. Facebook is also able to see what a person's job is which means they have some idea of how much money a person is making.

The graph (Appendix C) shows some information that has been gathered from Facebook by Facebook.

5.0 Chapter 5 – Methodology

This chapter will be looking at the method that will be used to gather information. In this case a survey will be created and distributed out. The reasoning for using a survey for this project will be discussed in great detail and each layer of the research onion will be looked at. For every question the reason behind them being asked will be discussed along with their relevance to the project and the literature review. This chapter will also look at the validity of the survey and the prototyping that took place.

5.1 The research onion

The research onion allows for the approaches for each step of the methodology to be examined to determine the best approaches to be used for the desired outcome.

5.1.1 Layer 1 - Philosophical stances

The method that will be used from this layer is positivism. The reason for using this method is that there is data that already exists that can be used to compare the results with. Scientifically if someone is seeing an advertisement they are likely to then by that product not another product they have not seen advertised.

5.1.2 Layer 2 – Approaches

The approach that will be taken will be deductive. The reason for using this approach is that the survey is setting out to gain answers not create theories. Using this approach will be an advantage as it will allow for questions to be answered on a yes or no basis or from a selection of answers.

5.1.3 Layer 3 – Strategies

The strategy that is going to be used is a survey. The reason for this is questions can be asked and the responses can be easily analysed. Another advantage of using a survey is that the questions can be catered to the project and any information that may prove useful can be obtained.

5.1.4 Layer 4 – Choices

The method that will be used is quantitative. The reason for this is that the questions are going to be listed and a participant will simply select their answer. The benefit of using this method is that the data can easily be grouped into one and analysed much easier. Another advantage is that the amount responses for the survey does not need to be a high

number. Using this method there will be similar results is qualitative research method was used the data pool would need to be much larger to carry out any analysis.

5.1.5 Layer 5 – Time horizons

The approach that will be taken for this layer is a cross sectional approach. The reason for this is there is not enough time to carry out research for months at a time. There is a deadline for the survey so it needs to be completed as soon as possible.

5.1.6 Layer 6 – Techniques and procedures

The best method to collect the data will be to create both an online survey which can be passed around on social media and a paper survey (hard copy). The reason for this is that some age groups may not find it easy to use social media or may not use it at all and struggle to complete the survey. Another reason for this is that the survey needs to be completed on time and if some people only use social media once a week they may not notice the survey.

To analyses the results the data will be placed into a spreadsheet and then turned into various different graphs to find and trends and to discover any links between sets of data.

5.2 The survey

This section will be looking at the survey itself, the structure of the questions, prototyping and how the results will be analysed.

5.2.1 The objectives of the survey

The main objective of the survey is to gather information on the effectiveness of social media marketing. The other objectives are to see what can change these results such as a person's age or gender. Another objective is to see what platforms are the most effective at selling products through advertisements. The final objective is to be able to analyse the results and discover any trends or any links between the results.

5.2.2 Target audience

The target audience for the survey are everyday people. There is no specific type of person who will be targeted as the survey is trying to gather information on every body's social media usage, if they have seen advertisements or not and if they have bought any products after seeing them advertised. It is important however that there is a range of

different people. There needs to be a good mix of males and females and different ages. This is important as it can be used later on to discover and trends that may occur and to see if gender or age is a factor.

5.2.3 The questions

This section of the methodology will be looking at the questions that will be in the survey. For each question the question shall be listed along with its relevance to the project and if there is any research that was gathered in the literature review give an expected outcome.

5.2.3.1 Question 1

The first question of the survey will be "What is your gender?" The reason for this question is to gather the information to then be used later on during analysis to determine if gender play a role in the rest of the survey's results. There is no link to the literature review that shows there is a difference when someone is male or female when it comes to social media.

5.2.3.2 Question 2

The second question is going to be "What age band do you fall under?" This question is question is going to be asked so that age can be used during analysis to see if it plays any role in the rest of the results of the survey. The literature review suggests that there should be more usage from young adults and teenagers.

5.2.3.3 Question 3

The third question shall be "How often do you use social media?" This question plays a key role in the rest of the survey. This will be used to determine whether the amount of time spent of social media platforms has any effect on the rest of the questions. If this question has a response that says they do not use any social media then they will no longer take part in the rest of the survey.

5.2.3.4 Question 4

This question will be "Which social media platforms do you use?" This will provide data on what platforms are being used which can then be used to determine from the results which are the best for advertising. From the literature review it is expected that the most popular platform will be Facebook followed by Twitter.

5.2.3.5 Question 5

The fifth question will be “Do you follow companies or organisations on social media platforms?” This can be used to see if following a company of a social media platform links to the amount of products bought or the amount of advertisements that are seen. From the research it can be seen that there should be a higher amount of advertisements seen by those who follow a company as companies create posts about their products.

5.2.3.6 Question 6

The sixth question is “How often do you come across advertisements on social media platforms?” The data from this question is relevant as it can be used to see if there is a link between seeing advertisements and following a company, it can also be used later on in analysis to see if there is a link between seeing different amounts of advertisement’s and buying products. The research shows that seeing advertisement’s should be the key factor in purchasing a product as that’s the only way to see a product unless a user decides to search for the company.

5.2.3.7 Question 7

This question shall be “Have you ever purchased a product after seeing it advertised on social media?” This question will be used to determine if there is a link between seeing advertisement’s on social media platforms and purchasing a product afterwards. According to the research there should be a link and there should be high amount of responses with the results of seeing advertisement’s daily.

5.2.3.8 Question 8

The eighth question is going to be “How many products have you bought after seeing them advertised on social media platforms?” This question will reveal how many products that have been bought because of social media advertising. The data can be used in the analysis to see if there are any links to the previous questions. The data can also be used on its own to see if using advertisement’s on the platforms as an effective method of advertisements. The research does not directly link to products being bought after they have seen an advertisement for a product.

5.2.3.9 Question 9

The ninth question shall be "Have you seen an advertisement for a product that you have seen on another website on social media?" The reason for this question is to see how well the one of the strategies mentioned in the literature review works. From the research it was discovered that Facebook and YouTube both access information such as cookies to gather information on which website a user has viewed. If they have viewed a product and have a contract with that company they will go ahead and post an advert for that exact product along with similar ones. The results should show that users that say yes will have bought more products after seeing them on social media platforms.

5.2.3.10 Question 10

For the tenth and final question, the question shall be "Do you think social media advertising is effective?" The response for this question is expected to be yes. However if the surveys previous questions show that there are no products being bought and no advertisement's being seen then the answer will most likely be no. From the research the expected outcome is to be yes due to the amount of money made in 2014 from advertisements on social media.

5.2.4 Is the survey valid?

To make sure that the survey is valid a convergent style of designing has been used. Convergent validity means that the data gathered will be related to another set of similar data. In this situation will the data relate to the results of the literature review. The survey should therefore be valid as most of the questions relate to information that has been obtained from the literature review and the others are used to further analyse the data.

6.2.5 Is the survey reliable?

The survey should be reliable due to the fact that the design have been made very simple to make sure that there is not any confusion and the pilot has been made. The pilot survey allows for the reliability to be tested as similar genders and age groups were showing to have similar if not the same answers. The survey was also tested on a group of 3 people and the results were gathered and analysed. The same group were then given the exact same survey and the results were exactly the same. However there is always going to be some results that do not look accurate, but that can be expected in any survey.

6.2.6 Is the survey generalisable?

The results that will be gathered will be easily generalisable. The data that will be gathered is mainly for the purposes to see how effective social media advertising is. However the information can also be used to research the difference in usage between genders and age. The data could also be used to see if there is a particular platform that is preferred by different ages or gender.

6.2.7 Prototyping

This section will be looking at how the prototyping was done and any changes that were made as a result of the prototype.

6.2.7.1 Pilot survey

To test the survey a pilot was made. This pilot was created so that the survey could be tested before it was handed out and the data could then be analysed to make sure that the results were accurate and to see what changes needed to be made. To test this the survey was sent around the university to fellow students. The reason for this is the similar age group gives easier results and make determining the effectiveness of the survey.

6.2.7.2 Making changes

After the pilot was carried out there were changes that clearly needed to be made. The first change was to add a question. There was no question which asked about the gender. This was an important question that was needed as it can be used in the analysis to determine if gender effects the results. The second change was to question 9. The original question was long winded and caused confusion. The change was simply rewording the question to cause less confusing and make the results more accurate.

6.2.8 Analysis of the results

To analyse the results all of the information will be entered into a single spreadsheet. The data from the online survey and the paper survey will all be merged into one. From the spreadsheet the data shall be sorted and then used to create various graphs. These graphs will contain many different results to discover any trends or links between results. Some of the data will also be turned into percentages to give a simply overlay of the results.

6.0 Chapter 6 - Analysis of survey

This chapter will be looking at the results of the survey that was carried out. In all there was 47 results collected and these results were turned into graphs to discover any trends. Each questions results will be discussed to determine any trends and

6.1 Question 1

The question – What is your gender?

Answers available – “Male” or “Female”

Question type – Check box

6.1.1 The results

The results were as expected. The reason for this is that the aim was for the survey to have equal or close to the same amount of the opposite gender. Overall there was 23 males and 24 females that answered the survey. This allows for the data gathered in later questioned to be examined by gender as well as age.

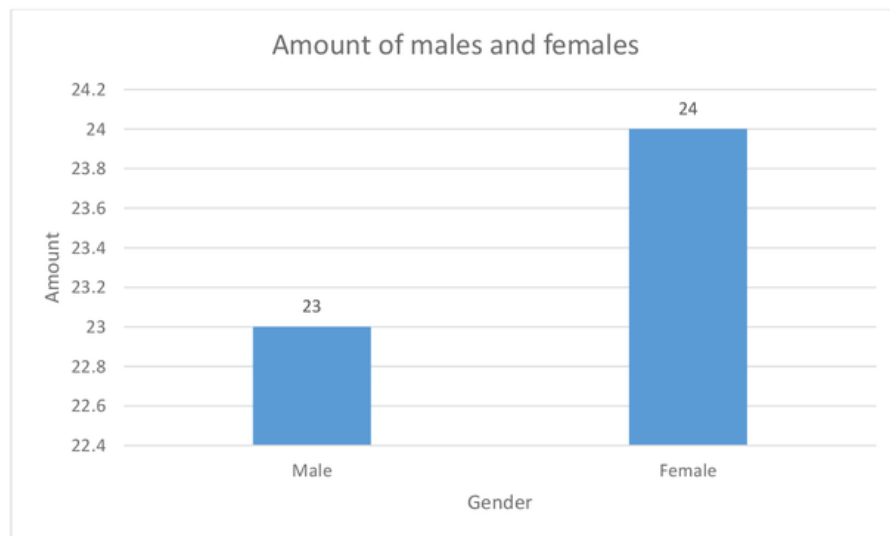


Figure 2 – Amount of females

6.2 Question 2

The question – What age band do you fall under?

Answers available – “10-20”, “21-30”, “31-40”, “41-50”, “51-60”, “61-70”, “71-80” and “81-90”

Question type – Check box

6.2.1 The results

The results for each age band can be seen below in the two graphs. The data is as expected showing that the age group that is using social media the most is within the 21-30 range.

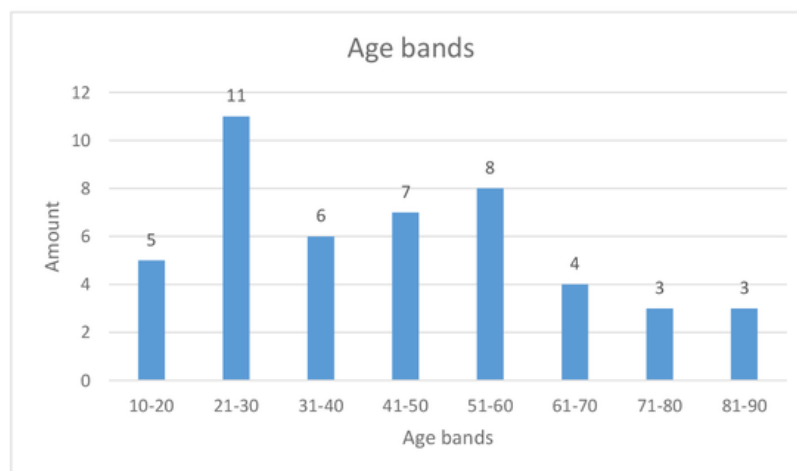


Figure 3 – Age bands

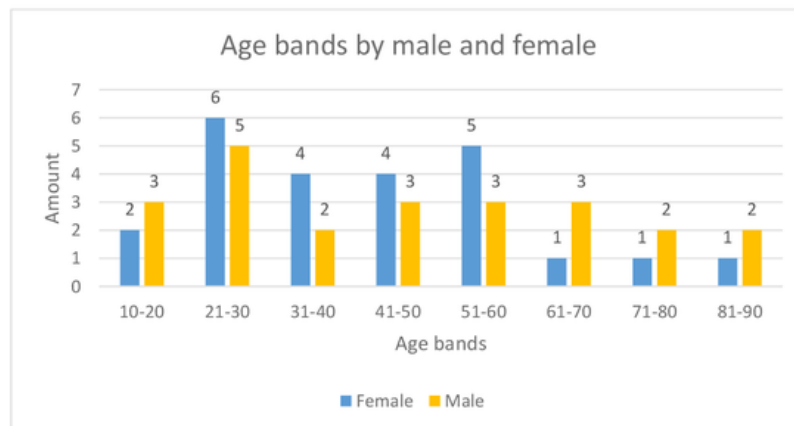


Figure 4 – Age bands male and female

6.3 Question 3

The question – How often do you use social media?

Answers available – “Never”, “Once a week”, “Couple of times a week” or “Daily”

Question type – Check box

6.3.1 The results

The results show that the most people use social media platforms on a daily basis. Age can be seen to be a factor that affects this. This may come down to the fact that the older generation struggles or may not use any modern technology therefore having no access to social platforms.

The results are as expected as from the research it has been shown that social media is mostly used by youths and young adults. The research also shows that the older a person is the less they use social media platforms and in some cases they were not used at all. The data shows that people that are aged above 60 are less likely to use social media platforms all together. This can be seen as 5 out of the 10 people aged above 60 said they do not use social media at all.

From this point on the amount of responses will tally up to 42 due to the following questions relating to a person’s activity on social media and 5 responses saying they do not use social media platforms.

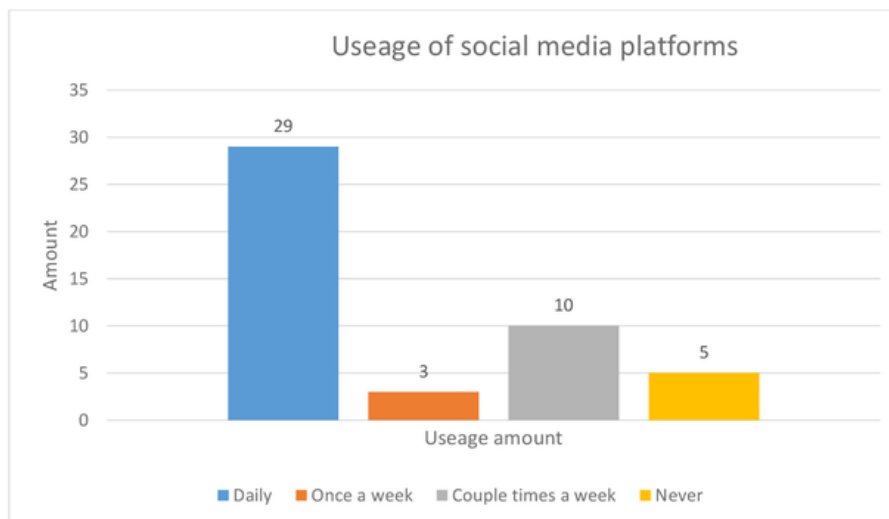


Figure 5 – Usage of social media platforms

6.4 Question 4

The question – Which social media platforms do you use?

Answers available – “Facebook”, “Twitter”, “Instagram”, “Snapchat”, “Instagram” or “Other”

Question type – Multiple choice with a text box for if other was selected

6.4.1 The results

The results are what were expected. They show that the most popular is Facebook with every single response saying that they use Facebook. This is not a surprise as Facebook is widely used by family's to keep in contact and often family members create Facebook accounts for older generations in their family. The results also show that Twitter has only 15 out of 41 responses saying they use the platform. This is also not a surprise as the research shows that there is a fall in the rise of users creating accounts on Twitter.

The results also show that YouTube is a popular platform which is also no surprise. The reason for this is that YouTube does not require an account to view the content and YouTube can be viewed on different social platforms and can often be found on Facebook content.

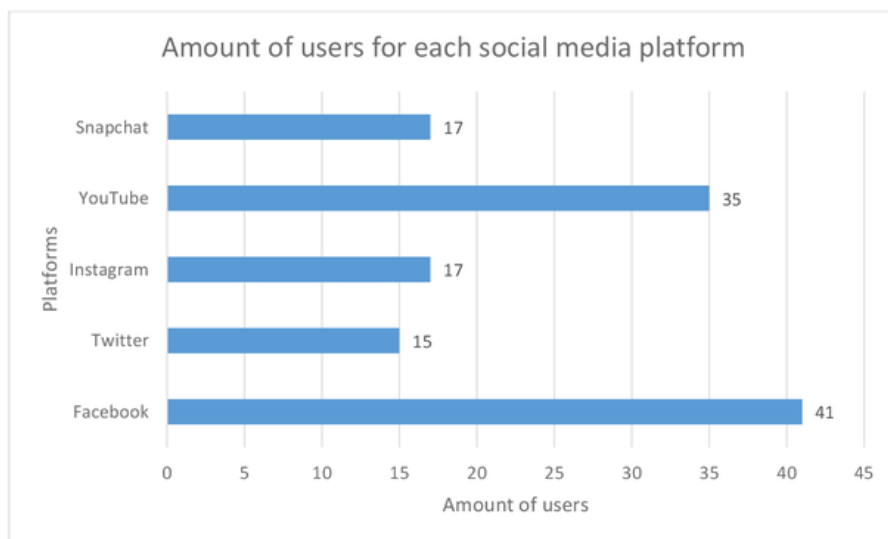


Figure 6 – Amount of users for each platform

6.5 Question 5

The question – Do you follow companies or organisations on social media platforms?

Answers available – “Yes” or “No”

Question type – Check box

6.5.1 The results

The results show that 31 people follow companies on social media platforms and 11 do not. There is a clear link that can be seen between the usage amount and following a company. Only 3 out of the 29 daily users do not follow a company and those that have a lower usage are less likely to follow a company. From the data it can also be seen that the older the person is the less likely they are to follow a company, this simply comes down to how much they are using social media platforms and in some cases they may not be aware if they are following a company.

This is backed up by the research carried out so the results are what was expected. There are a few surprising anomaly's such as all of the males aged 51-60 years old not following a company, whereas for the females of similar age only 1 in 4 of them does not follow a company. This could be a link between genders but seems unlikely due to this being the only age band that has this anomaly.

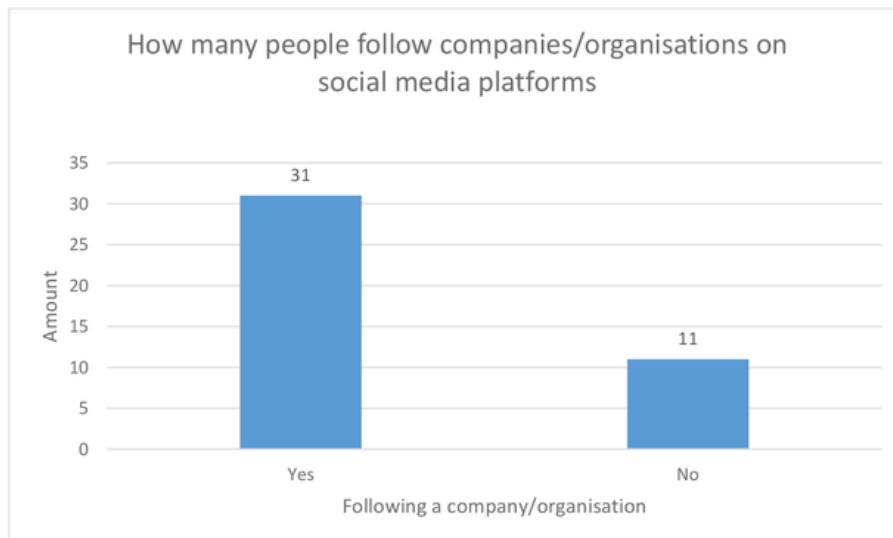


Figure 7 – How many people follow companies/organizations on social media platforms

6.6 Question 6

The question – How often do you come across advertisements on social media platforms?

Answers available – “Never”, “Daily” or “A few times a week”

Question type – Check box

6.6.1 The results

From the data it can be seen that 29 of the 42 responses come across advertisements daily which is to be expected from the amount of advertisements that can be found on some social platforms such as YouTube. There is no clear link between the amounts of usage to the amount of adverts that are seen. This may be due to the social media platforms in particular. It can be seen that almost everyone that is using YouTube is coming across advertisements every time they are on. This links back to the research as it shows that the amount of advertisements on YouTube is far greater to any of those on popular platforms such as Facebook and twitter. Another factor may be the intensity of the advertisements. YouTube is known for having a video advertisements that you can skip after 5 seconds. This makes the user aware to the advert whereas on Facebook someone may simply scroll past an advertisement and not realise it was there in the first place.

There were only 3 responses that said they had never seen an advertisement on social media which comes as a surprise for the amount advertisements that are around, however this may be linked to the amount of time they spend using social media platforms. This can be seen as the 3 responses in question either use social media a couple of times a week or only once. There is one other factor that could have given these results and that is them not being aware they have seen the advertisements or simply not remembering as seeing an advertisement on social media platforms is a daily occurrence for most users.

From this point onwards the amount of responses will only tally up to 39 due to the following questions relating to seeing an advertisement on social media.

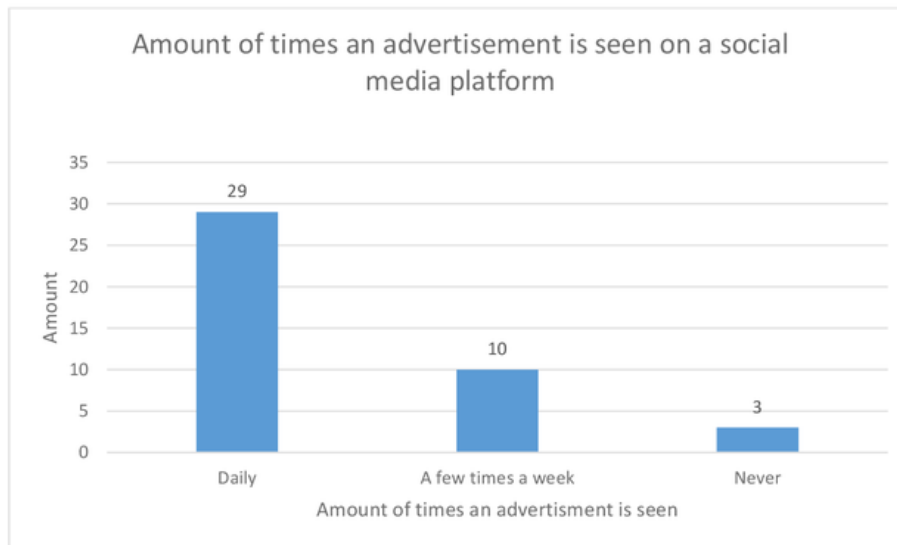


Figure 8– Amount of times an advertisement is seen on a social media platform

6.7 Question 7

The question – Have you ever purchased a product after seeing it advertised on social media?

Answers available – “Yes” or “No”

Question type – Check box

6.7.1 The results

From the results it can be seen that 24 have purchased a product after seeing an advertisement for it and 15 have not purchased a product. This clearly shows that the advertisements are working as there are clear results that users on social media are purchasing the products.

There is a link that can be seen between the amount of times someone sees advertisements to whether they have bought a product. The data shows that 20 out of 29 users that see advertisements on a daily basis have purchased a product after seeing it advertised.

The results are as expected due to the research showing that social media advertisements are effective due to the amount of money being spent and from their rise in popularity. Another reason for the results being expected is from personal experience seeing products being purchased by others.

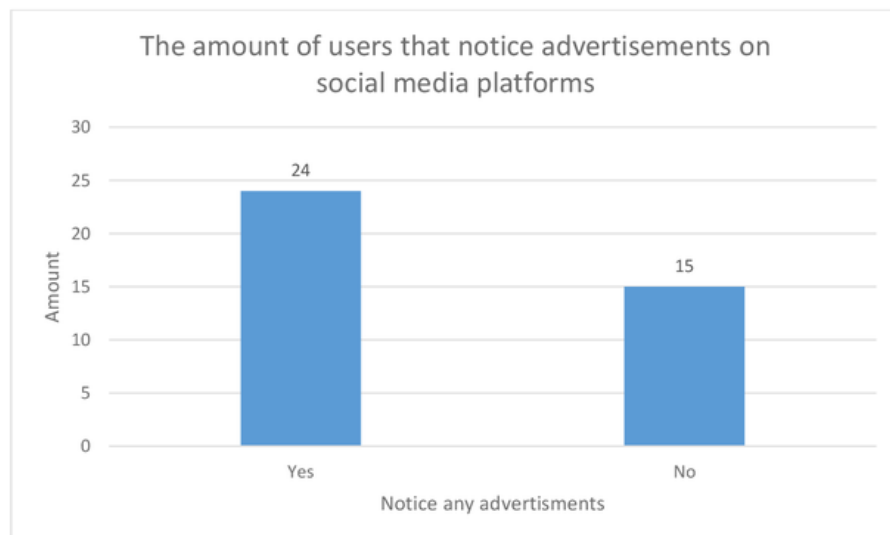


Figure 9– The amount of users notice advertisements on social media platforms

6.8 Question 8

The question – How many products have you bought after seeing them advertised on social media platforms?

Answers available – “1 to 5”, “6-10” or “More than 10”

Question type – Check box

6.8.1

The total amount that the results tally up to for this question is only 24 due to 15 responses saying they have not purchased a product.

The data shows that most of the users are purchasing between 1 to 5 products with 1 purchasing 6 to 10 and 2 purchasing more than 10. The data shows that the two people that have purchased more than 10 products use social media platforms on a daily basis, follow companies and they see advertisements daily as well.

These results were not expected because there are other results that are the same or similar that only purchase 1 to 5 products. This may come down to other factors such as their occupation (salary) or their trust in advertisement they see online. The reason for these results not being expected is because of the research that was carried out. The research indicated that the amount of products being bought would have been higher for the amount of money that is being spent and for the amount of large companies that are using social media advertising.

The large companies using social media to advertise their products would normally be going for a larger profit margin. These results show that there is not a great deal of products being bought and there are thousands of different companies that advertise on social media websites which means that there are companies that are likely to be making even less money compared to others.

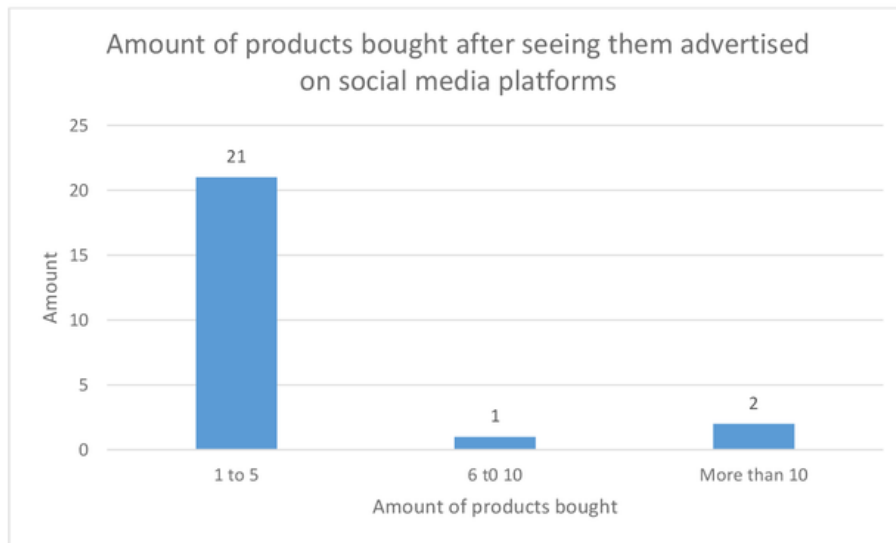


Figure 10– Amount of products bought after seeing them advertised on social media platforms

6.9 Question 9

The question – Have you seen an advertisement for a product that you have seen on another website on social media?

Answers available – “Yes” or “No”

Question type – Check box

6.9.1 The results

The results show that the majority of responses have seen an advertisement on social media for a product that they have viewed on another website. There was 26 responses that had and 13 that had not. There is a link that can be seen with this data and that is that everyone that has seen an advertisement for a product they have viewed has said they use either Facebook or YouTube and some both.

The result and link between the data was expected due to Facebook and YouTube both using data such as cookies to gather information on what websites a user has visited to create advertisements ideally aimed at the users interests. This is done as it is more likely that a user will purchase a product they have been looking in to.

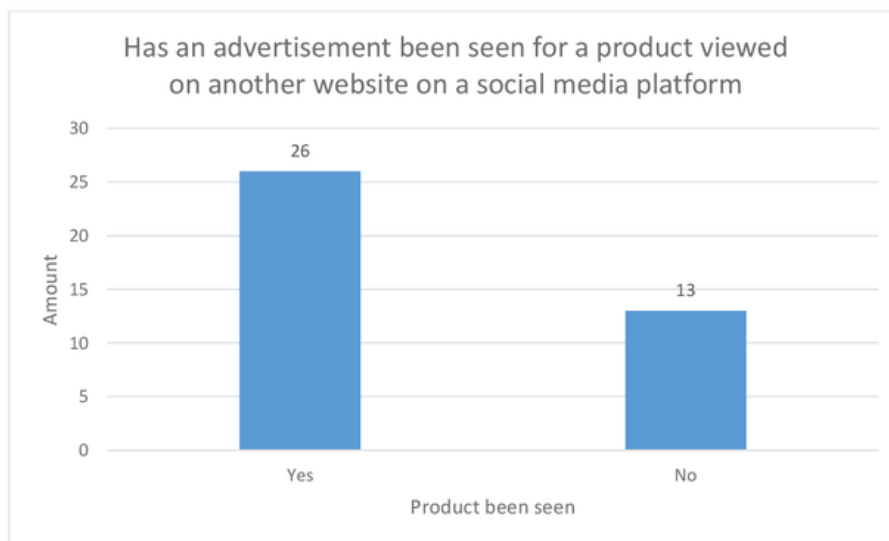


Figure 11– Has an advertisement been seen for a product viewed on another website on a social media platform

6.10 Question 10

The question – Do you think social media advertising is effective?

Answers available – “Yes” or “No”

Question type – Check box

6.10.1 The results

The data shows that 30 people think social media advertising is effective and that 12 do not. There is a clear link to those that think social media advertising is effective and that is those that have purchased 6 or more products after they have seen them advertised. The rest of the responses varies between yes and no for those that have bought between 1 and 5 products. Due to the survey not asking for the exact amount of products that have been bought those who think social media advertisements are not effective may have only bought 1 or 2 products and those that have bought more do think it is effective.

The results were as expected as social media advertisements are on the increase and there is massive amounts of major companies utilising the service and they would not do so if it was not an effective means of advertising.

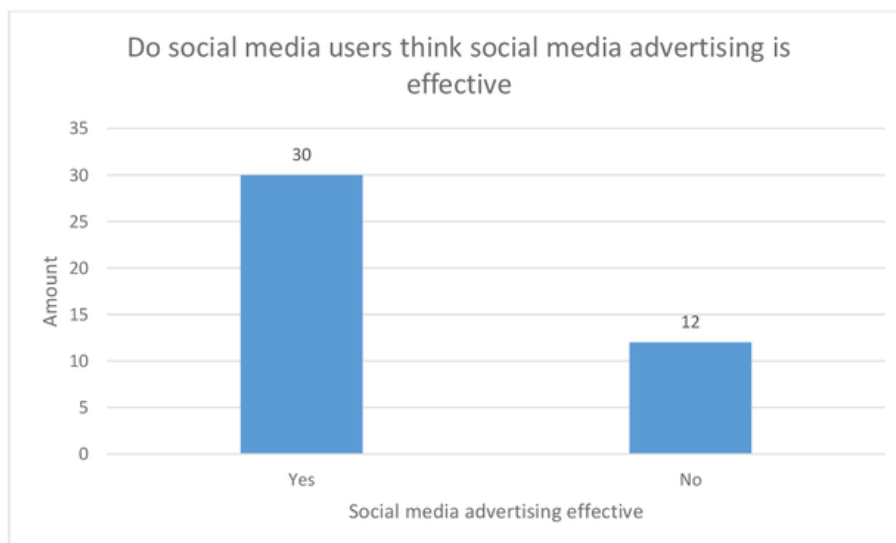


Figure 12– Do social media users think social media advertising is effective

6.11 Interesting percentages

From all of the data gathered a list of percentages has been made up from the links between certain data. Below are these results;

- 74% percent of people overall follow a company on social media and 58% of women follow a company.
- 69% of social media users use the platforms daily with females accounting for 55% of the daily users.
- 64% of Snapchat users are 30 years old or younger
- 67% of users have seen an advertisement for a product on social media that they viewed on another website

6.12 Noticeable correlations

This section will be looking at correlations that can be seen when taking factors such as gender and age into consideration.

6.12.1 Usage correlations

The data shows many different correlations between different answers. The first correlation can be seen by the following graphs. These graphs clearly show that from the age 10 to 30 there is an increase in usage and most people use social media daily.

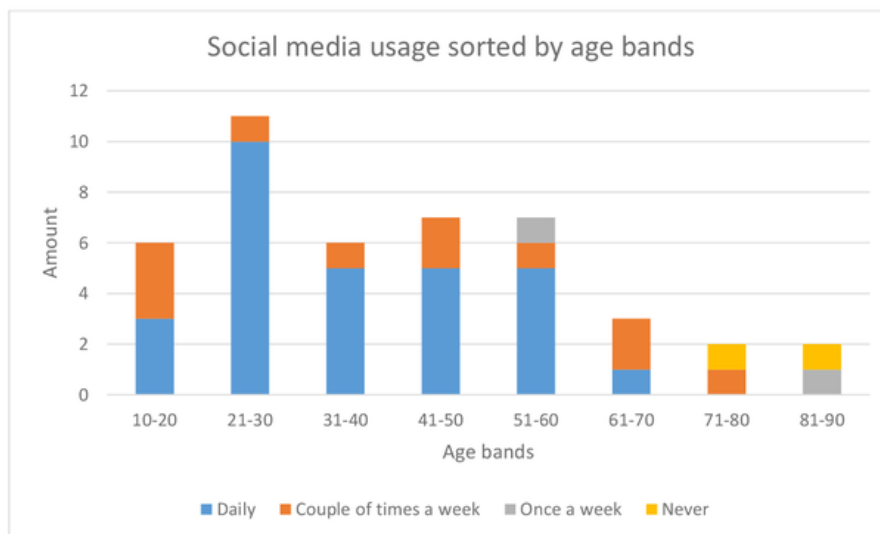


Figure 13– Social media usage sorted by age bands

This data was then broke down to see if gender plays a role in the usage amount. Below are the results which show that woman over the age of 60 use social media platforms less than men do.

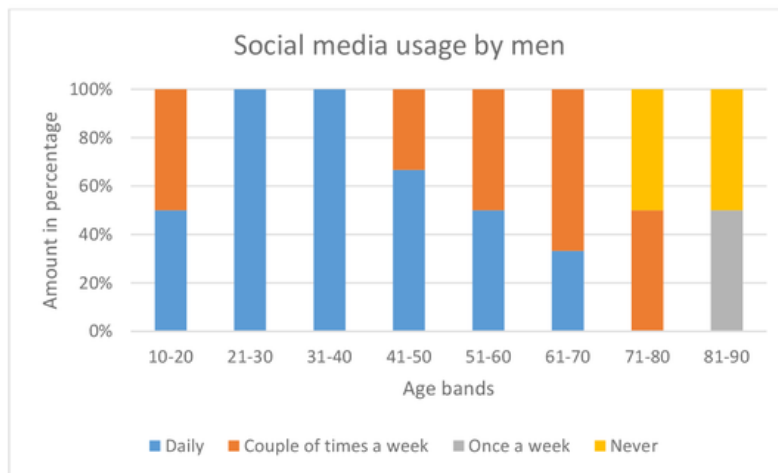


Figure 14– Social media usage by men

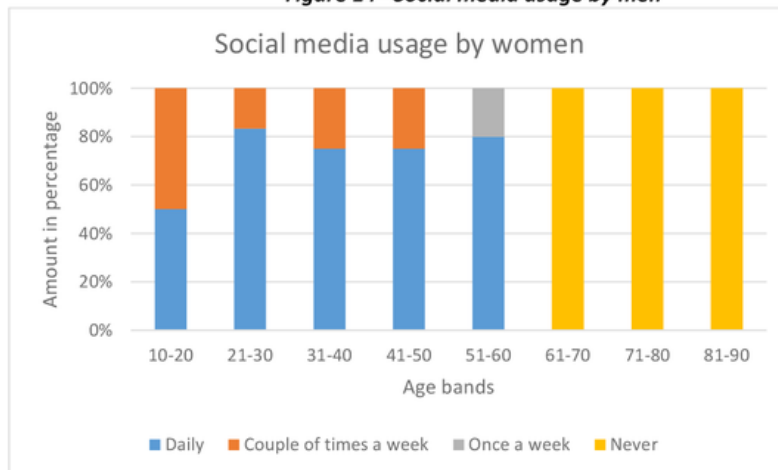


Figure 15– Social media usage by women

The data shows that women that are 61 years of age or older do not use social media. This data may inaccurate as there was only 1 female for each age band. This data is most likely to differ if there was a larger amount of data collected for these age bands.

6.12.2 Products purchased correlations

The data shows that the lower age bands age from 10 to 50 are most likely to purchase a product after seeing them advertised on a social media platform. Below is the graph that shows the correlation.

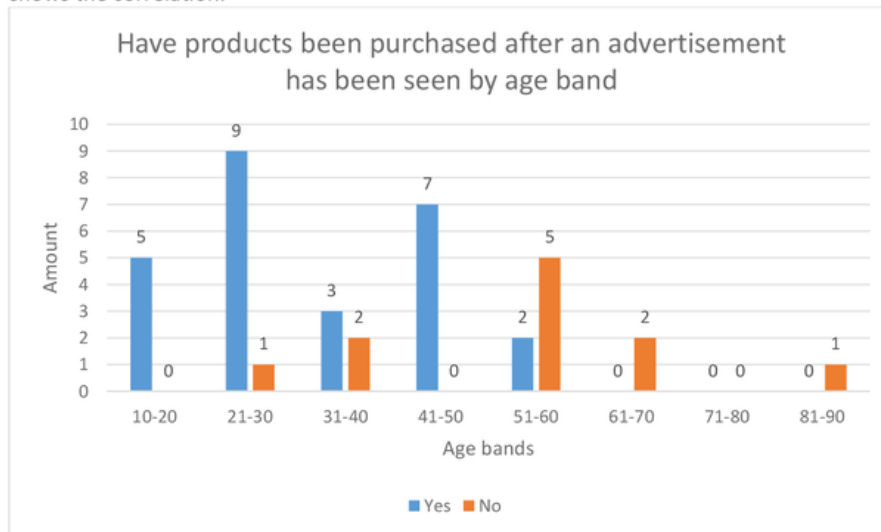


Figure 16– Have products been purchased after an advertisement has been seen by age band

There is a slight correlation that suggests that men are more likely to purchase a product than women. Below are the graphs for both men and women.



Figure 17– Have products been purchased after an advertisement has been seen by males

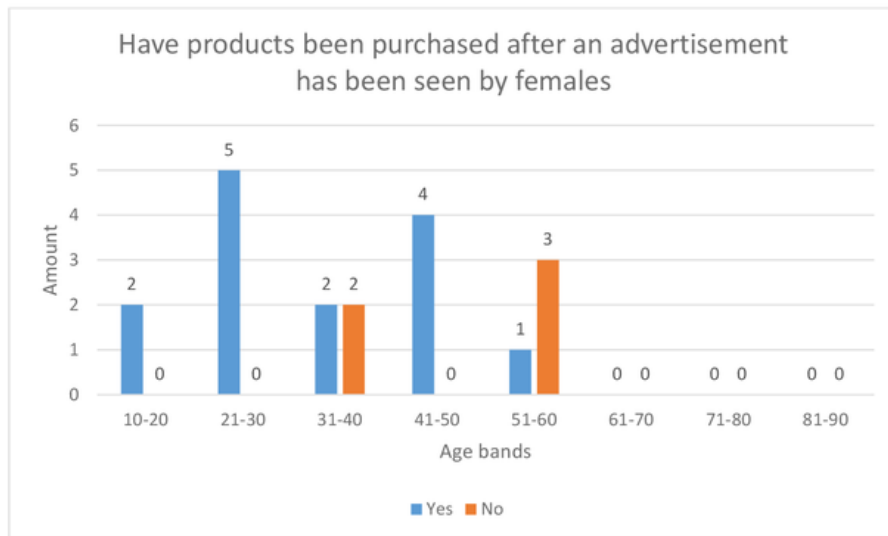


Figure 18– Have products been purchased after an advertisement has been seen by females

7.0 Chapter 7 – Evaluation

This chapter will be discussing the report to determine whether the aims and objectives that were set out at the start have been met and if they have not, then the reason will be discussed. The chapter will also look at the conclusions that have been made from the literature review and the data gathered from the survey and looking at if the results were what was expected or not. Finally the chapter will look at any changes that would be made if this report was carried out again.

7.1 Conclusions drawn from the data

Overall from the data that was gathered it is easy to come to the conclusions that advertisements on social media platforms is an effective marketing tool. This can be seen on many different levels. The data shows that there are those that purchase products after they have seen an advertisement and that there are many users that see these advertisements. The data also shows that there is a large range of different ages that use social media platforms. There are those of the older generation that do not use social media for reasons unknown but most likely down to the fact that they are not used to the technology and have no use for social media. However in years to come this can change as the current generation has been brought up with social media and may continue to use it in years to come, this means that the age range may start to increase in the next few decades therefore creating an even larger demographic for companies.

7.2 The research and the data

The data that was collected for the most part matched what was found within the research. The most popular social media websites were the ones that had the most products bought and they had the most advertisements seen. This is backed up by the way that advertisements work on these sites (Facebook and YouTube). The data also shows that products can be seen on social media platforms that had previously been viewed by the users on another website. This technique is used by Google who own YouTube and Facebook, both of which have a high amount of products bought and a high amount of responses that said they saw advertisements used these two.

The age bands are what were expected as the research showed that there is a higher amount of young adults and teenagers that use social media platforms and use them more

frequently. There was no surprise that older generations do not use social media platforms at all or only use them a couple of times a week or less.

The only response that was surprising was the amount of products that had been bought. The research shows that there are large global companies using social media advertisements to reach its customers and spending large quantities of money on this. For the amount of companies that are doing this and the amount of products being bought it looks like the amount of money that is being made is not that high. This however could be simply down to the amount of results from the survey and could differ if there was a larger pool of results.

7.3 Meeting the objectives

The objectives for this report were met by carrying out the research and from using the survey. Below are the objectives;

Examine the increase in social media marketing over the last 10 years – This objective was met through the use of looking at the spending patterns such as the amount being spent on advertisements. The reason for this is that there is a clear link between more money being spent and the rise in popularity. YouTube also provided answers for this objective by stating that there are more companies signing up each year for advertisements.

Look at the different platforms in which organisations can reach their audiences – This objective was met in the research. Each of the most popular platforms were examined and the strategies that are used by companies were discussed and evaluated.

Examine the platforms to find the most viable option for a marketer – The best platforms for social media advertisements were discovered through the survey. It could be seen that the most advertisements were seen on Facebook and YouTube and these also had the most amount of products bought by its users.

7.4 Meeting the aims

The aims for the report were met to some degree. There was some information that was not gathered in enough detail to completely fulfil an aim. Below are the aims with a discussions on how they were/were not met;

Evaluate the different strategies that are being used on social sites – This aim was reached during the research phase and from the survey results. Each social media platform was examined and the research showed that YouTube and Facebook were both able to target their users individually with advertisements catered just for them. This could be seen from the survey results as they showed that the most effective social media platforms at getting users to buy products and see advertisements were YouTube and Facebook.

Discover the effectiveness of social media advertising using published literature and by carrying out a survey – The effectiveness was easily measured from the survey. The survey clearly showed that advertisements on social media was effective to a certain extent however there was difficulty finding an published information on just how effective social media advertisements in particular are.

To learn about the amount of users on social platforms and the range of demographics – The range of demographics can easily be seen through the research and with help from the survey. The survey highlighted the most common demographics when it came to ages and from the research it was easy to see the different demographics that were available from the information that was available about where users were accessing social media platforms from. The research showed that there was millions of people accessing certain platforms from around the world with a few countries having some different platforms that were previously unknown. This shows that there are many different users with different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds that can be used by companies to target them for their products.

7.5 Was it what was expected?

The results gathered from both the survey and the research were what was expected. The only surprise was the amount of products that had been bought after being seen on social media platforms. The amount was lower than expected and the survey did not clarify when these products had been bought or how long they had been using social media for. This means that some users may have been using social media for years and only bought a single product. This conflicts with large organisations coming into the field producing their advertisements as there seems to be a low amount of profit available.

7.6 Changes for next time

If this report was to be done again there are many things that would be changed. The first item that would be changed is the survey. The survey needed a larger amount of responses to be able to see trends easier and to help determine how many products are being bought. Some of the questions would need to be changed and some added. There needs to be questions added to determine why people may be spending more on products they have seen online compared to others. This can be done by asking about the job someone holds. This could be used to examine if there is a link between how much someone is making and how many products they are buying. This would also give a better image of the demographics that use social media platforms. Changes would also be made to the question on how many products have been bought. This question needs to be changed to find out how many products have been bought in the last year and then add another question for how many have been bought over the years. It may also be a good idea to have a second survey that is aimed at the businesses themselves. This will gather information on how many products they are spending, where they are advertising and then see how effective it is. There needs to be some questions created to discover if users are following celebrities. As mentioned in the research companies use celebrities and ambassadors to advertise their products more discreetly. This could lead to further questions about purchasing a product that was seen on a celebrity's profile.

For the research, next time it would be beneficial to try and find out just how much companies are spending on their advertisements to try and determine if the amount of products being bought is worth the spend. However the trend which is an increase in the amount of companies using social media platforms to advertise their products does show that companies must be making money as they are continuing to advertise and more companies advertise each year.

8.0 Chapter 8 – Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter will look at the project on a whole and draw any conclusions and tie up any loose ends and also recommend any further research areas that could prove useful.

8.1 Conclusion

In conclusion the project has revealed the information that was desired and met the aims and objectives. The aim for discussing and evaluating different strategies that are being used on different platforms was discussed in great detail within the literature review. All of the strategies that are used on the most popular social media platforms were examined and discussed. The way they work and why they were being used was examined. The aim for discovering the effectiveness of social media advertising by using published literature and the survey was met. There literature backed up the effectiveness by highlighting the amount of companies that are using social media platforms to advertise and the increase in companies using the platforms. The survey highlighted the amount of products being purchased and the amount of advertisement that were being spotted by users. The difference in the amount of purchased products compared to the amount of advertisements seen may be lower for many different factors such as the advertisements themselves not being eye catching enough or for them not being desirable to the users. This was the reason for Facebook and YouTube being so effective at advertisement's as they were using users details and information to discover what they had been viewing to cater their advertisement's to its users. The aim to discover the amount of users that was on social media platforms and the range of demographics was easily found when doing the literature review.

The objectives were also met. The objective for looking at how a company may reach its target audience through the use of social media platforms was discussed greatly looking at how a company may gain the attention of users. This could be done by using celebrities or hosting a competition in which users like a company post or page and share their post (advertisement). The objective to find the most effective platform for advertisements was also completed with ease. The research showed that the most popular platform was Facebook which was correct according to the survey. The survey also showed that most of the users that bought products all used Facebook. This leads to the conclusion that Facebook is the best platform to use to advertise online. The final objective was to examine the rise in popularity over the last 10 years. This objective was met through the use of a

website called Statistica(39) who works with large companies such as Google, Panasonic and P&G. The statistics that were gathered from their own personal surveys showed that there was a rise in spending over the years which leads to one conclusion that it is becoming more and more popular. This can be seen because the only reason that more money will be spent in an area is if it is effective. And if one company finds an effective method the rest are soon to follow.

8.1.1 Benefits from the project

The project has uncovered many different benefits. The greatest of them all is that reaching customers anywhere has become a much simpler and easier task as the most popular platforms and strategies have been highlighted. Companies can also reach a person anywhere no matter where they are all because of their smartphones having social media applications on them. Another benefit uncovered is that the use of social media advertising can be used by small or local companies/businesses. By using Facebook a company can advertise themselves for a very small fee and they can decide to advertise to the local area and pay for the amount of users who will be able to see the advert. Another benefit is that the devices that are being used has been highlighted. Over 50% of the revenue from social media advertisements has come from a mobile device not a web page on a computer(23). This shows any company that they need to have a mobile friendly website/service others they are missing out on a great deal of revenue. This is because if a website is not mobile friendly and a potential customer is using their mobile device and struggle to use the website, they are likely to give up and try elsewhere.

8.1.2 Further work

There is further work that can be done to gather more details. There needs to be more work done on the exact amount of money that is being spent by companies on social media advertising. Although this information is not easy to get hold off due to companies not wanting people to see their financials, the information would answer many questions and provide a larger amount of detail on just how effective advertisements on the social platforms are. Further work could also be done to discover why users are following companies on social media platforms to uncover whether they like the company or just follow them because they entered a competition. This would reveal one of the best strategies on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

8.2 Recommendations for other research avenues

From this project there are many further areas that have been highlighted in which research can be carried out. Research can be carried out on how using social media advertising can be beneficial for a local or smaller business. This would give a clear indication how effective the advertising is. Another avenue would be to look into the use of celebrities in advertising on social media. Currently they are used to feature products in their posts to make users want a particular product because their favourite celebrities has it. This can also help to determine if there is a link between buying products and celebrities.

9.0 Chapter 9 – Reflection

This chapter will be looking at what I have done through the project, looking at what I have learned and most importantly what I've learned from any mistakes that were made.

9.1 What I have learned

From doing this project I have learned the many ways in which a company is trying to sell products on a daily basis. I have learned that when carrying out research the sources need to be trusted and they need to be relevant to the topic at hand. I have also learned that doing a survey is a lot harder than first thought. Creating questions that will deliver the results that I needed was no easy task, and even after I had done this I learnt towards the end that there were further questions that I could have asked that would have made my work much better in quality. I could have asked questions that would have allowed me to see in greater detail the spending patterns of users, and I could have made the survey much larger to gain more widespread information. I have also learned that when carrying out a survey the more responses really is important. With the responses that I had I was able to discover trends and patterns. However the further through the questionnaire I got the less data there was due to questions only being relevant if they answered yes in the question before. I learnt that finding information on large global companies spending is not an easy task as they keep information private as they do not want their competitors to see what they are spending money on, especially how much. The most important thing I learnt is that not everyone is going to respond to a survey. I sent out and distributed 62 surveys and only received 47, this means that around 75% of the surveys were actually completed and received by me. These surveys were sent out to people that are known to me and felt obliged in most cases to complete the survey. If I did a larger scale survey I'd have to send it out to people that do not even know me and I will receive less responses.

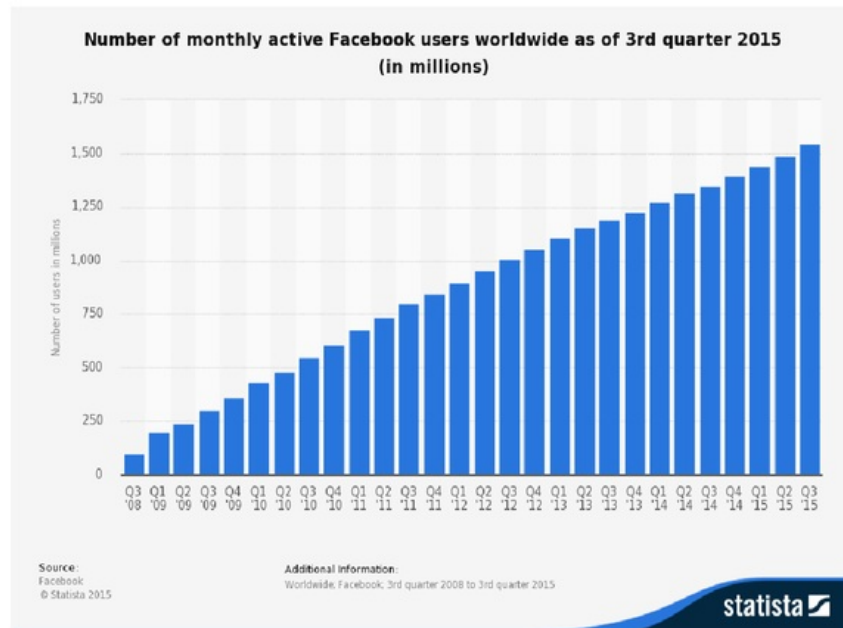
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11.0 Chapter 11 - Bibliography



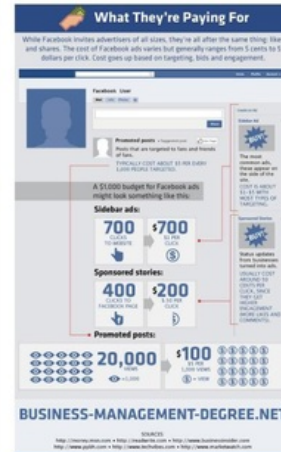
Social Network Ad Revenues Worldwide, by Company, 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Social network ad revenues (billions)				
Facebook	\$11.49	\$16.29	\$21.43	\$26.98
Twitter	\$1.26	\$2.03	\$2.95	\$3.98
LinkedIn	\$0.75	\$0.93	\$1.13	\$1.33
Other	\$4.36	\$5.88	\$7.41	\$8.72
Total social network ad spending	\$17.85	\$25.14	\$32.91	\$41.00
Social network ad revenue growth (% change)				
Twitter	111.2%	61.8%	45.0%	35.0%
Facebook	64.5%	41.8%	31.5%	25.9%
LinkedIn	33.2%	25.1%	20.5%	17.8%
Other	34.4%	35.0%	26.1%	17.6%
Total social network ad spending	56.8%	40.8%	30.9%	24.6%
Social network ad revenue share (% of total)				
Facebook	64.4%	64.8%	65.1%	65.8%
Twitter	7.0%	8.1%	9.0%	9.7%
LinkedIn	4.2%	3.7%	3.4%	3.2%
Other	24.4%	23.4%	22.5%	21.3%

Note: includes paid advertising appearing within social networks, social network games and social network apps; excludes spending by marketers that goes toward developing or maintaining a social network presence; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding
Source: eMarketer, Sep 2015

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www.eMarketer.com



Appendix

A:



http://images.bit-tech.net/content_images/2010/02/fifa-online-preview/3.jpg

B:



<http://cdn.mos.cms.futurecdn.net/300e82d103f2bff3b3dc2178b4377f42-650-80.jpg>

C:



<http://wearesocial-net.s3.amazonaws.com/uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/02/GWI-infographic1.jpg>