

Abstract

Due to the current focus on social media, and the lack of scientific literature available, the goal for this research has been to create a social media maturity model, which will allow organizations to assess their current state of social media implementation, and plot for their next move. This research has been conducted in cooperation with Accenture and Utrecht University as part of the Master Graduation Project for Business Informatics. The social media maturity model has been developed according to the design principles of the maturity matrix, laid out by previous researchers. By means of literature study, expert interviews, group sessions and application of the model in business context, the model has been constructed, tested, and validated.

Keywords: Social media, maturity model, social networking, social media implementation, social media assessment.

MSc Thesis

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Table of Contents

- List of Figures.....5
- List of Tables6
- Preface.....7
- 1. Introduction..... 10
 - 1.1 Social Media 10
- 2. Problem Definition and research question 14
 - 2.1 Problem definition..... 14
 - 2.2 Research question 14
 - 2.3 Contribution 14
- 3. Methodology 18
 - 3.1 Literature study 21
 - 3.2 Interviews 22
 - 3.3 Group Sessions 24
 - 3.4 Creating the tool..... 25
 - 3.5 Validating the tool with business cases..... 25
 - 3.6 Research validity..... 26
- 4. Results: Literature Study 30
 - 4.1 Why Social Media? 30
 - 4.2 Social media planning..... 32
 - 4.3 Social media use 35
 - 4.4 Marketing and Sales 37
 - 4.5 Research and Development 42
 - 4.6 Human resources..... 44
 - 4.7 Customer Service..... 47
 - 4.8 Blogging 50
 - 4.9 Internal social media use..... 52
 - 4.10 Social media measurement 54
- 5. Forming the literature model 58
 - 5.1 Three phases..... 58
 - 5.2 Creation of the literature based model..... 59
- 6. Constructing the maturity model 64

6.1	Interviews	64
6.2	Group sessions.....	76
6.3	Creating the tool.....	81
7.	Business Validation.....	84
7.1	Robeco.....	85
7.2	Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM).....	88
7.3	Toyota.....	91
7.4	The Financial Telegraaf (TFT).....	94
7.5	VisitDenmark	97
7.6	PlusMagazine.....	100
7.7	Hyves	103
7.8	De 50PlusBeurs.....	105
7.9	Business Validation Results	108
8.	The social media maturity model.....	118
9.	Discussion	122
9.1	Relevance and Implications.....	122
9.2	Limitations	123
9.3	Future research	125
9.4	Concluding.....	126
10.	Acknowledgements	127
	References.....	129

List of Figures

Figure 1: Hever & March, design science framework 18

Figure 2: Suggested maturity matrix construction steps by van Steenbergen et al. (2010) 19

Figure 3: Social media phases..... 59

Figure 4: Literature based model 60

Figure 5: Decision tree for change-acceptance 67

Figure 6: Example of table 4.4, capability maturity..... 73

Figure 7: Interview based social media maturity model 75

Figure 8: Social media maturity model based on group sessions 79

Figure 9: social media model based on group sessions 80

Figure 10: Robeco maturity profile 86

Figure 11: KLM maturity profile 89

Figure 12: Toyota social media profile 92

Figure 13: DFT maturity profile 95

Figure 14: VisitDenmark social media profile..... 98

Figure 15: PlusMagazine social media profile 101

Figure 16: 50PlusBeurs social media maturity profile..... 106

Figure 17: Plan phase of the social media maturity model 119

Figure 18: Capabilities placed on the maturity levels in the social media maturity model 120

List of Tables

Table 1: Restrictions to the structured literature review.....	21
Table 2: KRNW for the social media maturity matrix.....	64
Table 3: expert selections.....	65
Table 4: Nominations for additional experts.....	65
Table 5: Experts participating in the interview sessions and group sessions	66
Table 6: Expert-breakdown based on their background.....	66
Table 7: proposed changes by the experts based on focus areas and capabilities.....	69
Table 8: Changes related to appearance and clarification.....	72
Table 9: Experts divided over sessions.....	76
Table 10: Group 1 capability placement in maturity-stages	77
Table 11: Group 2 capability placement in maturity-stages	77
Table 12: Social media maturity stages.....	78
Table 13: findings general planning	108
Table 14: findings marketing and sales planning	108
Table 15: Findings research and development planning.....	109
Table 16: Findings internal human resource planning.....	109
Table 17: Findings external human resource planning	109
Table 18: Findings customer service planning.....	110
Table 19: Findings communications and public relations planning	110
Table 20: Findings business intelligence planning.....	111
Table 21: Findings set up and modify the community	111
Table 22: Findings listen	111
Table 23: Findings contribute.....	112
Table 24: Findings integrate	112
Table 25: Findings marketing and sales use	112
Table 26: Findings research and development use.....	112
Table 27: Findings internal human resource use	113
Table 28: Findings external human resource use.....	113
Table 29: Findings customer service use.....	113
Table 30: Findings communications and public relations	114
Table 31: Findings business intelligence use.....	114
Table 32: Findings social media measurement	114
Table 33: Suggested additions to the model based on the business validation	116

Preface

The master Business Informatics is a two-year master at Utrecht University. The program is the follow up on the bachelor of Information Science. The Business Informatics program is concluded with a scientific research project on a relevant subject to test the level and scope of academic ability that has been acquired during the master study. This document is the written result of the undertaken scientific project.

This project has been supervised by two supervisors at the university (internal supervisors) and two supervisors at the target company (external supervisors at Accenture). The two internal supervisors are members of the research group Organization and Information. One of them occupies the role of primary supervisor, while the other occupies the role of secondary supervisor.

The following supervisors participated in this research:

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Secondary internal supervisor:

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Introduction

1. Introduction

“Once every hundred years media changes. The last hundred years have been defined by the mass media. The way to advertise was to get into the mass media and push out your content. That was the last hundred years. In the next hundred years information won’t be just pushed out to people, it will be shared among the millions of connections people have. Advertising will change. You will need to get into these connections”

Mark Zuckerberg, Co-founder of Facebook (Maymann, 2008).

For long, Porter’s five forces model, and Porter’s value chain have been the models which organizations use to map out their business (Porter, 1985). Even though it has been 27 years since the model had found its origin, it is still used in business context today (Hill, Cronk, & Wickramasekera, 2009). However, times are changing. The environment, in which many organizations operate, is now more competitive than ever. Times change, people change, and ergo, organizations must change as well. Organizations are now taking their competitive battles to the online world. Here, they compete in building online relationship networks with customers (Mustonen, 2009).

In the recent years we have seen a transformation of the type of content which is available on the web. At first, most online material resembled traditional published material which the majority of web users simply consumed. However, since the early 2000s, user generated content has become increasingly popular on the web: users are active participants in the content creation (Agichtein, Castillo, Donato, Gionis, & Mischne, 2008). This transformation challenges organizations, which will have to find new ways to succeed in the new competitive environment. Innovative communities, possibilities for sharing information, and getting connected are described most in almost every magazine (Mustonen, 2009). This phenomenon is referred to as social media. Articles related to social media can be found everywhere; however there is no clear understanding of what social media really is. Social media applications give people new ways to find information and entertainment and also to build communities. The result of this change is that the role of traditional media has become weaker (Back, 2007).

1.1 Social Media

Social media is media designed in such a way that it has to be disseminated through social interactions. It is created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques (Wang, 2010). Social media supports the need for social interaction, using internet and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (one-to-many) into social media dialogues (many-to-many). It supports the democratization of knowledge and information, transforming people from content consumers into content producers (Wang, 2010). Social media has not received a clear definition yet. Several definitions are found in literature. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) define social media as: “A group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content”. Their definition focusses on the Web 2.0 aspects. On the other hand, Lon Safko and David Brake (Safko & Brake, 2010) define social media as: “Social media refers to activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media”. In their definition, conversational media are web-based applications that make it possible to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios. This is a more practical approach

focused on what social media does and can be used for. That said: there is no clear “one size fits them all” definition yet. The remainder of this thesis will continue with the suggested definition of social media by Safko and Brake (2010) as this is a more practical focuses project.

Social media is based on the technology of Web 2.0 (also known as the social web) (Qualman, 2010). It is used by people to be engaged in an online conversation. This engagement in online conversation is what is slowly starting to turn into a trend in current markets: the markets are slowly becoming conversations, and social media is becoming the new way to launch and sustain those conversations online (Wang, 2010). The reason why social media is becoming so popular is because of what lies at the core of social media: interaction. People enjoy the interactive character of their online conversations (Wang, 2010). Therefore, companies can make use of social media to shape their brand and product perception. Non product organizations can use social media to build strong brand awareness (Safko & Brake, 2010).

Also highly influential with regard to the use of social media is the basis of the communication. In day-to-day communication, one communicates with another person or a small group of people. One talks to their friends or the people they are familiar with. The scope of conversation, in this case, is small. This changes when it comes to online conversations. The scope of the conversations in social media is no longer small. Yes, people connect with their friends and family, but there is also a potential to reach everyone who uses social media in the world. This allows for the creation and maintenance of a large network of friends and acquaintances (Safko & Brake, 2010).

In their book the Social Media Bible, Safko and Brake listed the current uses of social media. Shortly reviewed, the list looks like this (Safko & Brake, 2010):

- Social networking: this is as the name suggests, creating and maintaining a network online.
- Publishing: social media is used to publish items of relevance to a certain demographic group. Blogs are a good example of publishing uses of social media.
- Photographs: social media can be used to share pictures.
- Audio: social media can be used to share audio files
- Video: social media can be used to share video files
- Microblogging: microblogging is a special category. This use of social media focusses on pushing out short messages to others.
- Livecasting: here social media is used to broadcast for example radio, television or other forms of media online.
- Virtual worlds: while one would not directly suspect this to fall under the social media category, the aspects that form the virtual world when it comes to the social aspect, are exactly the same as social media.
- Gaming: here the emphasis lies on the social communities surrounding games. Social media is used here to maintain them.
- Productivity applications: this is a rather strange category; however it is an application of social media non-the-less. With this category using social media to increase productivity is meant (for example sharing documents between different employees).

- Aggregators: tools that help to aggregate the information found on the web so this information can be easily stored, updated and maintained.

The research and literature found concerning social media is mostly descriptive in nature. Furthermore, many examples are given on 'how to earn a lot of money quick', and many stories tell of extremely popular bloggers that created huge networks very quickly. The main problem, which is often not addressed, is how to use social media effectively and what should be avoided (Mustonen, 2009). For organizations, social media is a very interesting field (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It provides them with a lot of opportunities to connect to their customers. As such, many organizations are interested in utilizing the power of social media. With so many organizations all attempting to address their social media needs, there is a clear need for a way to keep track of all these new developments and changes (Venkatraman, 2010). Seeing there is currently very little scholarly research available, there are several questions that jump to mind when thinking about social media:

- When is an organization considered to be properly addressing social media?
- What are the clear benefits of using social media?
- What are the risks associated with social media?
- How can an organization more effectively use his social media?
- When should an organization stop using social media?
- And so forth...

The first question here is of extra interest, because it incorporates many questions associated to social media. Organizations want to know how well they are doing with regard to something, in this case social media. This 'standing' as you would call it is often referred to as a certain maturity. Applied to social media, we would be talking about social media maturity. This means, the overall rating or score an organization has with regard to their social media implementation. An organization can benefit greatly from having insights in their current maturity with regard to social media, and what other benefits they could gain from increasing this potential maturity (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) (Venkatraman, 2010).



Problem definition

2. Problem Definition and research question

The following section describes the problem definition, research question and contribution.

2.1 Problem definition

As explained in chapter 1, many organizations want to do something with social media, but simply do not know what to do, and how to do it. The problem definition central to this project is:

“Social media has many different opportunities for an organization to gain business value. However due to the huge amount of available options and lack of available scientific literature, many organizations do not know what to do, or if they know what to do, they don’t know to achieve said value.”

This research focusses on providing organizations with a means to address their social media properly, and provide them with insights in their current ways of doing social media. The goal of this research is to provide organizations with a model, which will allow them to get a snapshot of their social media use. This snapshot will provide insights into how the organization is doing with regard to the best way of implementing social media. It will also provide them with potential new areas to focus on. These areas might help them increase their gain from using social media.

For a business, it is relevant to use such models in order for them to gain insights in how they are performing. The strength of a maturity model is that aside from providing them with an overall insight, it also provides them with an idea of what can still be achieved. Being on a certain maturity level (provided they have not achieved the maximum level yet) will show them which options they still have available to them to gain an even higher maturity, and thus on which area(s) they need to focus.

2.2 Research question

Based on the problem definition and the fact that social media is still a relatively new field of interest for organizations, the following research question can be defined:

“To what extend can a social media maturity model be constructed, based on available literature, expert knowledge and practical business knowledge?”

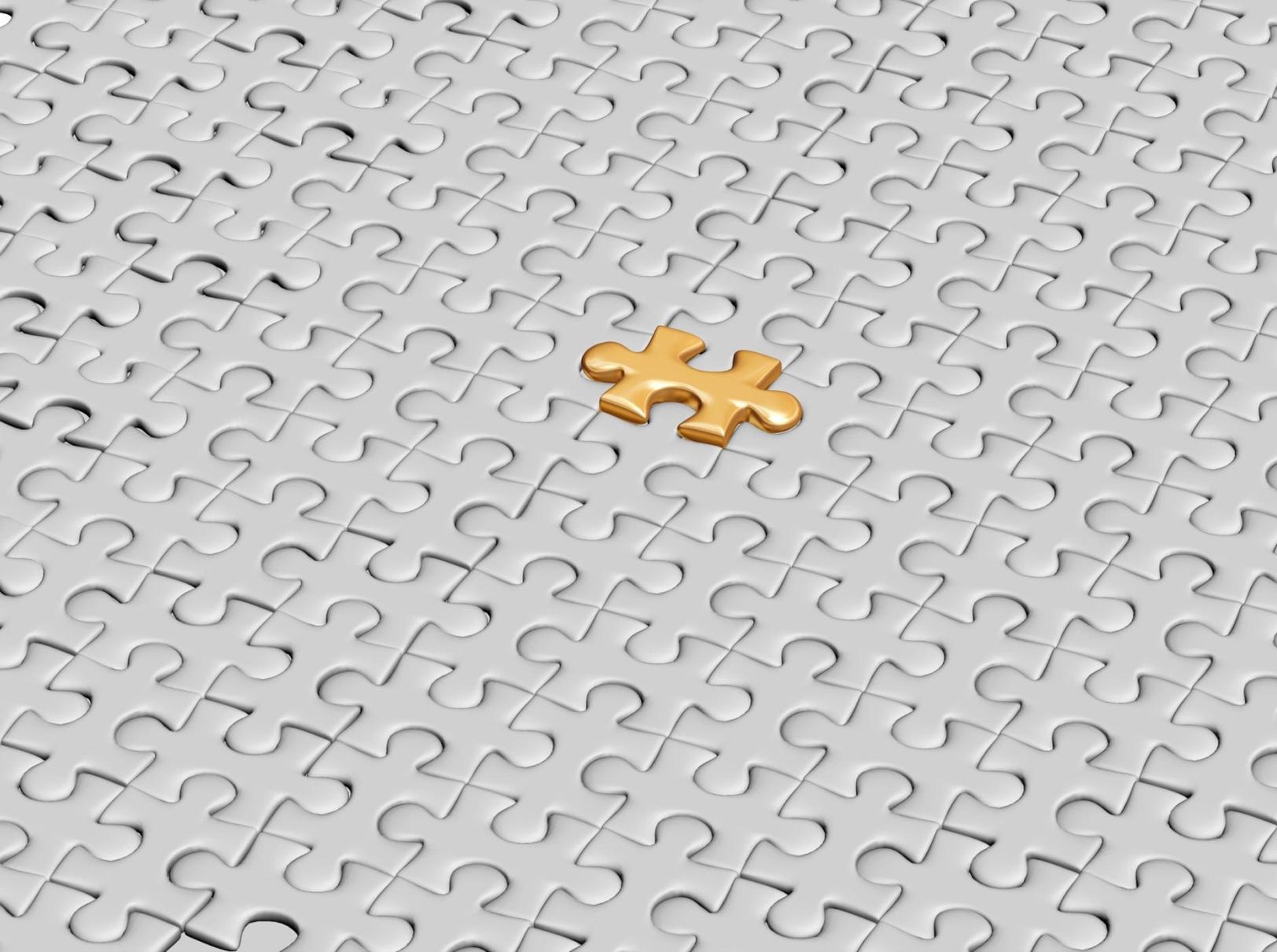
This research question focusses on the ultimate goal of the research project: constructing a social media maturity model. However, in order to create a social media maturity model (or any maturity model for that matter) enough knowledge needs to be available in order to properly combine that knowledge into a maturity model. Therefore, the question is whether such a model can be created based on the current amount of available knowledge both in the academic world and the business world.

2.3 Contribution

As explained, the field of social media is very new. One could say it is still in its infancy. There is a great need for research and practice in the area of social media. Most of the literature found contains descriptive information on how to earn a lot of money fast. However, organizations are in need of models and frameworks on which they can map their own social media efforts (Venkatraman, 2010). This research project combines different kinds of research done in the field of social media into one model. It combines different kinds of applications, implementations and knowledge of social media which can be

used by organizations to successfully maneuver the rapidly changing social media currents. Aside from providing an overview of social media, it also provides benefits and risks associated with the application of social media. The thesis which will be produced at the end of this research project, adds to the limited amount of literature available on social media implementations at organizations.

This thesis contributes greatly to business value and practical value. The to-be-created model will provide a means for organizations to quickly assess their social media maturity. This provides them with a snapshot on how they are doing with their social media, and also provides them with insights so they can continue to become more mature with social media use. As explained earlier, there are a vast number of options available yet many organizations do not know what to use, or how to use it (Mustonen, 2009). The model which will be constructed will provide organizations at least some form of guidance as to which steps to undertake next.



Methodology

3. Methodology

This research project is design research (Hevner & March, 2004). The ultimate goal is to create an innovative artifact in order to extend the boundaries of human and organizational capabilities. As such, Hevner’s seven guidelines for design science have been taken into account with the research design of this project. The following figure (figure 1) depicts Hevner’s research design for IS research (Hevner & March, 2004):

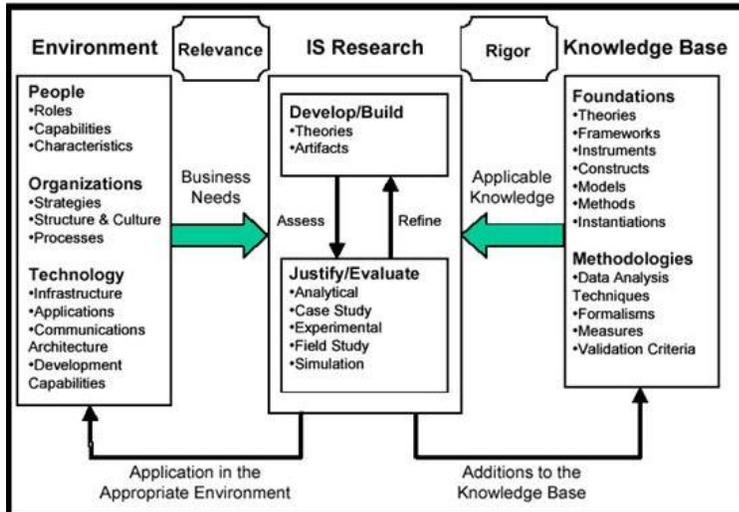


Figure 1: Hever & March, design science framework

This project will focus on creating an artifact in the field of IS research, in order to extend the boundaries of organizational capabilities. By means of literature studies, interviews, expert sessions and a form of case study (validating the model in businesses), the rigor and relevance criteria (Hevner & March, 2004) will be met.

This research draws on the work of van Steenbergen, Bos, Brinkkemper, van de Weerd, and Bekkers, (2010): the creation of a focus area maturity matrix. A focus area maturity matrix is a matrix that provides an overview of the current maturity in a certain field of expertise. It is constructed by means of the so called focus areas and their associated capabilities. A focus area is an aspect that has to be implemented to a certain extent, for a functional domain to be effective (van Steenbergen et al., 2010). Each focus area has a number of capabilities associated to it. A capability is defined as an ability to achieve a predefined goal that is associated with a certain maturity level (van Steenbergen et al., 2010). Fitting this into the focus area maturity matrix, we can clearly see the connection between the two. Within the matrix, several focus areas will be found, each with their associated capabilities. In order to score high on the maturity within a certain field, each of those focus areas will need to have their capabilities properly implemented. Not having them implemented results in having a lower maturity score. The focus area maturity matrix will be applied in the social media context. As alternative for this definition, a capability can be seen as some form of goal, or result, which has to be achieved by the organization (van Steenbergen, 2011).

According to van Steenberg et al. (2010), a focus area maturity matrix can be developed according to a set of pre-defined steps. In their research, four to be completed activities have been identified (each with a set of sub-activities). Based on these different activities, the creation of the social media maturity matrix has been structured as well. The following figure (figure 2) describes the suggested research steps by van Steenberg et al. (2010).

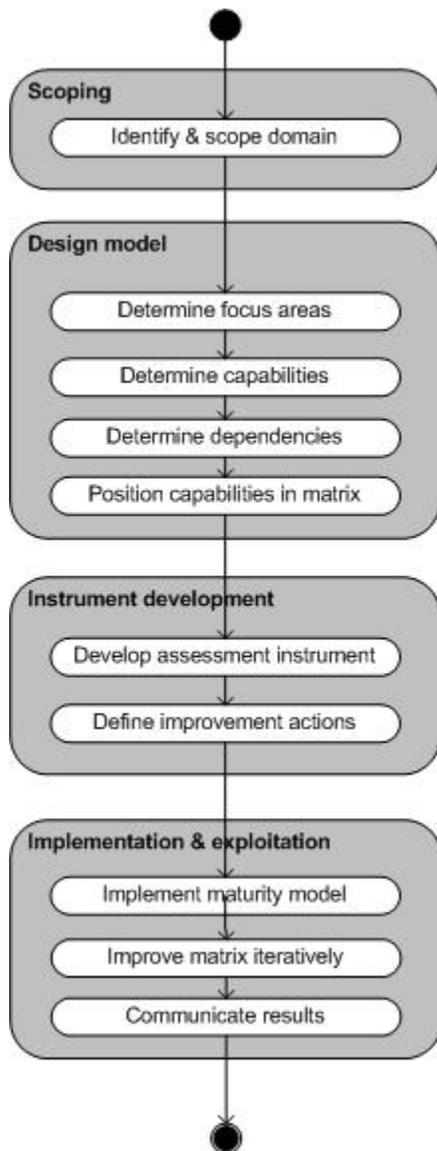


Figure 2: Suggested maturity matrix construction steps by van Steenberg et al. (2010)

Based on this suggested framework, several research activities have been identified which need to be completed in order to successfully create the social media maturity model. As seen in figure 2, the first step is to set the scope and decide on the domain for the research. This has already been decided on: social media maturity within a business context. The next step according to the framework by van Steenberg et al. is the ‘Design model’ activity, in this activity, focus areas, capabilities and dependencies will need to be identified, and those capabilities will need to be positioned in a maturity

matrix. To properly identify focus areas, capabilities and dependencies, and to successfully place those capabilities on the maturity matrix, three things will be done in this research:

- 1. Conducting a literature study on social media:** First of all, a literature study will be conducted. During the literature study, the focus areas, capabilities and dependencies will be identified. This means that when comparing this step to the framework created by van Steenbergen et al. (figure 2), the first three sub-activities will be handled of the 'Design Model' activity.
- 2. Conduct expert interviews:** During this step of the research, the focus areas, capabilities and dependencies found in the first step will be validated and the model will be expanded with expert knowledge. Experts will be asked to validated the findings in the literature and provide their own ideas on social media maturity and social media implementation by means of an interview. During this step, a start will be made with placing the capabilities in the maturity matrix. When looking at the framework by van Steenbergen et al. (figure 2), this covers the entire 'Design Model' activity of the framework.
- 3. Conduct group sessions:** During this step of the research, the focus areas and capabilities found in research steps one and two will be validated one last time by means of expert groups. Once this validation is done, the groups will then solely focus on placing the capabilities on the maturity matrix. When comparing this step to the framework suggested by van Steenbergen et al. (figure 2), this covers the validation of the first three sub-activities of the 'Design Model' activity, and will focus on completing the sub-activity 'Position capabilities in matrix'. Once this step is done, the 'Design Model' activity of the framework by van Steenbergen et al. will be completed.

Once these three activities are completed, the social media maturity model will be finished but not validated. The next steps will focus on validating the social media maturity model, and eventually communicating the results.

- 4. Create assessment tool:** During this step, the created social media maturity model will be translated into an assessment tool. The goal of this tool will be to allow for a quick use and evaluation of the designed social media model. This way, its use and validity can be tested in a fast and reliable way. When comparing this step of the research to the suggested framework by van Steenbergen et al. (figure 2), this part relates to the 'creation of an assessment tool' activity.
- 5. Evaluate the maturity model:** During this step of the research, the constructed tool will be used to evaluate the social media maturity model at several social media using organizations. The goal here is to validate the tool in business context to ensure it is valid, complete, correct and has practical value. When comparing this to the framework suggested by van Steenbergen et al. (figure 2), this relates to the 'Implementation and exploitation' activity of their framework. This part of the research will not deal with the 'improvement of the matrix in an iterative process' sub-activity. This is beyond the scope of the research.
- 6. Communicate results:** The results found in this research will be communicated in the form of a thesis. When comparing this to the framework suggested by van Steenbergen et al. (figure 2), this part relates to the 'communicate results' sub-activity.

3.1 Literature study

The first step of the research is to conduct the literature study. The literature study is conducted by means of the structured literature approach technique (Webster & Watson, 2002). Webster and Watson describe a three-step approach in order to cover as much literature as possible with regard to a certain field of interest. The first step is to identify a list of literature, based on a certain amount of keywords, in an online database. The articles found are reviewed based on their relevance and a list is made of relevant articles to continue in the process. Relevant literature in this case, involves literature that describes the use of social media in a business context, at any given time within the organization, at any potential department. For example, this can entail literature on how to set up a marketing campaign with social media, how to conduct social media customer service, how to write a social media strategy, and so forth. The next step is to take the relevant articles, and search through their references to see whether there are more relevant articles to be found there. Once again, a list of articles is made to be taken to the last and final step of the literature study. The last step is to take all the found literature so far, and check how often (and by whom) they have been cited. These citations are checked as well to see whether there are relevant articles to be found. Once all citations have been checked, and all relevant literature found in the last step is noted down, the final list is compiled containing literature from all three steps. This way, a very complete and accurate list of available literature can be found.

3.1.1 Cycle one: identifying literature in the database

The first step is to identify literature in a database containing scientific literature. To be independent from certain journals, the data for the literature research has been gathered from the Omega database hosted by the Utrecht University. The focus of this research lies in trying to capture the different aspects related to social media as a whole with regard to its use within organizational context. The main search term in this case is: social media. This term has been chosen since it is a relatively new field and the goal of this thesis is to capture as much aspects of social media as possible. However, blindly searching on social media resulted in an enormous amount of hits in several different areas of expertise (roughly 2.8 million). Therefore several restrictions have been set up in order to filter out the bad results and try to gain an accurate as possible result on the search. See table 1 for the restrictions.

Restriction	Motivation
Search only in the title	Omega allows for the option to search solely in the title, summary and author name. The preferred choice in this case is social media searching solely in the title. Any researcher can mention social media in the short summary of their research even when it is not related to social media at all. Therefore the search was confined solely to the title.
Field of expertise	The initial search on Omega yielded results in various different areas of expertise. For example psychology related effects of social media came up, as did the effect of social media on the spelling of young children. While these are all interesting topics, they have no value for the thesis project. Therefore several areas of expertise have been selected when conducting the search. These areas have been pre-defined by the Omega Library: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer Science - Economics - Information Science
Document type	Another restriction added to the structured literature review is the type of document to be included in the search. Since the goal is to get scientific literature for the study, only those documents have been included which have the greatest possibility of being scientifically valid. The chosen document types are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article - Report - Thesis
Year of publication	Because social media is a very new and very fast-paced field that is constantly changing, the choice has been made to search only on new literature that is based on the most recent developments in the social media world. Since this is a three-cycle literature study, the articles of most relevance will be cited by the newer articles. Therefore there is no risk of missing the older, important articles. The chosen publication years included in the search are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2010 - 2011

Table 1: Restrictions to the structured literature review

The search on the Omega Database, along with the restrictions in table 1, gave roughly 300 results. The results, and the choice on whether the literature has been included in the next phase of the literature study, can be found in appendix 1.

3.1.2 Cycle 2: searching through the references

The next step of the literature study is to search through the references of the articles found in step one (only those selected for further review). Again, the goal is to find relevant sources of information but this time, searching through the references of the articles found in step 1. Appendix 2 describes the different pieces of literature and their relevant references. Only the relevant references have been noted to avoid unnecessary clutter of the table.

3.1.3 Cycle 3: searching through the citations

The last step of the structured literature review focusses on identifying the citations of every piece of literature taken to the last step. This collection of literature contains literature from both cycle one and cycle two. For every single piece of literature, the citations are checked (how often it has been cited, and by whom) for their relevance with regard to the research. The results can be found in appendix 3. Only the relevant pieces of literature found are listed to once again avoid unnecessary clutter. Several of the pieces found in cycle one and two had over two thousand citations. Adding them all to the table would make it extremely difficult to read.

The entire list of to be reviewed literature consists of the found literature of all steps combined. Once the entire list is made, the literature is reviewed to create the model.

3.2 Interviews

The first part of the validation of the model is done by means of expert interviews. The goal for the interviews is to validate the findings in the literature, but also to expand the model with practical expert knowledge. These interviews are held at Accenture Amsterdam, ITO Tower office. Social media experts working for Accenture are asked to give their opinion on the literature-based social media model. They look at correctness, completeness and validity with regard to the focus areas and capabilities identified. Aside from this, they will also voice their opinion on the maturity between the different capabilities. In appendix 4.1 the interview questions can be found. The first part of the interview will be used to sketch a profile of the expert and his or her knowledge. The second part of the interview focuses on the validation and expansion of the model. The third part of the interview is used to create a rough overview of the potential maturity within the capabilities. Paper cards are used which the expert can place in the order he feels fits best with regard to the capability maturity. After completing this task, a photo is taken. Regretfully due to the nature of two interviews (call-based and long-distance) no photos could be created for two of the fourteen interviews.

It is important to note that during the interview process, the model is not be updated. This way, each expert will be given the same model and the same set of questions. This creates consistency, and prevents bias from entering the interview sessions. When experts hint into a direction that is already suggested by another expert, but is unable to clearly voice what he or she means, the interviewer will provide hints that might contain comments made by other experts. As an example, an expert notes that

he feels that there should be some sort of independent organ that pays attention to gathering data and analyzing things with social media internally. However, he is unable to properly put under words what he means. The interviewer then suggests that another expert suggested creating a focus area for business intelligence (which in essence is what the expert meant) and whether he agrees with that or not. While this could potentially suggest a bias due to intervention of the interviewer, it is important to remember that the goal is to identify as much as possible. Validating a potential important finding by other experts to ensure completeness of the model makes these interventions important in order to create a complete as possible model.

Based on all the suggestions made by the experts, several tables are constructed. One table pays attention to the fundamental changes within the model (different capabilities, new focus areas, and so forth). The next table pays attention to visual and minor changes in the model (such as changing the names of capabilities). The last table pays attention to the different ideas the experts had with regard to maturity. These tables can be found in the interview results section, chapter 6.

3.2.1 Expert selection

The most important step in the expert validation sessions will be the identification of the experts themselves. In order to ensure having the right experts, the method for expert identification is based on a research approach identified by Okoli & Pawlowski (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004). The researchers suggest a specific method for identifying valid experts. Okoli and Pawlowski apply this technique in the context of a Delphi Method study for e-commerce. Their expert selection technique is tailored to identify experts in the IS/IT domain for which (according to the authors) the Delphi method is used more and more. Since this research focuses on the IS/IT domain, the expert selection technique suggested by Okoli and Pawlowski can be applied.

A five-step selection approach is suggested to select the experts (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004):

1. *Creation of a Knowledge Resource Nomination Worksheet (KRNW)*
The purpose of the KRNW is to help categorize the different types of experts before identifying the experts themselves, in order to prevent overlooking an important class of experts.
2. *Populating the KRNW with names*
The lenses identified in the KRNW will now be filled with names. Each heading in the KRNW represents a different lens for identifying and considering experts.
3. *First round contacts – nominations for additional experts*
The people identified to be contacted are asked to identify experts who they think should be contacted for the project as well.
4. *Ranking experts by qualifications*
At this step the experts get ranked based on their qualification. This will help set a priority for invitation into the study
5. *Inviting the experts to the study*
Based on the ranking, a panel will be created consisting of experts

3.3 Group Sessions

Structured group sessions will be held based on the nominal group technique (NGT) approach (Delbecq & Van de Ven, 1975). The goal of the group sessions is to validate the findings in the literature study and interviews, and place the capabilities and focus areas on the maturity scale. In essence, this is where the maturity model takes its final form. Research has shown that conducting structured group sessions yield much better results than unstructured group sessions because unstructured group sessions are subject to many biases (Green, Armstrong, & Greafe, 2007). Conducting a structured approach such as the NGT can dismantle these biases and make for a much better, structured, and more result yielding session. The reason for choosing for the NGT approach, and not a different approach such as the Delphi method (Delbecq & Van de Ven, 1975) is due to time constraints. The Delphi Method takes a long time to complete. It is described as taking roughly five months (Delbecq & Van de Ven, 1975) (Cowan & George, 1999). Due to time-constraints on this research, the choice has been made to go for the Nominal Group Technique instead. In the article of Greafe and Armstrong (Greafe & Armstrong, 2011), several different group decision making techniques are evaluated including Delphi and Nominal Groups. The result of this research shows that Delphi method does perform best, however, the Nominal Group technique is only slightly under the Delphi method when it comes to performance and results. Thus, because Delphi is simply not doable due to time-constraints, the Nominal Group Technique is the best choice.

3.3.1 The session

The group sessions are held on the Amsterdam ITO tower (Accenture's main office) in large conference rooms with big screens to support the session by means of a Powerpoint Presentation. Each session consists of the moderator, and four to six experts participating in the session. During each session, the goal is to validate the findings in the literature study and expert interviews, and to create a consensus on placing the capabilities on the maturity scale. The sessions take place in a structured manner and follow a total of three steps which are repeated for each focus area. These four steps are identical to the NGT as described by van de Ven (van de Ven & Delbecq, 1974). The sessions proceed as following:

Before the session starts, the experts are welcomed into the session room and each given the materials required for the session. These materials consists of a set of cards with the capabilities of the social media maturity model written down on them, a set of cards with the focus areas written down on them, a pen, and a piece of paper. The session starts with the moderator taking the word and shortly going over the goal of the session and the things that the experts need to do. Before having to make decisions about the capabilities and focus areas, the experts are asked to validate the changes made to the model during the interview sessions. Not all suggestions found in the expert interviews will have made it to this round (due to not having enough support). Those that have been included will be validated before placing the capabilities on the maturity scale. If no objections are made to the suggested changes coming from the interview sessions, the group moves on to the maturity placements. The experts are asked to do the following:

1. For each focus area, the experts are asked to individually consider how they would place the capabilities on the maturity matrix. They are asked to create their placement with help of the cards and put these on the table in front of them.

2. Once the cards are laid out, every expert will be granted a turn to speak. During that turn they can briefly explain their motivation and reasoning behind their choice.
3. Once all experts have voiced their opinions, a discussion starts about all their individual ideas in order to find out whether experts agree with one another. If they do, a consensus is found.
4. If no consensus is found during the discussion, a vote takes place in order to vote for the best option.

Once a consensus is found, the group moves on to the next focus area. For each focus area, the four steps are repeated.

3.4 Creating the tool

Based on the outcomes of the group sessions, the tool can be created. The goal is to create a tool which can be used to assess the social media implementation of an organization. The construction of the tool is done along several steps:

1. For each capability, a statement needs to be created in order to allow for checking if the capability is present within the organization. An example of such a statement could be: "There is a social media strategy present at the organization". This statement can then be answered with yes, no or not applicable. This way, all capabilities can be tracked and it can be recorded whether or not the organization has implemented them. The focus areas will be used as a classification means in order to properly group the different capabilities.
2. Once all statements have been created, the tool will need to be programmed to pass along data that has or has not been implemented in order to create some form of output. This will be done by standard excel queries.
3. Once the logic is in place, and the tool is able to calculate whether or not capabilities are implemented, some form of output will need to be selected. This will be done by means of graphs and tables.
4. Last, all data needs to be stored in the tool in order to create some form of benchmarking output.

With help of the tool, the social media maturity profile can be created for an organization, and the maturity model can be tested.

3.5 Validating the tool with business cases

Once the tool is created, it will be validated by applying it at several social media using organizations. The goal of this 'business validation' is to find out whether or not the tool is usable in business context. Aside from this, the organization representatives who cooperate with the validation could have interesting ideas about the model, its completeness and the placement of the capabilities on the maturity scale which could be used for future research. The procedure will, just like the interviews and group sessions, be similar in every organization that is visited.

3.5.1 The session

Upon visiting the organization, the first thing on the agenda is to quickly explain the research and background, including the reasons why the organization is being visited. After the formal introductions, the process will be proceeding along the following steps:

1. The organization will be asked how well they think they are going to score with regards to their social media maturity. If they are unsure how they should classify this, they will be hinted to give their efforts a name (beginner, expert, and so forth).
2. Once the predictions have been made, the next step will be to fill in the tool. All parts of the tool will be filled in and discussed in detail.
3. Once finished, the results will be shown to the interviewee and he or she will be given some time to understand the output and ask questions.
4. The model will then be evaluated by means of a set of questions similar to those used in the interviews:
 - a. When looking back on the tool, to what extend do you think that the set of focus areas you see is correct (structure, naming, placement)?
 - b. When looking back on the tool, to what extend do you think that the set of focus areas you see is complete (are there focus areas missing)?
 - c. When looking back to the tool, and specifically the maturity matrix, to what extend do you think that the focus areas are placed correctly on the maturity scale?
 - d. When looking back on the tool, to what extend do you think that the set of capabilities you see is correct (structure, naming, placement)?
 - e. When looking back to the tool, to what extend do you think that the set of capabilities you see is complete (are there capabilities missing)?
 - f. When looking back to the tool, to what extend do you think that the capabilities are placed correctly on the maturity matrix?
 - g. To what extend do you think that the output of the tool is useful in its current state?
 - h. To what extend do you think that such a tool / model is valuable for organizations?
 - i. Is there anything that you would suggest adding to the maturity model?
 - j. Is there anything else you can think of that you would like to ask / say / comment?

Once all these steps have been completed, the business validation session will be completed. The interviewee will be thanked for his or her time, and they will receive the output of their organization by means of a screenshot with explanation.

3.6 Research validity

Because this research is qualitative based and the model constructed will be applied at businesses, it is important to make note of the validity questions often brought forward in scientific research (Yin, 2009). While the application of the model at organizations using social media is not an actual case-study, the findings could be used to potentially generalize the model. This generalization could be the applicability of the model in all industries, the acknowledgement of the model as 'the social media maturity model' or the use of the model in all industries as a good starting point for social media implementation. Therefore the validity of the research needs to be addressed. Four important terms of validity need to be

considered: construct, internal, external and reliability. However, as we shall see, not all of them are applicable in this research.

The construct validity deals with identifying the correct operational measures for the concepts being studied (Yin, 2009). In his research, Yin provides several tactics in order to ensure proper construct validity. Several of these tactics are applied in this research (Yin, 2009). The first suggested tactic is using multiple sources of evidence. This has been done by including a large amount of literature in the study, consulting with numerous experts with different backgrounds, and choosing different kinds of organizations (industry based) to participate in the research. The second suggested tactic is establishing a chain of evidence for certain findings. This is done in by providing evidence from multiple sources of literature, and only accepting certain additions or changes to the model after multiple experts have agreed on the changes. The last strategy provided by Yin is to have key informants review the draft reports. This is also done by having experts review the model multiple times as it evolves over time after more and more information becomes available.

The internal validity seeks to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships (Yin, 2009). This form of validity should only be used for explanatory or causal studies (Yin, 2009). This research is explorative and therefore this validity is not relevant.

The external validity focusses on defining the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized (Yin, 2009). A strategy suggested by Yin in order to achieve external validity is to use replication logic. Simply put, this means repeating the steps done to validate the findings at multiple sources. In this research, external validation is supported by applying the constructed model at multiple organizations.

The reliability focusses on demonstrating that the operations of a study can be repeated with the same results (Yin, 2009). In this research, this is done by constantly sticking to the same protocols. All interview sessions have been done the same way, with the same model, the same questions and same location. The same is true for the group sessions with the experts, and business validations at the organizations.



Literature study

4. Results: Literature Study

The following section describes the results found in the structured literature review, performed as explained in chapter 3. These results will be used to create a first version of the model (which will be explained and shown in chapter 5). However, it is important to note that the model will not yet be structured according to its maturity levels and is solely based on literature findings. The model found in chapter 5 will be used for the interviews to proceed with the construction of the social media maturity model.

4.1 Why Social Media?

Social media has changed the society and business environments and it is nearly impossible to go around it anymore (Lee, Saundage, & Parker, 2010). Earlier, the ability to create content and distribute it to an audience was limited to traditional media. Now everyone can contribute and participate. Social media is about sharing, interacting and socializing and it's gaining more and more interested participants every day. The rapid and continuous developments challenge companies and force those interested in online possibilities to constantly research the new possibilities (Safko & Brake, 2010). The popularity of social media, for instance blogs and discussion forums, has created new and unforeseen social possibilities for individuals, organizations and the society as a whole.

The ways to use social media are constantly increasing and changing. Social media does not require special technical resources to reach the masses. The applications can often simply be operated from a normal computer and they are often free of charge or at least very inexpensive (Kangas & Toivonen, 2007) (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Examples of use for an organization can be gathering useful and relevant information with as little effort as possible, or using your follower base on the social media platform to help develop a new product (Safko & Brake, 2010).

With so many possible benefits, organizations are currently diving into social media to try and find as many ways to use it as effectively as possible. Many of the organizations younger and future customers are growing up in an environment in which electronic social networking is the norm. The millennial generation expects an "always online" world of interactive networking and social networking tools which immensely affect their behavior (Baird & Fisher, 2005). When looking at the current business environment, it is beginning to show that corporate communication has been democratized. Power has been taken away from the marketing and public relations by individuals and communities that create, share, and consume blogs, tweets, Facebook entries, movies, pictures and so forth (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008). Communication about brands simply happens, and organizations cannot do anything about that (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008) (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Ahlberg, 2010). It is now up to the firms to decide if they wish to participate seriously in this communication or continue to ignore it. Doing either of the two will have a serious impact (Kietzman, Hermkens, & McCarthy, 2011). Firms can leverage this loss of control by providing proper infrastructure and tools to their customers. They should provide networking platforms and use social media tools to engage their customers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Weber, 2007).

Evans (Evans, 2008) emphasizes the importance of participation in social media for organizations. He claims that not being present on social media is conspicuous. If an organization does not participate, it

retards the advancement of trust, and can in fact increase the likelihood of mistrust. Simply participating is not enough. If a company builds a solid process around listening via the social web it can learn about its products and services directly from the customers (Evans, 2008).

Aside from loss of face when it comes to not doing social media, there are a large number of benefits associated to the use of social media (Neti, 2011) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011) (Meyerson, 2010) (Evans, 2008) (Weber, 2007) (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011) (Safko & Brake, 2010). An example of several of the more important benefits:

- Generating exposure to the business
- Creating customer loyalty
- Creating free publicity for the organization
- Penetrate new markets
- Differentiating yourself from your competition
- Selling more products and services

Just as there are benefits associated to using social media, there are also risks. According to research (Cosoi, 2011) (Everett, 2010) (ISACA, 2011) (Wolf, 2011) (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009), several major risks can be identified that relate to social media:

- Virus and Malware
- Brand Hijacking
- Lack of control over content
- Unrealistic customer expectations of internet speed service
- Non-compliance with record management regulations
- Data leakage
- Subject to inherent flaws and bugs

However, while these risks are dangerous and could prove to be a serious problem, prohibiting social media is not the solution (Wolf, 2011) (Zerfas, Fink, & Linke, 2011). Social media has such enormous advantages for an organization that they should not block it but instead focus on properly leveraging the social media use internally (Wilson J. , 2009).

Social media is something companies should not take lightly and just dive in to just because the others are doing it. It is something that requires extensive planning and consideration (Safko & Brake, 2010).

4.2 Social media planning

When an organization has made the choice to implement social media, it is very important that they plan what they intend to do (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) (Coon, 2010) (Mortleman, 2011) (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011) (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Ahlberg, 2010) (Evans, 2008). That said, there needs to be a planning phase where several important steps are undertaken. It is in this phase, that the so called social media strategy needs to be written. Many organizations simply dive into social media without any clear know-how and without any clear idea of what they want to achieve. This is wrong. Without a clear goal, and without a clear path of how to achieve this goal, social media often fails to deliver the expected results and return on investment (Safko & Brake, 2010). This makes planning for social media extremely important. Within this phase, several things need to take place.

4.2.1 Social media goals and strategy

First it is important to think about the reason social media is being implemented. What is the goal (Ahlberg, 2010) (Neti, 2011) (Meyerson, 2010) (Miller & Lammas, 2010) (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011) (Neti, 2011)? Is the organization interested in gaining more customers? Do they want to increase brand exposure? Once an organization has made its decision about the goals and the reasons why they wish to implement social media, their next focus should lie on constructing a social media strategy. This strategy describes the how-to-do-it of their intended social media use. The strategy is important, it helps setting a path through the volatile and unclear social media landscape (Ahlberg, 2010) (Neti, 2011) (Meyerson, 2010) (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011). Sean Carton (Carton, 2009) provides a solid checklist for organizations to use when creating and brainstorming about the social media strategy. This checklist is a set of questions that organizations can use to determine whether they have thought about all the aspects relating to the social media strategy. Having this strategy is important, but more important is that this strategy aligns with the business strategy already in place. Simply writing a strategy for social media is not a good thing if it does not fit within the overall business strategy. This means that if the company has decided to go into a certain direction with for instance their communication, social media use needs to follow along these lines as well (Lee, Saundage, & Parker, 2010) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) (Neti, 2011). It is important to take into account the fact that the results expected when writing the strategy do not happen overnight. It takes time to execute the strategy and the results might become visible anywhere from three to six months (Neti, 2011).

4.2.2 Business and social media strategy alignment

It is important for an organization to consider the fact that not only their social media strategy has to be aligned with the business strategy, but their social media initiatives also need to be aligned amongst themselves in order to have the largest possible reach (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). A prime example in this case would be Dell. Dell uses a combination of social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), Blogs, and content communities (YouTube) to show its range of laptop computers. Aside of aligning the different platforms, there also needs to be consistency amongst them. When for example posting something on Twitter, it is advisable to have it published on the other platforms as well (Campbell, 2010) (Eberle, 2010). It is advisable (but not necessary) to choose a third-party application or service which allows for quick, easy distribution of posts and other content among multiple social media sites. This ensures consistency (Campbell, 2010).

4.2.3 Social media roadmap

Aside from having a strategy, it is advisable to implement a roadmap (Back, 2008) (Meyerson, 2010). This roadmap can be used as something to cling to over the longer period of time to provide insight in how the organization is doing with regard to the goals they planned for in the strategy.

4.2.4 Creation of a social media team

Sometimes, the use of social media requires a special social media team to deal with anything related to the social media efforts done by an organization. Smaller companies consisting of ten, fifteen or twenty employees should be fine with simply one person arranging their social media efforts, but larger organizations that serve larger groups of customers will require the dedication of several people. This means that a special social media team needs to be assigned in order to deal with the activities online (Meyerson, 2010) (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010). This social media team has the responsibility of handling all social media related issues with regard to the implementation and use of social media.

4.2.5 Social media policy

With the use of social media, also comes risk (Cosoi, 2011) (Everett, 2010) (ISACA, 2011) (Wolf, 2011) (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009) (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010). Therefore it is up to the organization to conduct proper risk management to mitigate these problems. Organizations should address these problems by developing policies that address the acceptable and unacceptable behavior for both the customers and the employees (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010). Protecting an organization from risk is only one of several important reasons why the organization should implement social media policies. Another important reason is that employees need to protect themselves (Zinner & Godshalk, 2011). Every organization will likely need multiple social media policy documents for different purposes, social media platforms and use of social media in different business functions (Grensing-Pophal, 2010) (Mortleman, 2011) (Cosoi, 2011) (Bradley, 2010) (Martin, Reddington, Kneafsey, & Sloman, 2009) (Zerfas, Fink, & Linke, 2011) (Zinner & Godshalk, 2011). Aside from a formal policy, general house rules and a privacy policy should be created and posted as well (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011).

4.2.6 Train the staff in their social media use

Aside from the need for a social media policy, the staff should be properly trained in their social media use. Employees need to be able to use social media properly before they can advocate the organization (Martin, Reddington, Kneafsey, & Sloman, 2009) (Bradley, 2010) (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010) (Mortleman, 2011). Furthermore, once the discussions and conversations are taking place, the organization has to work out how to properly respond to them. This involves how employees need to handle certain types of conversations, complaints, special events, and so forth (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010). Here the organization has two choices. They can choose to allow individuals to become involved and post comments themselves. Alternatively they can choose to create (or use) a centralized department that handles all the responses. If the first case applies, the staff needs to be trained how to handle responses as well (Bradley, 2010). Research has shown (ISACA, 2011) that training staff not only ensures proper responses and social media use, but also mitigates many of the earlier discussed social media risks. Training your staff and ensuring they will handle social media properly is the only way an organization can control the social media realm. Banning social media will ensure that the people working at the organization will not use it in the work spheres, but they will use it at home privately non-the-less.

Embracing the fact that social media is there and training your staff how to handle it will greatly help in being able to control it (Mortleman, 2011) (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010).

4.2.7 Develop metrics

In the planning phase, it is advisable that an organization starts constructing metrics. They have formalized several goals and objectives they wish to achieve, but they also need to measure whether or not these goals have been met. Therefore, the planning phase is also the part where the organization develops metrics that go with the goals and objectives so that later on those goals and objectives can be measured (Safko & Brake, 2010).

4.2.5 Benefits of the planning phase

The benefit of having a proper plan is that it helps organizations set out their intended path and provides a clear and well-thought reason for using social media. Another important benefit of having a proper plan in place is that it creates the ability to measure success of the social media implementation. Without goals, key performance indicators and metrics which are all well formulated in the social media strategy and on themselves, nothing could be properly measured and the company will not be able to calculate its return on investment (Meyerson, 2010) (Safko & Brake, 2010) (Qualman, 2010).

4.3 Social media use

Once the plans are in place, it is time to start using social media. However, beforehand it might be worth checking that all employees can actually use it and have access to social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Once it is clear that everyone is able to use social media, it is time to start listening to the conversations taking place online.

4.3.1 Build a community

When the organization starts its social media efforts, they need to start building a community. A community needs to be managed by the organization. Several studies (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010) (Safko & Brake, 2010) (Meyerson, 2010) provide guidelines for creating a successful community. They note that the following things need to be taken into consideration when setting up a community:

- The community needs to be free of registration. You want customers to experience as little resistance to joining the community as possible. Having to fill in an e-mail address can already be too much of a hurdle for them to join.
- Customers need to perceive that they are really contributing to something, or getting something out of being part of the community. This can for instance be that they are the first to receive updates, or receive special treatment while being part of the community.
- The organization needs to be authentic and transparent. Their tone in the community should not be corporate. Instead they should focus on coming across with a human voice.
- The community needs to be visible; organizations need to promote their community on their website, e-mail autographs, and traditional forms of communication.
- Set proper moderation norms in the community so that employees, but also those that use the community know what is expected from them.
- Adhere to the rules of the platform (Facebook, Twitter, Hyves, and so forth) in use. It is important that the rules set by the platforms being used are not broken. This can result in removal of the community pages which makes the brand look bad.

Aside from these guidelines, a community manager needs to be assigned. This person is in charge of managing everyone and everything involved in the community from the organization's point of view (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011). Empowerment of users is important in the community. When for example customers are showing an extreme interest in the community and go out of their way to contribute, those people should be rewarded by for example gaining a moderator function. This will not only ensure that they stay with the community longer, but it can also motivate them to advertise or advocate even more (Safko & Brake, 2010) (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011).

4.3.2 Listening

Much research suggests that when first starting to use social media and having their platform in place, the organization should focus solely on listening to what is being said in the segments where their customers are speaking (Mustonen, 2009) (Weber, 2007). Then, after observing social media for some time, the organization can start to mingle and respond. If you would like your customers to start engaging with you, you will need to give them a reason for doing so. A good way to start is by embracing one or more causes that are important to their customers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Weber, 2007), such

as investing in the nation's children, promoting social and environmental concerns, and so forth (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011). Another thing to consider here is that customers do not like speaking to a corporate brand. Be unprofessional and human. Customers are not interested in actively following a corporation that only states one-lining advertisement messages. Provide interesting, and honest content for your customers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). When listening and responding to the customer, an organization should use tools to help them mitigate the potentially enormous responses they will have to deal with (Safko & Brake, 2010). Many free tools are available for an organization to use to help them mine the data in social media. With these tools, the organization should also constantly monitor the social media platforms being used for violations of the policies created by the organization (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010).

4.3.3 Put a human face on it

When creating the profiles, choose a picture for the social media page. However, try to avoid using a logo. People like faces associated with companies. This allows them to feel a more natural bond with the corporation other than seeing simply the corporate brand (Campbell, 2010). People want to speak to other people. Not to a faceless business unit (King, 2008).

4.3.4 Ensure visibility

An organization can have the most beautiful social media presence one could ever hope to achieve, but without customers dealing with that presence, the organization might as well have nothing. Therefore it is important that the organization ensures that their social media is visible to the customer. This can be done by linking on the company page to the social media, adding social media signatures on all e-mail traffic, and so forth. That way, the social media efforts of the organization become visible (Qualman, 2010) (Safko & Brake, 2010).

4.3.5 Give them a reason to follow you

Getting customers to engage with you in social media requires the organization to take a few things into consideration. Customers are more likely to talk about companies and products when they feel they know a lot about them (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Therefore it is up to the organization to disclose as much information as they can (provided that information is not trusted information). This allows the customer to feel familiar with the organization and makes it more prone to engaging on social media (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Ahlberg, 2010). Aside from providing familiarity, the organization should be outrageous in some way. People talk about things they find somewhat outrageous. This does not mean the organization should do something controversial or provocative, but it just means there needs to be something special. Last, it is important to consider that people like to feel special. Providing something exclusive for the customer can give you that little extra that makes the customer a loyal follower (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Parise, Guinan, & Weinberg, 2010).

4.4 Marketing and Sales

The marketing and sales department of an organization is responsible for, as the name suggests, the actions relating to the marketing of the products and the sales of those products. Social media changes how this social media marketing is conducted. Social media marketing is basically the attempt to use social media to persuade consumers that one's company, products and/or their services are worthwhile (Ahlberg, 2010). This means that for example online communities, social networks, blogs, and so forth are used for the marketing purposes. Due to social media, marketing has changed. The marketer is losing direct control and the customers are gaining control more and more (Weber, 2007). The job of the marketer in the social media world is to engage, and keep engaging, the customers by providing interesting content on the company's website, creating environments those customers want to visit, and by going out and participating in social media (Weber, 2007). However, it is not merely about hitting the front pages of popular websites or having a lot of hits on Google. It is a strategic and methodical process to establish the company's influence, reputation and brand within communities of potential customers, readers or supporters (Neti, 2011). The role of social media in marketing is to use it as a communication tool that makes the companies accessible to those interested in their product and makes them visible to those that don't know their product (Meyerson, 2010). It should be used as a tool that creates a personality behind the brand and creates relationships that they otherwise may never gain (Neti, 2011) (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008). This creates not only repeat-buyers, but customer loyalty (Neti, 2011). Out of all the applications of social media, in marketing lies the most interest (Mustonen, 2009). This is mostly due to the cheap and quick nature of social media, and the ability to reach huge quantities of people (Mustonen, 2009). Ideally, marketers manage to create electronic word-of-mouth. Nothing is more trustworthy than a recommendation from a friend or relative (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009) (Weber, 2007).

4.4.1 Set the marketing and sales goals

The first thing that is important is, just like it is for the overall social media use, the goals. There might be an overall social media strategy in place, but this part emphasizes on the details concerning marketing and sales and the specific sub-goals for marketing and sales empowered with social media. It needs to be clear what the goal of the marketing campaign will be and how social media can successfully contribute to this goal (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011) (Mustonen, 2009) (Meyerson, 2010) (Wollan & Trochymiuk, 2011)

4.4.2 Decide on the platform

Once this has been decided, the next step is to decide which platforms to use (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). Different marketing campaigns require different platforms. When a campaign is launched that requires video capabilities, several of the well-known platforms are no longer useful. Also relevant to the choice of platform are the demographics of the target group. Organizations need to carefully consider which platform to start their campaign on, based on the demographics of their target group (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011) (Chi, 2010) (Casserly, 2010). Are they specifically targeting youngsters between the age of 18 and 25 and focusing their campaign on customer feedback and brand awareness? Then their best bet would be to for example go for Facebook (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011).

4.4.3 Combine traditional and social media

While social media is a powerful means of marketing, no company should ever solely focus on it alone. One might consider these two forms of media as completely different. However, for the customer they are both part of the same: namely, your corporate image (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Having a mix of both social media marketing and conventional marketing techniques will yield the best and most powerful result (Neti, 2011) (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011) (Ahlberg, 2010). In other words, marketing can no longer be about capturing attention solely via reach (traditional marketing). The marketing department should focus on both capturing (through traditional media, but also through social media) and continuing the attention through engagement and interaction (through social media). Hence the blend between the two is essential (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). In the research of Andrew Stephen (Stephen & Galak, 2009) it is concluded that while social media are complementary to the traditional media, traditional media is still very influential in the whole marketing process and should therefore not be abandoned (Neti, 2011). When individuals follow a brand, they most likely already like it. Therefore brands should focus on relationship maintenance to make sure they are giving consumers as much as possible in exchange for their loyalty. This includes provoking dialogue and making them feel they are being heard (Stockman, 2010).

4.4.4 Engage the social media marketing and sales

After the goals have been set and the platform and marketing mechanics chosen, it is time for organizations to start using their social media (engagement). In the engagement, several things are extremely important. Organizations need to be aware of the fact that they are no longer advertising for a brand. They are advertising for a feeling (Singh, Veron-Jackson, & Cullinane, 2008). What this means is that organizations should no longer focus on the 'sell, sell and sell' but they should instead focus on listening to the conversations and then joining in (Parise, Guinan, & Weinberg, 2010) (Ahlberg, 2010). Especially the joining in is important. Simply listening and observing is not enough to get people to follow the organization on social media (Mustonen, 2009) (Weber, 2007). People following the organization on the social media are not interested in receiving a push message forcing you to click a link and reading about the super awesome product the organization is selling (Miller & Lammas, 2010). If all the organization does is sending out sell messages, the masses will quickly stop following them (Meyerson, 2010).

4.4.5 Do not attempt to control the conversation

Customers will always talk about your organization, which can either be in a positive or in a negative way. What matters, is that the organization does not attempt to control what is being said. Their attitude should be one that is responsive in nature, not control-like (Parise, Guinan, & Weinberg, 2010). The focus should be on diffusing negative comments, and encouraging and rewarding positive comments. In order to properly address and use social media for marketing and sales, someone needs to coordinate the efforts. This should be a person who has experience in using social media. However, this does not mean he or she should do it alone. Empowerment of employees to send out messages containing the voice of the organization is not bad at all. In fact, this could lead to more brand exposure. The employees do need to be authentic and transparent with what they say, and attempt to be human as possible (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). They should however also adhere to the policies that are in place (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009).

4.4.6 Provide exclusivity

Once the organization is joining in the conversations relevant to the organization and customers, the customers will catch on and start showing an interest in the organization. When the organization has built up a group of followers, it is up to the organization to ensure that they will remain loyal followers. This can be done by providing good content for the customers, but also providing some sort of exclusivity or reward for their support (Parise, Guinan, & Weinberg, 2010) (Meyerson, 2010) (Chi, 2010) (Weber, 2007). As Lon Safko puts it: "Content is King" (Safko & Brake, 2010). Having good and interesting content on your social media platforms ensures your customers stay with you and advocate your organization to others (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010). It is all about maintaining the relationships with your customers (Mustonen, 2009) (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009). Once the organization is engaged in social media, has built up a follower base, and is doing what they can to maintain the relationships, the organization can start using several techniques to bolster their brands and make their social media presence more powerful.

4.4.7 Social media press release

A good way for a company to get noticed with regard to product or services is writing a good press release. An important thing to remember here is to use Keywords. There are several tools available to help with the selection of keywords. Today it is all about interactivity and multimedia (Neti, 2011) (Miller & Lammas, 2010). The goal here is to turn the press release into a so called social media press release. It's like an old press release but it also contains audio and video elements. The one thing that a social media press release has over a normal press release is interactivity. In the study done by Eberle, (Eberle, 2010), two important things are found concerning social media use for marketing. First off the companies should be focused on increasing credibility and embeddedness (the degree to which individuals or an organization are enmeshed in a social network). Consumers are more likely to engage in word of mouth and spreading the news if they are feeling close to the company (e.g. when embeddedness is high). Second, an increase in perceived interactivity leads to a higher credibility and stronger feeling of embeddedness towards the company. The good thing about this interactivity and credibility is that the social media press releases are catching on with bloggers due to the interactive nature. This results in getting spread around much faster which is in essence what a company wants (Eberle, 2010).

4.4.8 Viral Marketing

Something many organizations engage in once they have successfully deployed their social media marketing is viral marketing (van Zyl, 2009) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011) (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008) (Stockman, 2010). Viral marketing is electronic word of mouth whereby some form of marketing message related to a company, brand or product is transmitted in an exponentially growing way, often through the use of social media applications (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). It is a cheap, fast way to reach a lot of people really fast (at least, if done properly). Viral marketing gains its name from the virus-like exponential growth it can obtain when the marketing technique is executed properly. It is a technique that when used on social media can reach masses of people and thus create enormous brand awareness (Harris & Rae, 2009). In order to properly conduct viral marketing, it needs to be accompanied by

changes in the rest of the marketing mix and needs to be backed up by the traditional forms of communication (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). To maximize its effect, the organization should carefully choose the different types of social media to apply it on (Awata, 2010). It is important that once the viral is set free, the organization no longer attempts to control it. Let it run free and allow it to do so without interfering in anything. Do not attempt to try to get your customers to spread the word around (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). Consider that while the message needs to be both interesting and memorable, it should never be provocative. Weber (Weber, 2007) has suggested a set of criteria that the viral message should adhere to in order to be of high quality. Failure is always possible no matter how memorable the viral is. There is unfortunately always a bit of luck involved (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). Gillin (Gillin, 2007) listed five reasons why marketing society's interests in social media and especially viral marketing have increased:

- There is a declining response rate in traditional media. Consumers increasingly ignore conventional online marketing such as banner and e-mail advertisements due to disinterest and spam.
- Technology developments: The developing IT infrastructure, new tools and an increasing online population contribute to social media attractiveness
- Demographic shifts. People, especially young individuals, have moved online and the use of traditional media channels has declined
- Customer preference. Trust is important and people trust their friends and other internet users more than companies. Thus, influencing friends will give you more credibility.
- Low cost. A good viral campaign can produce way more engaged customers than a television campaign at a fraction of the cost.

4.4.9 Community marketing

To increase their marketing effectiveness and be better positioned to quickly identify and respond customer needs, companies should begin adopting an emerging online communication discipline called social community marketing as a new approach to creating an ongoing dialogue with customers (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011). At the heart of social community marketing is the notion that brand building moves from a mass-marketing model in which the goal is to acquire as many customers as possible, to a more targeted, tailored approach in which the aim is to start a conversation with customers and increase the richness and depth of those conversations over time (Miller & Lammas, 2010) (Wollan & Trochymiuk, 2011). The community in question here could for instance be a forum, or a Facebook page, or a frequently updated Blog where many people respond to. In order to properly set up the community, the organization (aside from the previously mentioned steps) should take several things into consideration. In the research done by Robert Wollan and Andre Trochymiuk (Wollan & Trochymiuk, 2011), three broad strategies for community marketing have been identified. First, an organization can choose to allow users to comment on their products online (user reviews). Provided it is a good product, this will add extra trust and credibility to the products and will pursue customers to buy the products faster. Second, the organization focuses on trying to get customers to mobilize their own networks. A good example of this happens on Facebook rather often: share this picture of our company, and win a price! Third, the organization targets influencers who can move the masses. This specifically targets individuals who have

both significant followers as well as demonstrated “Weight” in their communities (Wollan & Trochymiuk, 2011). When those influencers buy the product because it is a good product, others will likely do the same.

4.4.10 Competitor research

Companies can also take their social media use a step further than simply for their own promotion, by using it to keep track of the competition and using it to predict or research market trends (Yazdanifard, Obeidy, Fadzilah, & Babej, 2011) (Hedin, 2010) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011) (Weng & Lee, 2011). Marketing departments of several large fortune 500 companies note that they can use the data found on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to make predictions of the paths that their competitors will take in the future (Weiss, 2010). LinkedIn is used mostly for this by looking at the projects and work experiences the employees of said company place on their profiles. Social media applications can in this light also be used for crowd forecasting. It allows for a more balanced view of where the trend is heading due to the large audiences available (Hedin, 2010). This does require a substantial investment and at the moment we only see this in the companies with more advanced intelligence programs (Hedin, 2010).

4.4.11 Benefits and risks of using social media for marketing & sales purposes

Social media marketing is significantly different from conventional marketing. It offers three distinct and important advantages (Neti, 2011):

- It provides a window to marketers to not only present products or services to customers, but also to listen to customers grievances and suggestions
- It makes it easy for marketers to identify various peer groups or influencers among various groups, who in turn can become brand evangelist and help in organic growth of a brand.
- It is all done for almost zero costs

Aside from these three main benefits, social media marketing also supports the following (Neti, 2011) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011) (Meyerson, 2010) (Evans, 2008) (Weber, 2007):

- Brand Exposure
- Customer loyalty
- Reduction in overall marketing expenses
- The ability to connect more deeply with the organizations best customers and gain valuable customer insight
- Improve marketing return on investment

No direct disadvantages or risks have been found in literature with regard to using social media for marketing and sales purposes. However it is logical to assume that several of the ‘general’ social media risks apply here as well because in order to conduct social media marketing and sales, one needs to use social media itself.

4.5 Research and Development

The research and development department is, as its name suggests, responsible for the research and development of new products. Social media has a substantial impact here. Companies constantly evolve and change their product mix with innovations and new ideas. However, it is difficult for organizations to keep up with the rapid changes and innovations required to stay competitive (Alon & Gupta, 2011). A recent study by Alon and Gupta (Alon & Gupta, 2011) found that out of 1600 companies globally, only 55 percent is satisfied with their return on innovations. Three main problems are identified when it comes to proper innovation namely:

- The rapid commodization of products results in shorter product life cycles, the need to accelerate the product development process is paramount.
- An expanding range of expertise and competencies is required to introduce highly complex products to the marketplace, some of which are beyond an organization's knowledge and skills.
- Increasing micro segmentation exists.

These problems can be leveraged with social media (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008) (Mustonen, 2009) (Bennet, 2010). Traditional tools will not get them there; therefore companies use social media both to internally facilitate the flow of ideas among employees and externally to tap in to customers, suppliers, partners and others outside the organization (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008).

4.5.1 Tapping into the needs and desires of your customers

One of the central powers of social media is that it enables people and organizations to interact with each other in real time (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) (Weber, 2007). This opens up possibilities for organizations to gain insights into what kinds of products and services would be wanted by potential customers (van Zyl, 2009) (Weber, 2007). This can in turn result into avoiding a lot of expensive and time-consuming trial and error phases. Companies that have been successful in leveraging social media's power to connect not only to the people within their organization, but also to those outside of the company succeed in not only creating powerful new products, but also in immediately marketing this product by having it being partially constructed by the target customers as well. They prove to be a rich source of innovation (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011).

4.5.2 Setting the goals

Once again, it is important to note which goals are supposed to be achieved with using social media for research and development (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This could for instance be idea generation, searching for innovation or doing a demographic study amongst the customers of the organization in order to gain feedback for a new product.

4.5.3 Analyzing social media platforms

An organization creates products for their customers, and the customer is the best expert of his life. His values, opinions and emotions should be constantly monitored when it comes to product development (Mustonen, 2009). A systematic analysis of blogs, chats and personal internet sites helps to find out the opinions of the customers on certain products and services (Cateora, 2007). However, Ulwick (Ulwick, 2002) argues that customers should not be listened to too much. They do not have technical know-how,

or knowledge on new materials or procedures. However it is extremely powerful in order to find out what kind of improvements the customers would be willing to pay something extra for (Ulwick, 2002).

4.5.4 Incorporating customers in the idea generation

Organizations should remember that the power in social media also comes from the fact that customers can respond to what the organization suggests. Customers can be rallied to assist when it comes to the creation of new products or services (Weber, 2007). Social media provides a platform where organizations can gain information concerning recent trends and what the customer wants. They should focus on actively engaging their customers to help in the idea generation process of new products and services (Weber, 2007) (van Zyl, 2009) (Hoyer, Chandy, Dorotic, Kraft, & Singh, 2010) (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008) (Alon & Gupta, 2011). Once the idea is there, the organization simply needs to create the product and distribute it. Marketing and sales has basically already started, since the customers helped create the product itself. Not only does this support the idea generation and product and development process, but it also creates loyalty amongst the customers because they feel they are getting something in return (Safko & Brake, 2010), and are allowed to actively take place in the development process of a product. Designing products in such a way also stimulates word-of-mouth and social media based conversation (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Products that are fun, intriguing, highly-visible easy to use and which engage the emotions (for example because a lot of people helped develop it) are more likely to stimulate conversation than products that do not meet these requirements (Neti, 2011) (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) (Dobele, Lindgreen, Beverland, Vanhamme, & van Wijk, 2007) (Stockman, 2010).

4.5.5 Prototype testing

Another thing that companies should do is to not only use the customers they are engaged with in the social media to help generate ideas, but they should also use these customers to test prototypes (Mustonen, 2009). The best way to start with social media in product development is to be fast: take a new-product concept; create a plan for soliciting ideas internally and externally using social media, and start collecting feedback to further tailor the product (Alon & Gupta, 2011).

4.5.6 Benefits and risks of using social media for research and development purposes

The following benefits are associated to using social media in research and development. (Alon & Gupta, 2011):

- First of all, the sources of innovation are greatly expanded, especially those outside of a company's formal research and development unit.
- Next, the product and development efforts to keep pace with the ever shortening product lifecycles are ramped up.
- The company's ability to understand and target narrow customer niches with relevant new offers gets strengthened and more powerful
- It is relatively cheap to conduct a very thorough analysis of the customers desires

No direct disadvantages or risks have been found with regards to using social media for research and development purposes. However it is logical to assume that several of the 'general' social media risks apply here as well because in order to conduct social research & development, one needs to use social media itself.

4.6 Human resources

Every company employing a social media strategy must recognize that its entire human capital strategy must reflect this new reality (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011). Company practices must encourage collaboration, both internally and with customers and partners. It is up to the human resource department to leverage this new change when it comes to social media use in an organization. The use of social media affects the culture of organizations in multiple dimensions: from how the enterprise adopts social media internally, to how it recruits and retains employees (Zinner & Godshalk, 2011)

4.6.1 Recruitment

Aside from impacting the internal side of the human resource department, one of the largest and most important impacts is on the external human resources, also known as the recruitment of the organizations (Gehring, 2011) (Wolf, 2011). This ranges from simply being able to reach more potential candidates, to predicting their job-switching behavior to better target the potential new employees.

Traditional recruitment tools are outdated. New technology and services are growing trends (Ahlers, 2006). This suggests the need for creativity and innovation within the recruitment departments (HR Department) to develop new ways to recruit. Social media is becoming the dominant trend within the recruitment world (Fathi, 2008) (Wilson J. , 2009). Organizations are required to innovate towards a process innovation within their recruitment departments in order to sharpen up their recruitment tools (Jacobs, 2007). They must adapt to the emerging and increasing social media industry (Barnes & Barnes, 2009) (Wilson J. , 2009). This means that organizations are increasing their visibility on the internet through social media (Noella, 2009) (Fathi, 2008). Visible innovations can in turn lead to the enhancement of brand and organizational reputation. This enhancement will then result in good publicity which results in a larger stream of potential employees (Weinstein, 2004). Thus, adapting the emerging social media recruitment trends and showing innovative and creative skills can be beneficial for the organization. It gives visibility and attracts potential employees more easily (Weinstein, 2004).

4.6.2 Research demographics

The first thing that is important when it comes to recruitment by means of social media is to research the demographics of the potential job candidates that need to be found. One can run the best possible social media recruitment campaign, but when for example the platform is blocked in a specific country, the campaign stops right there (Gehring, 2011). Therefore, a plan, a goal and a set of demographics is the first step in recruiting online.

4.6.3 Training of the employees

Conducting recruitment with help of social media requires that the recruiters are aware of what to do, and how to use social media properly. Organizations seeking to start recruiting online will need to make sure that their recruiters know what to do, and have the tools to do it (Gehring, 2011). If they do not, they should invest time in the capability development of their people so they can better utilize social media to its full advantage (Gehring, 2011). This means investing time to properly train people in the use of social media.

4.6.4 Leadership support

When it comes to recruitment through social media, it is important that leadership support is present. Without a clear champion for the use of social media, people will not focus their efforts on it as much as they should (Gehring, 2011).

4.6.5 Profile assessments

Kluemper & Rosen (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009) researched the options of assessing people based on their social media pages. They found that people's personality, global performance and intelligence can be assessed based on their personal profile page, thus recruiters should be able to pick out the right candidates. An example is that for instance intelligence can be estimated roughly by checking his or her personal page on writing style, layout and content (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). Individuals are able to show their creative side through social media as they can update their page with their interests by means of videos, photos or other portfolio (Barnes & Barnes, 2009). Furthermore, fraudulent claims are less likely to occur as social media users expose themselves on the internet (DeKay, 2009). This fact can indicate that employees found through social media are more likely to be honest, which is in accordance with the "personal traits" of a good employee (Wilson, 1973).

4.6.6 Targeted search

Social media is a great tool to perform a targeted search with (Schawbel, 2009). It enables recruiters to look for certain people with specific interests within a certain field with particular skills. It enables recruiters to connect through social media with people they know from the past who possess specific known qualities (Woloshin, 2009). Passive jobseekers can also be targeted by recruiters which is what most of the social media users are (DeKay, 2009) (Elmore, 2009).

4.6.7 Creating talent pools

It is easy to use social media to create a large talent pool (Elmore, 2009). Any social media user could add themselves to the company's social media profile. This can also be the other way around: companies invite people (by means of a targeted search) with matching interests to join their organizational social media page. This enables recruiters to investigate the amount of direct interested potential employees more easily. A talent pool can consist of sufficient interested potential employees to fulfill certain job positions (Barnes & Barnes, 2009) (Schawbel, 2009).

4.6.8 Combine traditional and social media

In the research conducted by Wolf (Wolf, 2011) it is found that social media can be a good stand-alone recruitment tool compared to the traditional forms of recruitment and at a lower cost as well. However, for the time being, an organization should use social media as another form of recruitment and not stand-alone. The traditional forms of recruitment are still usable in different situations (Wolf, 2011). Interesting to add would be that Wolf found that social media is extremely superior in every way when it comes to connecting to old relatives, finding passive jobseekers, finding potential employees on very short notice, and the ability to perform targeted searches (Woloshin, 2009) (Wolf, 2011).

4.6.9 Benefits and risks of using social media for human resource purposes

When using social media with regard to human resources, the organization can reap several benefits (ISACA, 2011) (Wolf, 2011) (Campbell, 2010):

- Having the policies in place ensures mitigation of the risks identified by the ISACA (Virus and malware, Data leakage and Brand Hijacking) (ISACA, 2011)
- Social media is basically a free recruitment tool as both the recruiter and the potential candidate can join for free
- Creates efficiency due to the targeted searches which allow recruiters to much more easily meet the right candidates
- Companies can promote the brand and the company message which gives the job seeker a more informed perspective on the companies as potential employers

No direct disadvantages or risks are found with regard to using social media for Human Resource purposes. However it is logical to assume that several of the 'general' social media risks apply here as well because in order to conduct social human resources, one needs to use social media itself.

4.7 Customer Service

The customer service department is responsible for maintaining the relationships with the customers. Customers have opinions, and these days customers will not hesitate to vent negative opinions on the internet. Organizations need to be able to respond to this because otherwise they could be looking at numerous customers who can air their frustrations with dozens, hundreds and sometimes thousands of other friends and online acquaintances (Safko & Brake, 2010). Social media has changed customer service and support forever (Sadowski, 2011) (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010) (Bernhoff & Charlene, 2008) (van Zyl, 2009). Social media can be used to increase customer loyalty through customer support services and hence improve customer retention (Neti, 2011). The three biggest social networking sites give consumers a place to vent their frustration. The more memorable and special they make their complaints; the more likely those complaints are to spread around extremely fast (Sadowski, 2011). Companies that don't act quickly to contain those bursts of anger could be facing serious damage to their reputation (Sadowski, 2011). Just as social media has revolutionized communications with customers, so too have they revolutionized the information processes in customer service. Information can flow in real time, and in significant quantities from sources such as virtual communities, blogs and social media (Henning-Thurau, et al., 2010) (Weber, 2007). The type of information that exists within these communities is an invaluable resource for customer service purposes, with real-time customer views, preferences, buying behaviors and much more (Mathwick, Wiertz, & De Ruyter, 2008) (Trusov & Bucklin, 2009).

So what should organizations do to properly address and manage their customer relations with help of social media? Based on research done by Sadowski (Sadowski, 2011) a general consensus is found amongst organizations using social media for customer support functions on the following things.

4.7.1 Create a plan and a set of goals

Deciding how to use social media in customer service and support begins with a plan, just as it does for using the technology in any part of an organization. The company should understand which of their customers use social media, what they value, the type of information they seek, why they want to use social media, and what kinds of transactions will have an impact on them. This way, the company knows what to expect, and how to respond properly (Sadowski, 2011).

4.7.2 Empower and train the users

The next step after the plan is made, is to empower and train the users who are going to be using social media. A good idea is to create a scenario graph or book that allows employees to see how they should handle certain customers on social media. The difference between for example a telephone or social media is that social media is usually there to stay. Therefore it requires different approaches than traditional forms of customer service (Sadowski, 2011).

4.7.2 Build the social media service channel

Next, organizations need to invest in building their social media service channel. They should not expect that while investing, the cost of their other support channels will fall. They must continue to deal with customers who do not use social media and continue to use the traditional way of contact. They need to build a social media channel to attract and retain customers from the net generation. It is however important to familiarize your customers with the fact that you are using social media. An organization

can build the greatest social media channel in its industry, but if customers don't know about it, they are not likely to use it. Organizations have to market their new social customer service capabilities (Sadowski, 2011).

4.7.3 Continuously monitor the social media service channel

While most of the people using social media have good intentions, there are those that wish to advertise other products, act rude, and wish to harm others. It is up to the customer service team to constantly monitor the social media channels to clean out the bad weed. This contains dealing with spam and moderating the channels by means of filtering out unwanted comments. By unwanted comments, only comments are meant that go too far. When a customer provides the organization with negative response, obviously the organization should not remove it but react to it accordingly. However, when a customer goes on a swearing spree, the organization is allowed to step in and clean out the comment (or remove the comment completely) (Safko & Brake, 2010).

4.7.4 Calling in assistance: the customers

Companies that see themselves as the only source to help customers solve their problems are setting themselves up for unnecessary expenses and stress (Safko & Brake, 2010). Social media can be a powerful tool in this case. Companies can set up online communities enabling customers to talk to other customers. This way, they can direct many questions to their knowledgeable users (Meyerson, 2010) (Safko & Brake, 2010) (Weber, 2007). Power users (Sadowski, 2011) in this case are clearly something to capitalize on. But they need to be managed because a company doesn't want customers to provide bad advice. The power users are people that have expertise they want to use, and they often get kicks out of helping fellow customers: they like feeling empowered, helping others, and getting the recognition that comes with being regarded as an expert. Social media is a tool that can enable these people to act and help other customers (Safko & Brake, 2010) (Qualman, 2010). This means that the company doesn't have to reply to every individual request but still they need to manage these people (Sadowski, 2011).

4.7.5 Monitor the competition and keep up

Competitors continually raise the bar. One day perhaps responding within two working days is acceptable while the next day the competitor does it within three hours. It is up to the customer service department to monitor what the competition is doing (which is easy using social media) and adapt accordingly. They need to keep their eyes on whether customers are bypassing their traditional service channels and going straight to the social media. If that is happening, that can result in having to invest less in for example the existing call-centers. However, it is important to note that as long as a channel is used, it is advisable to keep that channel intact (Schawbel, 2009).

4.7.6 Surprise the customers with superb service by unifying the marketing, sales and service channel

The companies that are mastering social media in customer service are going further than simply handling customer complaints. They are proactively warning customers about pending issues, alerting them so they can change their plans (Sadowski, 2011). Informing customers in real time what they need to do can smooth out peaks in customer service calls. A combination of the marketing, sales and service channel requires the organization to use social media for informing its customers about new products

and services. An example of such a unified channel is the fast-food chain Chick-fil-A. They used Facebook in a new product launch to increase store traffic. It created a marketing campaign for people who followed them on Facebook and gave them the opportunity to come and try new foods for much less than the non-followers would. This is a good example of a combination of marketing, sales and service (Sadowski, 2011). Another good example is the Dutch Railroad (NS). While not always on time with their trains, their information support through social media channels is. Responses are often instant, and when registered, customers receive up to date travel information through text messages or Twitter messages usually before it is even announced on the train stations. Perhaps the greatest and biggest gains in satisfaction, and the biggest sources of operational efficiencies, require getting out in front of service problems. Social media provides highly effective early warning systems of customer issues before they become full-blown crisis (Sadowski, 2011).

4.7.7 Benefits and risks of using social media for customer service purposes

The benefits of using social media in customer service are the following (Sadowski, 2011).

- Countering aggressive consumer activism (a consumer venting his or her frustration in the online world)
- Decrease the workload of the company workforce
- Dealing with the rapidly changing world where customers have a much stronger voice
- It is relatively cheap compared to the other forms of customer service
- Creating a strong voice for the organization when crisis situations emerge

No direct disadvantages or risks have been found with regards to using social media for customer service purposes. However it is logical to assume that several of the 'general' social media risks apply here as well because in order to conduct social media customer service, one needs to use social media itself.

4.8 Blogging

The company blog is something considered to be very important when it comes to creating an online social presence for an organization. The company blog can contribute to all of the above mentioned business functions in several ways. This can be both the traditional blog, and the micro-blog (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011) (Safko & Brake, 2010).

4.8.1 Utilizing a search-engine optimized blog

It is important for an organization to have a blog platform. Blogging in general can be a highly effective tool for public relations efforts (Eberle, 2010). It allows organizations to enter into previously private realms and allows the firm to reach the choir (Kent, 2008). According to Rogers (Rogers, 2003), reaching the choir helps when companies seek to communicate with opinion leaders, innovators and early adopters. The blog platform should contain SEO, or search engine optimized keywords and phrases that help visitors find the business when they search via Google, Yahoo, Bing, and others (Campbell, 2010).

4.8.2 Humanize the organization

The best way to humanize the organization is to use a blog. A blog can give a company a face and a voice: a company becomes a group of people instead of being a faceless corporate unity. People can relate to and trust other people while no-one really relates to the abstract image of a company (Demopoulos, 2007). Blogs allow organizations to collect information about its customers, consumption habits, as well as about the success of its marketing solutions and product development (Demopoulos, 2007). It can be especially powerful when combined with other corporate communication channels. Blogging can help establish a passionate community around a company and its products, strengthen a brand, and demonstrate a company's expertise within a field (Demopoulos, 2007) (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009).

4.8.3 Set a blogging communication goal

When wanting to create a blog, it is important that the organization has a clear communication goal which must be communicated to its readers (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009). Furthermore, guidelines need to be established for employees who are blogging about the organization. Organizations should fully understand how the blog works in order to reach its full potential. It should not be used as a tool to push the marketing messages into the social media realm (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009).

Ambient awareness is a phenomenon found in Microblogging. One small microblogging message may not have that much meaning for a person, but several of those messages together can generate a strong feeling of closeness and intimacy. This results in microblogging platforms as being a good application to reach a high level of social presence for an organization. This is what makes microblogs a good and powerful mid-ground between traditional blogs and social networking sites (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011).

4.8.4 Blogging in marketing

On a marketing perspective there are also clear benefits to be found due to blogging. We find enhancement of customer relations, sources of new ideas and research, speed and flexibility in communication of the corporate messages (Garnyte & Vila Perez, 2009). Another form of utilizing the power of micro-blogging entails writing advertising and other brand-reinforcing messages, especially those that need to be acted on quickly. This can be both externally or internally. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011).

4.8.5 Blogging in customer service

Micro-blogs can be used to improve customer service and complaint management processes. Firms should manage dissatisfied and complaining customers rapidly and professionally. Micro-blogging can be a very powerful tool for this (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011).

4.8.6 Rules for microblogging

When it comes to microblogging, three important rules need to be taken into account (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011):

- Messages need to be relevant for the target group. Users are unlikely to read, let alone spread it through their own network if the message is boring or uninteresting.
- Show respect to those that follow you. This implies using correct identification, appropriate language, and refraining from deceiving other users.
- Firms that use micro-blogging should pay close attention to the benefits and return-on-investment of their activities.

4.9 Internal social media use

So far all of the previously discussed social media use has been externally focused. However, internally the organization can benefit from using social media greatly as well (van Zyl, 2009).

4.9.1 Stimulating collaboration and knowledge sharing

Using social media internally stimulates collaboration and knowledge sharing between individuals, which can lead to increased productivity through the creation of communities of practice (Ferreira & Plessis, 2009) (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010). James Bennet (Bennet, 2010) found that this includes the weak ties amongst employees. Social media provides employees with an easy way to connect, gain information and collaborate. However, it is important that social media technology gets channeled in effective ways to ensure maximum results. Employees need to be directed on how to use it properly or there might be several pitfalls that the social media use can fall into. Some of these risks are bandwidth and storage consumption, potential legal liability, exposure to malware, and decreased productivity (Hathi, 2008) (Perkins, 2008). It is recommended to designate specific networks for organization-wide social networking. Again, the creation of a policy with regard to its use is suggested. Organizations should establish strategies to address social media issues such as personal usage, business relevance, and so forth. (Ferreira & Plessis, 2009). The intranet could be replaced by a Wiki in order to ease up the work of the helpdesk and disseminate information to the stakeholders of the company (Mustonen, 2009). All in all, these tools focus on workflow optimization (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011).

4.9.2 Online resource

Social media can assist organizations to create an online resource containing the accumulated wisdom of the organizations by allowing knowledge to be codified, searched and shared (van Zyl, 2009). By decreasing the use of e-mails and other disruptive communication methods, the use of asynchronous communication methods such as blogs and wikis can increase productivity and work flow efficiency (van Zyl, 2009).

4.9.3 Using social media as corporate intranet

Due to the rich set of features that can be found in the online networking and sharing applications, businesses can use social media as a company intranet. Everyday operations can be conducted on social websites. The management post announcements to employees: and encourages employees to share work-related documents, and so forth (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010). It is very important to note that in order to properly do this without risk the company will require a closed social networking web site.

4.9.4 Using a virtual world

Virtual worlds in communication and project work are also a power means to work more effectively in an organization. This allows the organization to gather experts from all around the world (or different locations within the same organization) in order to effectively and efficiently work on a collaborative project. This allows them to get closer to new markets and customers (Mustonen, 2009) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

4.9.5 Project coordination

In his research, Kai Riemer (Riemer, 2010) identified the uses of internal social media use, and in particular how microblogging could be used effectively. He found that there is an increase in efficiency when using microblogs to coordinate team-efforts. The updates found on these microblog platforms were most used with regard to: providing updates, coordinating others, sharing information and asking questions.

4.9.6 Benefits and risks of using social media for internal purposes

The benefits of using social media internally consist of (van Zyl, 2009) (Riemer, 2010)

- Up to date contact information linked to user maintained profiles
- Identification of experts, opportunities and potential business partners
- Increased productivity and workflow efficiency
- Increased staff motivation and sense of community through the accumulation of a digital reputation
- Retention of cumulative organizational knowledge and efficient use of social media technologies
- More effective, appropriate and efficient use of social media technologies
- The ability to influence the perception of the organizations and/or brands through improved customer relations, viral marketing and innovation

No direct disadvantages or risks have been found with regard to using social media for internal purposes. However it is logical to assume that several of the 'general' social media risks apply here as well because in order to conduct social media internally, one needs to use social media itself.

4.10 Social media measurement

In the social media strategy, the organization sets about a set of goals and objectives that they wish to obtain with their social media use. Once the organization has engaged in social media, and is using it to strengthen its current business functions, it is time for the organization to start measuring its success.

Return on investment (ROI) is important in this case. ROI means a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment or to compare the efficiency of a number of different investments. The return of an investment is divided by the cost of investment in order to calculate the ROI. The result is a percentage. Usually return is measured by the amount of money gained or lost, but people spend their time and energy on social media and it is very hard to connect the amount of money about profits with the investment in social media directly (Safko & Brake, 2010). There is no direct correlation between the return of social media investment and the amount of money gained (Wang, 2010). However, when people spend a lot of time and energy on something, they must be interested in it and want to get it. This implies that there can still be some sort of measurement to the return of social media strategy through the statistics of different social media tools in order to measure the contribution of social media strategy for the profits (Wang, 2010). Because different social media tools focus on different value propositions, Liana Evans (Evans L. , 2009) provided a list of indexes corresponding with various social media tools.

4.10.1 General social media metrics

Several metrics for the general and overall social media use can be identified. Analyzing social media data requires different kinds of techniques and the application of new kinds of metrics (Quiring, 2011). Several types of metrics can be identified (Quiring, 2011):

- **Volume (Buzz):** Volume is the most basic metric and it gives an indication of the issues interest to the public. This involves measuring the change in volume after a certain event or campaign which will then provide the organization with insights in how their social media campaign has changed the way customers are speaking about them.
- **Topics:** This entails measuring the volume around certain words, such as the name of an organization. The next step in this process is to take those topics being mentioned, and then measuring the volume (as well as the change in volume) around each of these topics.
- **Sentiment:** Measuring the sentiment of customer's discussions can be immensely valuable. Identifying the sentiment towards an organization's brand, products and services can provide insights into what parts of its business customers like, dislike and are neutral about. This does require text-mining technology and a know-how of how to do this.
- **Topic sentiment:** Topic volume and overall sentiment are useful measures by themselves, but the combination is often what provides the more actionable insights. Topics in this context also refer to features of products or services.

4.10.2 Using specific metrics per business function

Companies and managers have long attempted to identify and track key performance indicators in order to measure success. This is something which also needs to be done when it comes to social media. The problem is that traditional metrics for reach and awareness are still viewed by marketers as critical to measuring success (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011). Key performance indicators in social media should all be dependent on the individual organization and its goals (Ahlberg, 2010). However, given the power of digital platforms to measure conversion from clicks, to click-through, to actual purchases, the suggestion can be made that traditional metrics only tell a small part of the story (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Traditional metrics can be used, but it can be suggested that new metrics such as for example the number of Facebook 'likes' get incorporated as well. Several examples:

When it comes to measuring the social media returns in marketing and sales, it is difficult to put a finger on hard numbers. Organizations should not focus solely on hard numbers such as increases in sales. Businesses should also measure longer term goals such as reducing quarter costs by improving customer service using social platforms, and increasing brand recognition with social media promotions. Not all social media efforts can (or should) be measured in Euro signs (Casserly, 2010) (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). When running a commercial campaign on television, and a commercial campaign on social media, it will be difficult for an organization to measure which part of the increase in sales comes from the television and which part comes from the social media (Safko & Brake, 2010). However, some tools are available to measure the return on investment for brands that advertise to social networks. A group called Syncapse measured spending in Facebook fans of a product versus non-fans over a couple of years. Fans spent more than non-fans and were more likely to be loyal to the brand (Stockman, 2010) (McEleny, 2010). However, as the length of the research suggests, this type of metric takes long to operationalize (Stockman, 2010).

In customer service, social media ROI can be identified by looking at the service provision to the customer. Just as they measure how well customer complaints are handled in traditional channels, companies must consider their performance in addressing negative sentiments generated via social media. The media response unit needs to be measured on how well it resolves customer problems coming to the attention through social media. Social media complaints are much harder to categorize, track and resolve. Three metrics can be used here which are different from those used in traditional call centers: The mood of the people who talk about the company via social media channels, the level of advocacy among customers, and how well a company can identify complaints that stump the social media crowd and bring those issues in-house for effective handling (Sadowski, 2011). Using web-crawlers and others tools the customer service department can collect, categorize, and measure the number of complaints aired every day with sufficient accuracy (Sadowski, 2011). Aside from measuring these things, one can consider looking at easier and more traditional metrics such as the time it takes to handle an issue related to a customer, how many issues are handled per day, and so forth (Sadowski, 2011).

In order to measure the return on investment in using social media internally, Ward (Ward, 2006) suggests measuring quantifiable outcomes such as: paper use, hardware cost, headcount and sales figures. Softer outcomes are less simple to measure and include for example: customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction and employee productivity.

When measuring the success of social media in Human Resource, one could look at the traditional metrics used. For example the cost per new recruit, the amount of new leads, and the time it takes to recruit new employees. Measuring the ROI of social media in recruitment is very tangible (Gehring, 2011).

4.10.3 Using social media to strengthen original KPI's and metric measurements

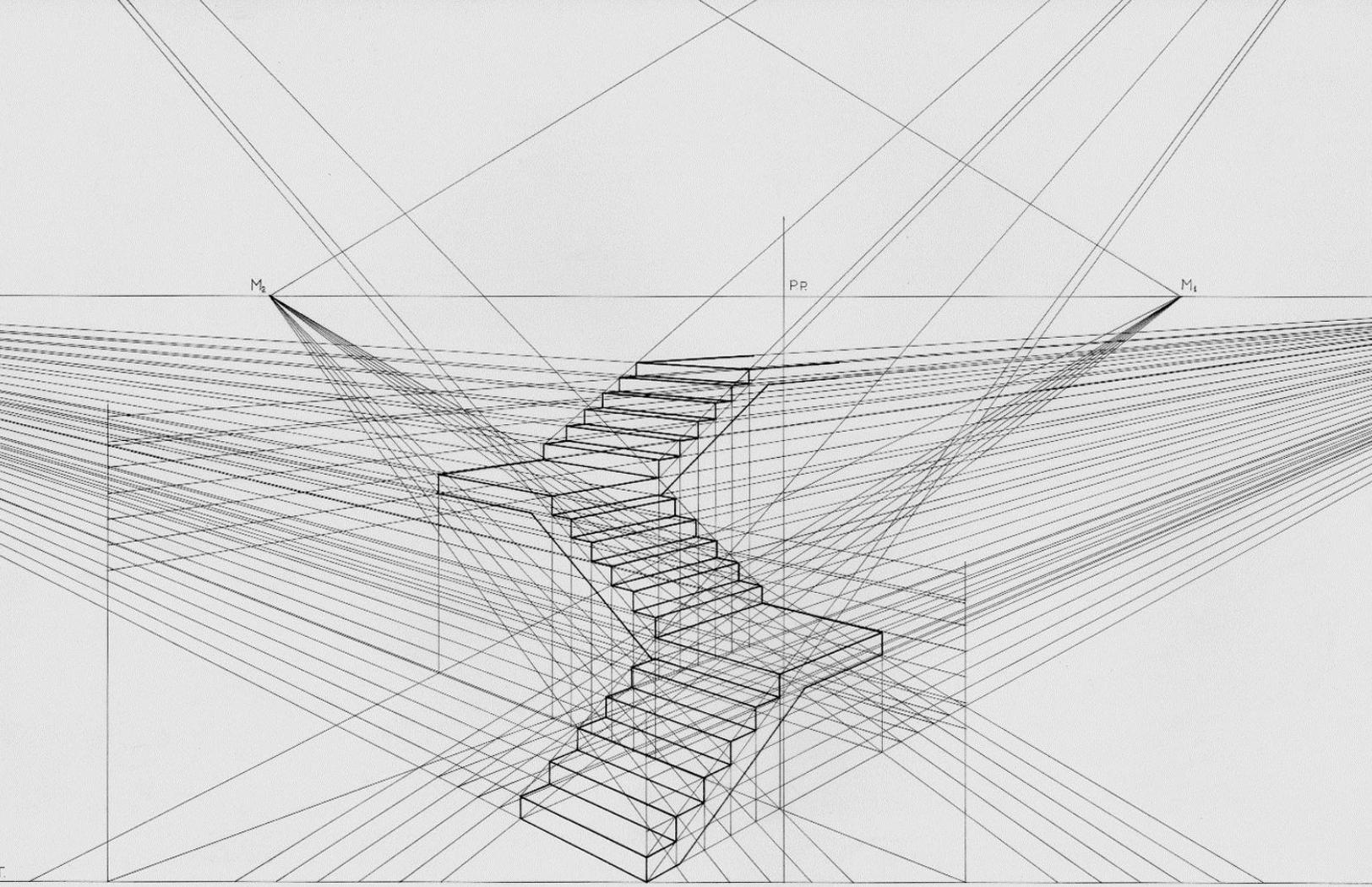
Aside from measuring the overall success of the social media activities, one can also use social media itself as a means to measure original (traditional) organization KPI's and metrics. A good example of such a metric that almost transforms into a new metric due to social media is customer health. Social media can be a great tool for measuring the overall customer health of an organization (Quiring, 2011). Customer health is the holistic measurement of a customer's real and potential value to an organization (Quiring, 2011). When attempting to measure customer health, the organization should focus on measuring four things: what customers tell an organization, what customers tell others, what customers show others, and what customers show an organization. On all of those four levels the organization needs to gather the data as much as possible. With the rise of social media, organizations have been given a very easy tool to measure what the customer shows and tells others. This opens up a new perspective on the customer that the organization was previously unable to see (Quiring, 2011). It consists of what customers are saying about the organizations brand, products and services to one another. Customer sentiment monitoring is one way to get a view into this type of customer health data. Just because the organization can gather, integrate and analyze this customer data doesn't mean it can gain customer insight effectively. Generating insights is one of the most challenging activities for companies to perform on a consistent, operational basis (Quiring, 2011). Examples of analysis could be that the organization attempts to find groups of high-potential customers and shifts their attention towards them. Once the organization has found the data they are interested in, it is time for them to act upon it. The organization should always focus on increasing the health of the customer base. There are always new faces, new places and new spaces for an organization to address in the pursuit of growth and this results in new levels of customer health to aspire to (Quiring, 2011).

4.10.4 Benefits and risks of social media return on investment measuring

Using social media and measuring returns on investment with help of social media provides the organization with the following benefits (Quiring, 2011) (Smith, Wollan, & Zhou, 2011) (Meyerson, 2010) (Safko & Brake, 2010):

- The ability to calculate the returns on new social media activities. This allows the organization to evaluate, change and optimize their social media use
- Provides the organization with better marketing, customer service, and research and development investments
- Gain more powerful customer insights
- Greater accuracy and timeliness when it comes to augmenting traditional KPIs and metric measurement with social media.

No direct disadvantages or risks have been found with regard to social media measurements.



Forming the literature model

5. Forming the literature model

With the literature study complete, it is time to put all of the found results into perspective. The goal is to create a first draft of the model, without considering rankings of maturity. The result is a model which displays the potential focus areas of social media, and the potential capabilities associated with those focus areas. The purpose of this model is to use it in the expert interviews and group sessions to validate whether or not the focus areas and potential capabilities are correct, and to use this literature-based model as a base to construct the final maturity model with.

5.1 Three phases

When looking at chapter 4, the literature study, there is an order in which an organization should implement social media. For nearly each department (marketing and sales, customer service, and so forth) there is a distinction between some form of 'planning' for social media and some form of 'doing' social media. In nearly every chapter, some planning or preparatory work which the organization has to do has been identified. Once that planning is completed, the organization can start using social media correctly. Afterwards, there is some form of evaluation for the organization to be done in terms of return on investment, and measuring certain metrics and KPI's. When putting this in perspective, we can broadly define three phases that organizations pass through when using social media: a planning phase, a phase where the organization starts doing social media and starts interacting on it, and an evaluation phase where the organization checks the results of their social media efforts. The fact that these three phases are address in an order does not mean this says anything about maturity. Nor does this mean that an organization always has to start with the planning phase. The following phases are identified, based on the literature study results in chapter 4:

5.1.1 Plan

It is clear that each department, regardless of where social media is being deployed, has to deal with some form of social media planning. On the simplest level it entails looking at goals, objectives and strategy. On the highest level this can deal with aligning the business strategy to social media use, and ensuring a full training for all employees. Aside from broad, organization wide planning, the organization should also plan within the departments where social media is to be implemented, on a more specific level.

5.1.2 Interact

In this phase, the organization starts to build their own network, establishes their own community, starts to promote on social media, and slowly starts integrating social media into their way of working. The organization starts developing social media marketing campaigns, starts reacting to customers through social media, slowly starts collecting customer feedback on their product developments, and starts to recruit through social media. Once the organization has incorporated social media in their way of working, the organization starts to really use social media to differentiate itself from the others. They can use their social media presence to make it part of a multi-channel customer engagement where they develop strategies that engage and empower customers and business partners to participate in the company's day-to-day business operations. A company usually starts linking several platforms together in this phase and they will focus on creating a social media platform that integrates several of the earlier proposed suggestions.

5.1.3 Evaluate

In this phase, the organization measures its success and performance to gain insights in how well they are adhering to the goals they identified in the plan phase. This involves checking if certain goals are met, but also using social media to measure other types of metrics or KPI's.

These phases are iterative. Social media constantly evolves, so do the customers, so does the organization, and so does the environment. Social media grows every day with more users, and this provides the organization with new options to constantly increase their social media efforts. However, with every new step the organization takes, they will need to return to updating their plan, interacting, and evaluating the new social media goals afterwards. Thus we clearly see that while the organization might be in its evaluation phase with one initiative, they could be in their planning phase with another.

5.2 Creation of the literature based model.

The three phases (visually shown in figure 3) clearly show that the organization goes through a process when it comes to social media. Inside all of these phases, the organization can do several things within several departments. In the social media model, the aspects relating to the things the organization can do to properly implement social media are shown as focus areas. For example: when an organization wants to use social media in marketing and sales, they need to specifically plan for social media in marketing and sales context. This more specific planning for marketing and sales is an aspect the organization will need to properly implement in order to successfully conduct social media for marketing and sales. As such, this is identified as a focus area. This relates to the idea of focus areas and capabilities as proposed by van Steenberg et al. (2010) as explained in chapter 3. Within those focus areas the organization has goals, results or implementations they need to achieve with regards to their social media efforts. These goals, results and implementations, are referred to as capabilities in the maturity model. For example, in the focus area marketing and sales planning (this means that this concerns the marketing and sales focus area within the planning phase), the organization can implement a social media strategy for marketing and sales. This social media strategy is considered a capability. All of the possible capabilities, in each of the possible focus areas, are used to form the social media model in figure 4. This model, based on the literature, will be used in the next steps of the research.

The first model describes what the three social media phases look like visually. These are the three phases the organization goes through when it comes to social media. These phases come forth from the business strategy, as it is important for an organization to link their social media efforts to their business strategy.

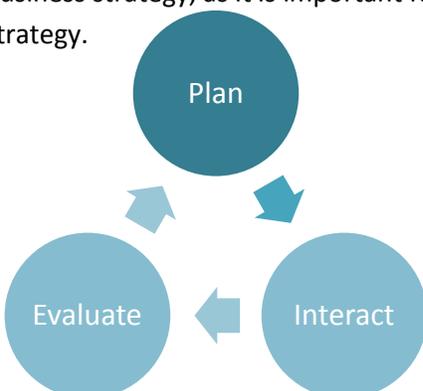


Figure 3: Social media phases

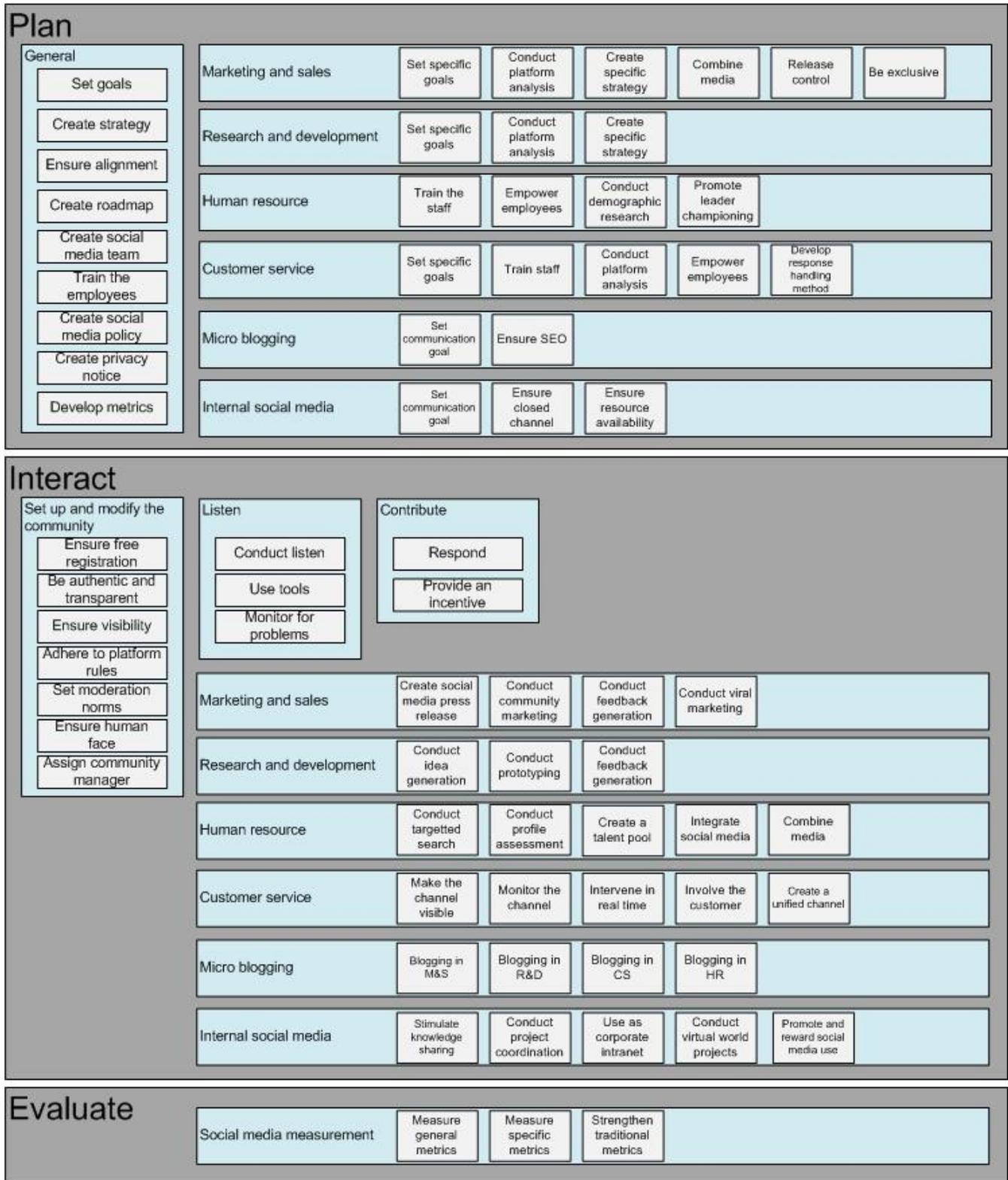


Figure 4: Literature based model

The second model (figure 4), describes the potential focus areas, and the potential capabilities which will be used and validated in the interviews and group sessions in more detail. This is basically the global model in figure 3, but then zoomed in on the three different phases. It is important to note that this is not the final model. This is an in-between model which highlights the findings in the literature and places them in the context of the focus area maturity matrix. It clearly shows several different focus areas (the blue boxes) and their associated capabilities inside them (light-grey). These focus areas and capabilities inside the model are all based on the findings in the literature and are not yet validated by experts in interviews and group sessions. This model needs to be interpreted top down, from left to right, for each dark-grey square. Aside from that, five focus areas should always be addressed, regardless of what kind of social media efforts are required:

- General planning
- Set-up and modify the community
- Listen
- Contribute
- Social media measurement

This means, that when an organization announces that they wish to do social media only for their marketing and sales department, they should look at the five focus areas just explained, and they should look at the specific marketing and sales department focus areas in the planning and interact phase. Obviously, starting at the planning phase, and then moving down to the evaluate phase.



Constructing the maturity model

6. Constructing the maturity model

The construction of the maturity model is done by means of expert interviews and group sessions. When it comes to the maturity decisions, two types of maturity need to be taken into account. First of all there is the difference in maturity amongst the different capabilities. Second, the maturity between the identified focus areas needs to be addressed (for example: is doing marketing and sales, more mature than doing customer service?). In order to create the maturity model, a total of fourteen interviews are held amongst experts at Accenture. The interviews are also used as a validation of the literature based model. Furthermore, to add more refinement and deal with the maturity between the identified focus areas, group sessions will be held. In these group sessions, the changes to the model based on the interviews will be validated one last time, and the placement of the capabilities on the maturity matrix will be addressed.

6.1 Interviews

As explained earlier in chapter 3, the interviews are held at Accenture's ITO Tower in Amsterdam. The first step in the interview sessions is to find the experts who would be willing to participate in the interview. The method suggested by Okoli & Pawlowski (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004) has been selected to make this selection. In total, five steps needed to be undertaken to find the experts willing to participate.

6.1.1 Step one: Creation of a Knowledge Resource Nomination Worksheet

The first step in the process is to create a Knowledge Resource Nomination Worksheet (KRNW). The nomination worksheet helps in setting out potential areas in which experts can be found (see table 2). This Knowledge Resource Nomination Worksheet is defined within the scope of the thesis project:

Disciplines or Skills	Organizations	Related Literature
Practitioners	Accenture	Books
Organizations	Accenture Clients	Online blogs
	Organizations engaged in active social media use	

Table 2: KRNW for the social media maturity matrix

The discipline or skills section describes the areas in which the experts participating in this validation will be categorized. The practitioners section encompasses those that actively use social media on a daily basis. This means an employee at for instance an organization who has to use social media for recruitment purposes, or any other business-related use of social media. Accenture has several experts on social media working at their organization. Aside from that, Accenture has several clients that currently use social media in a certain way. Experts can be found there.

6.1.2 Step two: Populating the KRNW with names

The second step in the selection process is to populate the KRNW with names. During this phase, people who work actively with social media will be contacted and added to the list. Therefore anyone currently engaged in social media in a business context or research context is to be considered a potential candidate for this list. Once the list is filled, we can continue selecting the experts by continuing to steps 3-5. The table 3 describes the potential experts.

Accenture
Jos van Dongen
Marije Gast
Wilko Wielinga
Ronald Verschoor
Aard-Jan van Kesteren
Otto Pettinga
Robbert Engelen
Sjoerd Gehring

Table 3: expert selections

6.1.3 Step three: First round contact – nominations for additional experts

After contacting the experts in table 3 for their participation, those that were interested in participating were asked whether they knew others that might be interested. This brought in the experts found in the first column of table 4. Who brought them to the research project is named in the second column of table 4.

Name	Brought in by
Angela Gordon	Marije Gast
Jort Possel	Sjoerg Gehring
Sander Poelman	Jos van Dongen
Michel Bieze	Jos van Dongen
Peter van Schaijck	Jos van Dongen
Marnick van Kilsdonk	Jos van Dongen
Paul van Balen	Jos van Dongen
Wouter Balm	Wilko Wielinga
Thierry Marcel Wesseling	Wilko Wielinga
Cindy Yim	Otto Pettinga
Marcel van der Heijden	Paul van Balen
Sander van Vliet	Paul van Balen
Olivier van Bloemendaal	Ronald Verschoor
Chiel Muurling	Marije Gast

Table 4: Nominations for additional experts

6.1.4 Step four: Ranking experts by qualifications

In this step, the experts should be ranked in accordance to their qualifications. However, this step is based on conducting an NGT session with around 50 respondents (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004). Since the amount of experts is nowhere near that amount, and the domain currently being researched is so new, all experts have been invited to join the study.

6.1.5 Step five: inviting the experts to the study

As explained in the previous step, all experts have been invited to join the study. Out of those experts, a total of 14 responded that they would be willing to participate in the interviews and potentially the group sessions. The experts that have participated in the research are listed in table 5.

Expert Name
Ronald Verschoor
Aard-Jan van Kesteren
Angela Gordon
Robert Engelen
Jos van Dongen
Wilko Wielinga
Marije Gast
Sjoerd Gehring
Cindy Yim
Sander van Vliet
Chiel Muurling
Olivier van Bloemendaal
Thierry Wesseling
Marcel van der Heijden

Table 5: Experts participating in the interview sessions and group sessions

The experts have different fields of expertise. Table 6 denotes the different kinds of experts participating in the research.

Expert	Number of Experts
General	3
Marketing & Sales	3
Human Resource	2
Products	2
CRM	4

Table 6: Expert-breakdown based on their background

After the experts had been invited, the interviews started. On average, the interviews took around three hours to complete. All interviews have been recorded and transcribed. A sample interview transcription and sample photos associated to the interviews can be found in appendix 4.2 & 4.3.

6.1.6 Interview Results

In every interview, the experts gave their ideas and views on the social media maturity model. They suggested several changes, some of which were supported heavily by others, and some of which were not supported by others at all. Based on all the suggestions made by the experts, table 7 has been constructed. The first column of this table shows the suggestions made by every expert with regard to new focus areas, new capabilities, changes in focus areas, and changes in capabilities. The next column shows the number of experts that support these claims. The next column shows whether or not this has been taken into consideration with the next version of the social media maturity model. The last column shortly describes the reason why. More detail for each implemented change will be described after the table. All changes forthcoming from the interview sessions will be validated again in the group sessions. All experts participating in the group sessions will be allowed to comment on the changes regardless of whether they suggested it. This ensures that there are no negative feelings with regard to implemented changes.

6.1.6.1 Suggested changes to the model

Because of the different nature of the experts when it comes to their fields of expertise, and the fact that this research deals with the creation of something on which little literature is available, 5 experts agreeing on a suggested change is the criteria for at least taking the suggested change ‘to the next round’ and thus into the group sessions (where these changes will be validated again). It is important to note here, that experts commenting on their field-related issues are considered to have more weight when it comes to their opinions. This decision process can be graphically displayed with a decision tree used to make these decisions (figure 5):

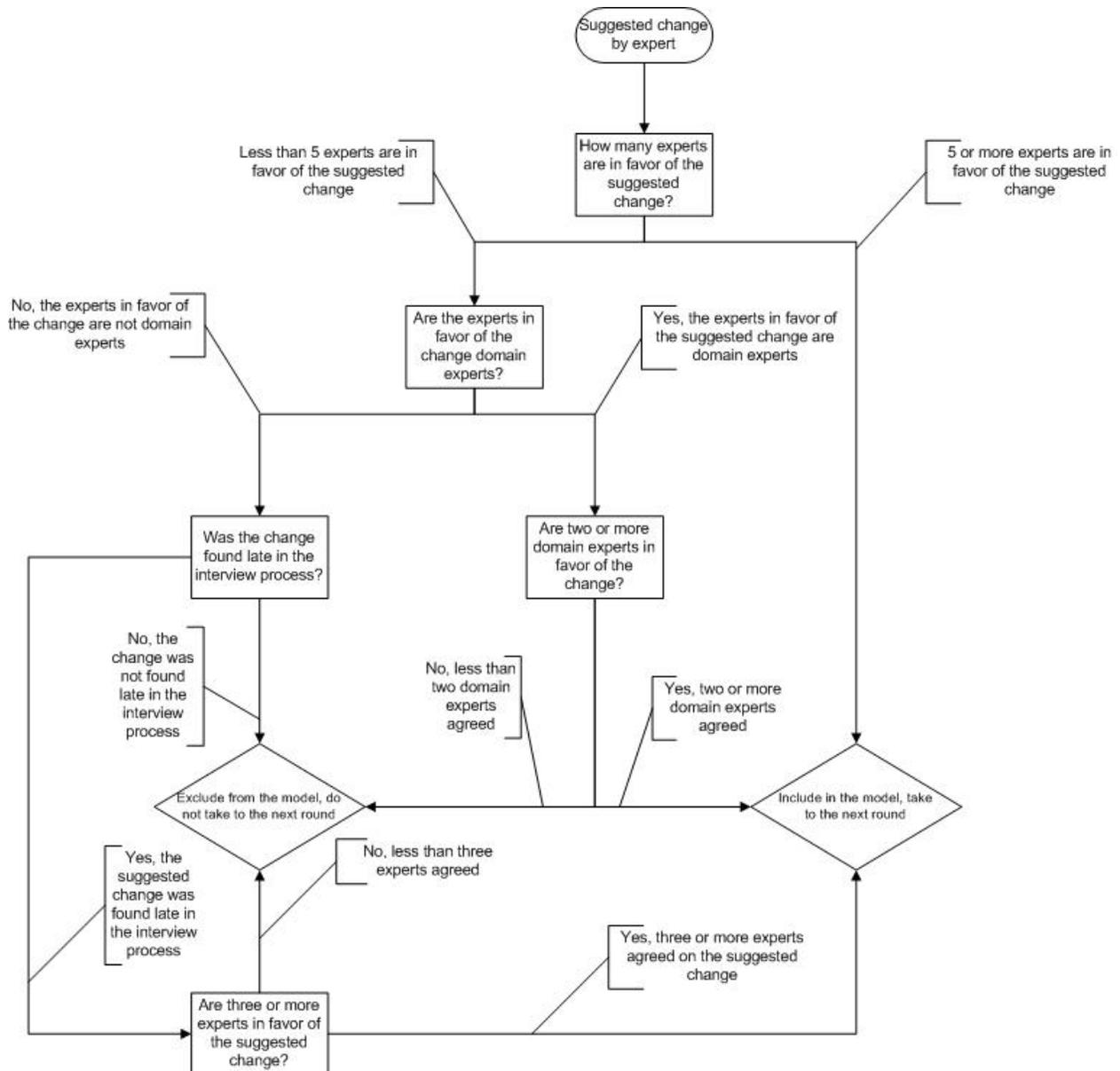


Figure 5: Decision tree for change-acceptance

The reasoning behind the different sub-steps is the following. When a change gets suggested, the first thing is to look at how many experts agree (which does not mean that other experts disagree, they simply did not mention the suggested change during their interview). If there are five or more, this change will be implemented and taken ‘to the next round’ (the group sessions). If a suggested change does not have five experts who mentioned the change, the next thing to look at is whether or not the experts who do mentioned it are domain experts. If that is the case, this could be a domain specific social media related issue, meaning not all experts will know about this. Therefore, extra attention is given to suggested changes by domain experts. If two experts in the same domain agree on a suggested change, then it is taken to the next round. In that round, the group can decide on whether or not they agree with the suggested change and it can still be reversed if needed. Working this way is important because it ensures important concepts will not be missed. When there are no five experts agreeing on a change and no domain experts are agreeing on it either, then the last thing is to look at the point in the interview sessions where this suggested change has been found. If it is found late in the interview (for example at the 11th of the 14th interview) and not five but four experts agree, one could argue that the change should at least be considered in the next round in order to ensure that important concepts are not missed. Therefore if a suggested change is found late in the interview sessions, it is also included if three or more experts agree. Three has been chosen because of the fact that if the suggested change was found in the later stage of the interview sessions, this implies that eight of the fourteen interviews have already been conducted, leaving only 6 more to remain. If half of those agree on a suggested change, it should be considered. If there are any negative feelings toward these ‘late’ suggested changes in the group sessions, they can be undone. If none of the three potential situations applies, then the change is not included in the model and will not be taken to the next round. It is important to note that the decision tree has only been used with changes relating to the focus areas and capabilities directly. For suggestions concerning name changes or visual issues, the decision tree has not been used.

Table 7 consists of all of the suggested changes made by the experts.

Suggested Change	Support by number of experts	Added to the model	Reason
(Focus area) Change the micro-blogging focus area to a communication / PR focus area	7	Yes	7 experts agreed
(Focus area) Change the planning phase into a planning and a set-up phase	2	No	2 experts agreed
(Focus area) Move Set-Up / Modify the community to the planning phase	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Focus area) Add a Business Intelligence focus area	4	Yes	No majority, but found late in the interview process. Interesting enough to validate in business
(Focus area) Add the internal use focus area under the Human Resource department lead	5	Yes	5 experts agreed
(Focus area) Add an integration focus area to support integration and creation of a unified channel	4	Yes	No majority, but found late in the interview process. Interesting enough to validate in business
(Broad capability) Add a capability that deals with budget	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Broad capability) Add set goals and create strategy to all specific focus areas as well	8	Yes	8 experts in agreed
(Broad capability) Add training to all specific focus areas	7	Yes	7 experts in agreed
(Broad capability) Move leader championing to the general area	5	Yes	5 experts in agreed
(Broad capability) Add resource availability to ever specific focus area	1	No	1 expert in agreed

(Broad capability) Combine any guideline related capability under one specific capability	9	Yes	9 experts agreed
(Broad capability) Add trend watching as a capability	1	No	1 expert agreed
(General planning capability) Move community manager to the general planning phase	1	No	1 expert agreed
(General planning capability) Add capability for keeping someone responsible for efforts	2	No	1 expert agreed
(General planning capability) Denote a difference between goals and objectives	1	No	1 expert agreed
(General planning capability) Move ensure alignment to the evaluate phase	1	No	1 expert agreed
(General planning capability) Add the development of specific metrics	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Interact Capability) Broaden capability monitor for potential problems to monitor	5	Yes	5 experts agreed
(Listen capability) Combine listen and use tools	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Marketing and sales capability) Move release control and be exclusive to the use phase	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Marketing and sales capability) Move social media press releases to the communication/PR focus area should it be implemented	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Research and development) Add focus area co-creation	5	Yes	5 experts agreed
(Customer service capability) Add a capability that deals with front and back office alignment	2	Yes	2 experts agreed, however both are CRM experts and strongly encouraged this addition.
(Customer service capability) Change intervene in real time to intervene within a timeframe	3	Yes	3 experts agreed, however all are CRM experts. 3 out of 4 CRM experts agreed.
(Customer service capability) Remove ensure visibility	2	Yes	2 experts agreed, however both are CRM experts and strongly encouraged this change.
(Customer service capability) Remove monitor the service channel	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Internal social media use capability) Split promote / reward to add reward to the evaluate phase	1	No	1 expert agreed
(Evaluate capability) Add Analyze to the measurement capabilities	8	Yes	8 experts agreed

Table 7: proposed changes by the experts based on focus areas and capabilities

The first change that has been made is the change of the focus area first called ‘micro-blogging’. This focus area was not defined clearly and did not provide an accurate coverage of which part of the business was affected by it nor which aspect of social media maturity this truly was. All other focus areas all dealt with a certain aspect of the organization while ‘micro-blogging’ did not. Aside from that, for every focus area it is more or less clear which department is responsible for implementing the capabilities. With ‘micro-blogging’ this wasn’t clear. Another argument against ‘micro-blogging’ is that it’s a focus area which actually is a form of social media use. All the other focus areas were mapped to actual parts of the organization where social media should be implemented. During the interviews, a lot of experts suggested changing it to a ‘communications and public relations’ focus area because this department usually deals with micro-blogging and selection of social media techniques. Because of this reason, the focus area has been changed. This entails the deletion of the ‘micro-blogging’ focus area, and the creation of a new focus area: communication and public relations. When asked if the experts in favor of this change could think of potential capabilities, all of them agreed on needing goals, a strategy and a clear idea of the required platform. Aside from this, the experts concluded that the ‘social media press releases’ capability would fit better in this focus area than in the marketing and sales focus area. These changes have been added to the model. It is important to note that only those experts that suggested this change have been asked if they could identify potential capabilities.

The second change that has been added is the addition of a ‘Business Intelligence’ focus area both in the plan phase and the interact phase. Many experts claimed they missed something that dealt with

analyzing internal data found through social media, and monitoring of certain aspects of the social media use. During several interviews the term Business Intelligence has been brought forward. Based on this, a new focus area has been created. When the experts that mentioned business intelligence as a potential focus area were asked about potential capabilities, none of them were truly able to identify them. They just felt that business intelligence was something important to take to the group sessions and business validation to see if more information could be elicited on it there.

The third change has been the change of the 'internal social media' focus areas to the 'internal human resource' focus area. During several interviews, a debate arose which part of the organization would be responsible for the internal changes. Most of the experts initiating this debate agreed that it would be the human resource department. With every focus area it is clear which part of the business is responsible. When it comes to the 'internal social media' focus area, it was not clear. By placing it under human resource, this becomes much clearer. This is why this change has been added.

The fourth change has been the addition of the 'integration' focus area in the interact phase. One of the experts mentioned that when an organization would reach his highest maturity state, they would have integrated social media in their already existing systems. Instead of adding a specific capability in every different focus area, it was discussed that perhaps it would be better to have an integration focus area, as that could also focus on ensuring consistency amongst the different social media platforms. Several other experts came up integration related focus areas as well (social media system integration, consistency amongst all social media platforms by means of proper integration of all channels, adjusting legacy systems to match social media use, and so forth). Thus it has been added to the model. Integration here means the integration of social media into the organizations system, and the integration of consistent social media channels within the organizations operations.

The next change has been to add 'specific strategy', 'training' and 'goals' to every specific focus area in the plan phase. Obviously every department had need for certain goals and a way to get to said goals. Adding to that, every department needs to ensure their staff is properly trained when it comes to social media use. A lot of the experts agreed on this and brought this forward in their interviews.

The next change was adding the 'leadership championing' capability to the 'general' focus area in the plan phase. Generally, an organization needs someone who takes the lead when it comes to starting to use social media. This person can be seen as the person who takes the lead when it comes to social media use and implementation. At first it was just in recruitment, but the experts agreed that this had to be brought to a more general part of the model since it is required for every department using social media.

The next change has been combining both the 'policy' capability and the 'privacy notice' capability in the 'general' plan focus area. This ensures that the model will be much clearer, but it also ensures that every capability covers the same thing: some form of deliverable or process. Having two different types of guideline related capabilities in the model creates unnecessary confusion. After combining the capabilities, the word 'policy' alone did not encompass the total meaning of the combined capability. Therefore, the capability has been renamed to 'social media principles' in order to cover both the policy part, and the privacy notices and guidelines part.

The next change has been to broaden the capability 'monitor for potential problems' to 'monitoring' in the 'listen' focus area in the interact phase. An organization conducting social media does not only monitor for potential problems. They monitor much more such as competition, certain keywords, and so forth.

The next change was to add a 'co-creation' capability to the research and development focus area in the interact phase. Early in the interviews it was found that the research and development focus area was missing an obvious co-creation capability as that is the essence of social media use in research and development. The experts agreed with this and almost all of them brought this forward in their interviews.

The next change has been to add the capability 'front and back-end alignment' in the customer service focus area in the interact phase of the model. This capability deals with aligning the front and back-end activities of the customer service department. While only two experts agree on this, they were two customer service experts who have significant experience in the social media domain. Because the two experts who identified this change are CRM experts and strongly encouraged to add this to the model based on their personal experience, this change has been added to the model to be taken to the next round.

The next change, again in the customer service focus area in the interact phase, has been to change the capability 'intervene in real time', to 'intervene within a timeframe'. 'Intervene in real time' already suggests a certain high-level maturity where intervene within a timeframe suggests the applicability of different kinds of maturity. Three experts agreed on this, but again, the experts agreeing were experts from the customer service domain. Adding to that, making this change makes a lot of sense because responding in real-time already suggests the highest possible maturity level when it comes to intervening on social media.

The next change, again in the customer service focus area in the interact phase, was to remove the capability 'make the service channel visible'. There is already a capability that deals with visibility in the general part of the 'interact' phase, and thus adding it in the customer service area would be double and unnecessary. Two experts agreed on this, but again, they were customer service experts. When considering the readability of the model: having two capabilities with the same meaning is not necessary.

The last change was to add 'analyze' to the measurement capabilities in the evaluate phase of the model. It is a good thing when an organization measures their metrics, but it is the analysis that really matters. When debating with the experts whether or not a new focus area should be added, the general consensus was that it would be sufficient to simply rename the capability to 'measure & analyze...' instead of adding a new focus area and cluttering the model.

Changes related to new focus areas, changes in focus areas, new capabilities and changes in capabilities have not been the only suggestions made by the experts. Several appearance and clarification related changes have been suggested as well. This can for instance be renaming a certain focus area to make it clearer. Table 8 describes all such suggestions made by the experts, and whether or not they have been implemented in the new version of the model.

Suggested Change	Support by number of experts	Added to the model
(Focus Area) Rename Evaluate	1	No
(General capability) Rename train employees to inform employees	2	Yes
(Marketing and sales capability) Put viral between brackets in viral marketing	1	No
(Marketing and sales capability) Rename combine traditional and social media to multi-channel approach	1	No
(Research and development capability) Rename feedback generation to something more specific	1	No
(Research and development capability) Rename prototyping to testing	1	Yes
(Interact capability) Rename use tools to workflow management	1	No

Table 8: Changes related to appearance and clarification

With regard to the appearance and clarification changes, two out of the seven suggestions have been implemented in the model. The suggestion to rename ‘train employees’ in the general planning section to ‘inform employees’ has been added to the model. This is due to the fact that the suggested training in the general planning consists of informing employees about social media use and the effects this has on the business. Considering the fact that there is also a ‘train the employees’ in each specific section next to the general planning phase, the ‘train the employees’ in the general planning phase itself has been renamed to ‘inform employees’ to create a more clear model.

The second change which has been added to the model is the renaming of the ‘prototyping’ capability in the specific research and development social media use. There was confusion about the ‘prototyping’ capability and whether or not it overlapped too much with the ‘co-creation’ capability. In order to ensure the clear difference between ‘prototyping’ and ‘co-creation’, this capability will be renamed to ‘prototype testing’. All other suggestions have not been taken into the model due to the lack of expert support, and the lack of validity with regard to the literature and model.

6.1.6.2 Deciding on the maturity

The experts participating in the interviews have been asked about their thoughts on how the capabilities could be properly placed in the order from low to high maturity. Every expert has been asked to lay down the cards to visualize the maturity from low to high, based on the technique described in chapter 3. Based on all the different outcomes, a table has been constructed which can be found in the appendix 4.4 due to its large size. The following figure (figure 6) shows a screenshot of a part of the model to illustrate how the placement process has been done.

Social media planning	Create Strategy	Create roadmap	Create Roadmap	Create privacy notices
	Ensure Alignment	Create strategy	Create roadmap	Create roadmap
	Form social media team	Create Strategy	Create Strategy	Create Roadmap [Empower Employees]
	Form social media team	Create Strategy	Create strategy	Create strategy
	Form social media team	Create strategy	Create Strategy	Develop Metrics
	Form Social Media team	Form social media team	Create strategy	Develop Metrics
	Form social media team	Set Goals	Develop metrics	Develop Metrics
	Set Goals	Set Goals	Ensure alignment	Develop Metrics
	Set Goals	Set goals	Ensure alignment	Develop metrics
	Set goals	Set goals	Ensure alignment	Develop metrics
	Set Goals	Set Goals	Set goals	Develop metrics
	Set goals	Set goals	Train employees	Train employees
	Social media marketing and sales preparation	Combine traditional and social media	Conduct platform analysis	Conduct platform analysis
Combine traditional and social media		Conduct platform analysis	Conduct platform analysis	Combine traditional and social media
Combine traditional and social media		Create specific strategy	Conduct platform analysis	Combine traditional and social media
Conduct platform analysis		Create specific strategy	Conduct platform analysis	Combine traditional and social media
Create specific strategy		Create specific strategy	Conduct platform analysis	Create specific strategy
Create specific strategy		Create specific strategy	Conduct platform analysis	Release control
Set specific goals		Create specific strategy	Conduct platform analysis	Release control / Combine traditional /
Set specific goals		Set specific goals	Create specific strategy	Release control / Combine traditional /
Set specific goals		Set specific goals	Set specific goals	Release control / Combine traditional /
Set specific goals		Set specific goals	Set specific goals	Set specific goals

Figure 6: Example of table 4.4, capability maturity

Table 4.4 in the appendix suggests the different opinions of the experts with regard to how the capabilities should be ordered with regards to maturity. In the table, the different capability maturity classifications are placed below each other (see example figure 6) to identify consensus between the different expert opinions. During the interview sessions, several new capabilities and focus areas have been identified by a group of experts. Every expert that mentioned these new potential capabilities was asked to also attempt to order those capabilities from low to high maturity. The experts that suggested new potential focus areas were asked to think of capabilities that could be placed inside this focus area, and then decide how they should be placed from low to high maturity. These suggestions have been added to the table in appendix 4.4 as well. An example of this is co-creation. Early on it was found that ‘co-creation’ was a potential new capability in the research and development focus area. Every expert that mentioned ‘co-creation’ was asked whether they could put it on the maturity scale as well. Experts that did not mention this capability were not asked to put it on the maturity scale. This is the reason why there are five experts that have placed co-creation in a maturity perspective. It is important to note that not all experts were able to provide insights in maturity with regard to certain focus areas. Aside from that, two out of the 14 experts did not provide their thoughts on the maturity due to time constraints on their behalf. Another two of the 14 experts did not lay down the cards with the capabilities on them due to time-constraints but did provide a capability maturity sketch. A good example would be a recruiting expert not being able to provide insights into the marketing and sales focus area with regard to maturity. For this reason, some of the focus areas lack one or two expert opinions. As can be seen in the table in the appendix 4.4, the consensus on the majority of the model is large, while on some specific areas, there are some different opinions. Fortunately, by looking at the different capabilities, a pattern was quickly found by a combined effort to both look at the majority of the opinions, opinions based on expert backgrounds, and looking at the capabilities in the maturity level before and after the capability in question. The following two scenarios describe the decision making process:

Scenario 1: Capability A and Capability B both have four experts in favor for placing the capability on a certain spot. By looking at the capabilities before and after capability A and B, it is found that capability B has five experts in favor of placing it on the next maturity level. Thus, the decision is easily made. Capability A is placed on the current spot where it had four experts in favor, and capability B is placed on the next maturity level where it has five experts in favor.

Scenario 2: Capability A and Capability B both have four experts in favor of placing the capability on the current maturity scale, and looking forward and backwards yields no insights in placing the capability correctly. By further investigating Capability A, it is found that it has four CRM experts agreeing that it should be on this maturity level. Since the focus area happens to be a customer-service related focus area, the choice is made to favor the opinions of the CRM experts over the other experts and capability A is placed on the current maturity level.

The final result of combining all of the expert opinions, sorting them, and then looking for consensus is found in the table in appendix 4.4. When the capability is marked green, then that is the spot where the capability will be placed in relation to the other capabilities. When combining the findings of the table in appendix 4.4, with all of the above added changes, the new model for social media maturity based on the expert interviews is found. Figure 7 on the next page shows this model. The capabilities in the general focus areas are sorted by maturity from top to bottom. The capabilities in the specific focus areas are sorted by maturity from left to right. The capabilities and focus areas have been renamed to more accurately match with the definitions of focus areas and capabilities as defined by van Steenbergen et al. (2010). It is important to note that the final placement of these capabilities, and all changes based on the expert interviews that have been added to the model, will be validated one last time during the group sessions to ensure all experts agree with the maturity model.

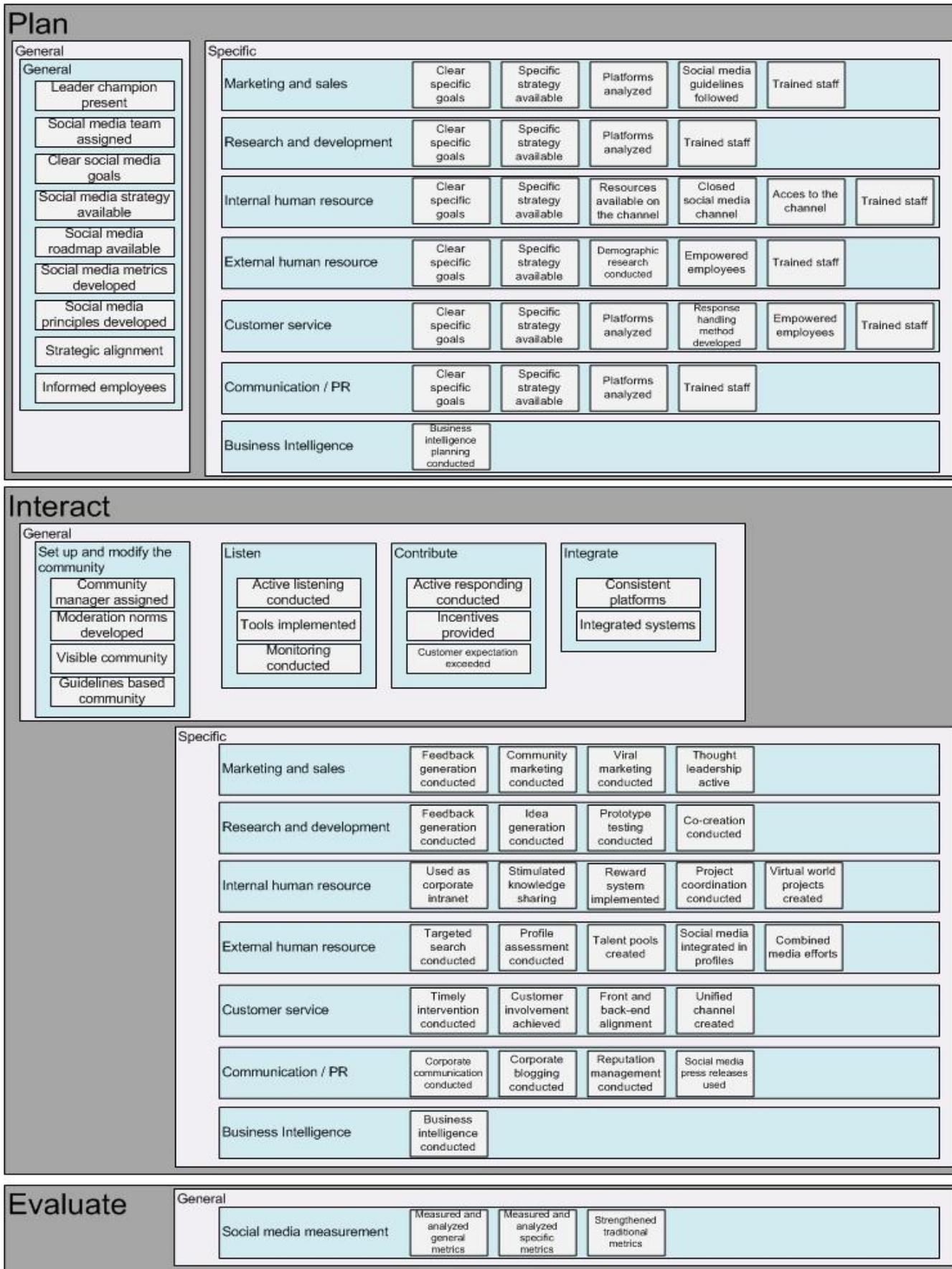


Figure 7: Interview based social media maturity model

6.2 Group sessions

Now that the model has been roughly completed, the only thing remaining to be done is to validate the suggested changes in the group sessions, and make the placement of the capabilities and focus areas on the maturity scale final. The order of the capabilities from low to high maturity has already been decided on in chapter 6.1 (see figure 7). This chapter focusses on the placement of the different focus areas and capabilities on the actual maturity scale (setting clear goals, means having a maturity score of 'x' and then having a strategy installed, means having a maturity score of 'y').

In order to validate the suggested changes, and find the maturity, two group sessions were performed. The process for both group sessions has been explained in chapter 3. The first group session consisted of a group of five experts. The last session consisted of a group of four experts, however one of them called in sick on the last moment. In table 9, the experts present at the group sessions are described.

Expert Name	Session
Aard-Jan van Kesteren	1
Robert van Engelen	1
Marije Gast	1
Wilco Wielinga	1
Jos van Dongen	1
Sander van Vliet	2
Chiel Muurling	2
Olivier Bloemendaal	2
Thierry Wesseling	2 (Sick)

Table 9: Experts divided over sessions

Validation of the suggested changes

The groups have been asked to validate the suggested changes by looking at the model displayed in chapter 6.1 (figure 7). This validation process has been done the same way as the maturity placement process based on the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) (as explained in chapter 3). First the experts have been asked to write down if they feel something is wrong. After that every expert has been given the chance to speak about their thoughts. After every expert had spoken about what they wished to speak about, a discussion was started in order to find consensus. When no consensus had been reached, a vote round has been conducted.

Based on this validation, two changes have been found. The first thing that has been found in the group sessions is that it would be best to combine the capabilities 'resources available on the channel', 'closed social media channel' and 'access to the channel', into one capability. Motivation for this change is that they all cover the same aspect: some operational related capability based on having the right resources at the right time on the right channel. The experts felt it would be unnecessary to clutter the model with three capabilities when they could also be combined to one. Therefore, this capability has been combined to one capability named 'resource access on closed channel'.

A second change based on the group session validation is the 'combined media' capability in external human resource. The experts felt that this capability was not really a capability but more something that organizations will always do. An organization will never stop doing traditional external human resource, and completely focus on social media because both yield different kinds of results. Therefore, the

experts agreed that this capability had to be removed. As such, the capability has been removed from the model.

Other than those two changes, no negative feelings towards the changes in the model based on the expert interviews, and the model itself have been brought to light during the group sessions. All experts agreed with the model, provided the two previously discussed changes would be added.

Maturity decisions

Next, the groups have been asked to start considering the placement of the capabilities on the maturity scale. As explained in chapter 3, this is based on a NGT process. The sessions went extremely efficient, as it took two sessions to reach a consensus. The sessions started blank. There was no idea yet on how the maturity scale would develop (will it be 0-5, 0-10, 0-14?) and where the capabilities would be placed. The only thing aiding the experts are the tools described in chapter 3. The first and second group, agreed on roughly the same placement when it comes to the capabilities. Aside from that, they both agreed that the maturity scale would have to go from 0 to 20. Obviously there were some minor differences when it comes to the placement, but after the sessions were finished, there was a clear view of how the capabilities should be placed. The minor differences were later decided upon by a small group of people deciding on the last choices to be made, and what seemed to be most logical. Appendix 5 shows both placements made by groups one and two. Some capabilities have been placed on the same spot on the maturity scale. The experts agreed that while the capabilities have to be different (they found that it was needed to have a ‘platforms analyzed’ capability and a ‘specific strategy available’ capability), they should be placed on the same maturity scale because the difference in maturity between the two is marginal.

The second thing asked of the expert has been to group sets of capabilities to form so called social media maturity stages (for example, beginner, average, expert, stages an organization passes through). This way, an organization can see how well they do on for example the 1st stage, 2nd stage, 3rd stage and so on when it comes to implementing all capabilities related to those stages. Based on the maturity scale from 0 – 20, both groups were asked to attempt to group sets of capabilities on the maturity scale to match stages they would find useful. An example could be that for instance all capabilities on the scales 0 – 5 could form the first stage. Both groups agreed that four stages would be needed. The first group used the names: beginner, moderate, advanced, expert, and the second group used the names: starter, average, advanced, expert use. After a lot of discussion in both groups, the following results were found with regard to which capabilities would fit which of the four stages (tables 10 and 11):

Beginner	Moderate	Advanced	Expert
0-4	5-9	10-14	15-20

Table 10: Group 1 capability placement in maturity-stages

Starter	Average	Advanced	Expert use
0-4	5-10	11-15	16-20

Table 11: Group 2 capability placement in maturity-stages

These results show consensus in the first stage. The other three stages are different, due to a choice made to have the 'average' area range from 5 – 10. After careful consideration, the choice has been made to go for the placement made by group one. The motivation for this is that on maturity level 10, the start is made with social media measurement (focus area 'social media measurement', capability A). Once an organization is able to start measuring their social media efforts, this means that one cycle would have been completed (planning, interact and eventually evaluate). After coming in contact with the participants in group 2, and asking their opinion about that placement, they all agreed that the placement made by group 1 would be the best because of the social media measurement argument. Therefore the following placement is final and shows how each capability relates to a certain maturity stage of social media (table 12):

Stage	Capabilities on maturity scale
Beginner	0-4
Average	5-9
Advanced	10-14
Expert	15-20

Table 12: Social media maturity stages

With the suggested changes by the experts, the social media maturity model which will be used in the business validation looks as follows (figure 8):

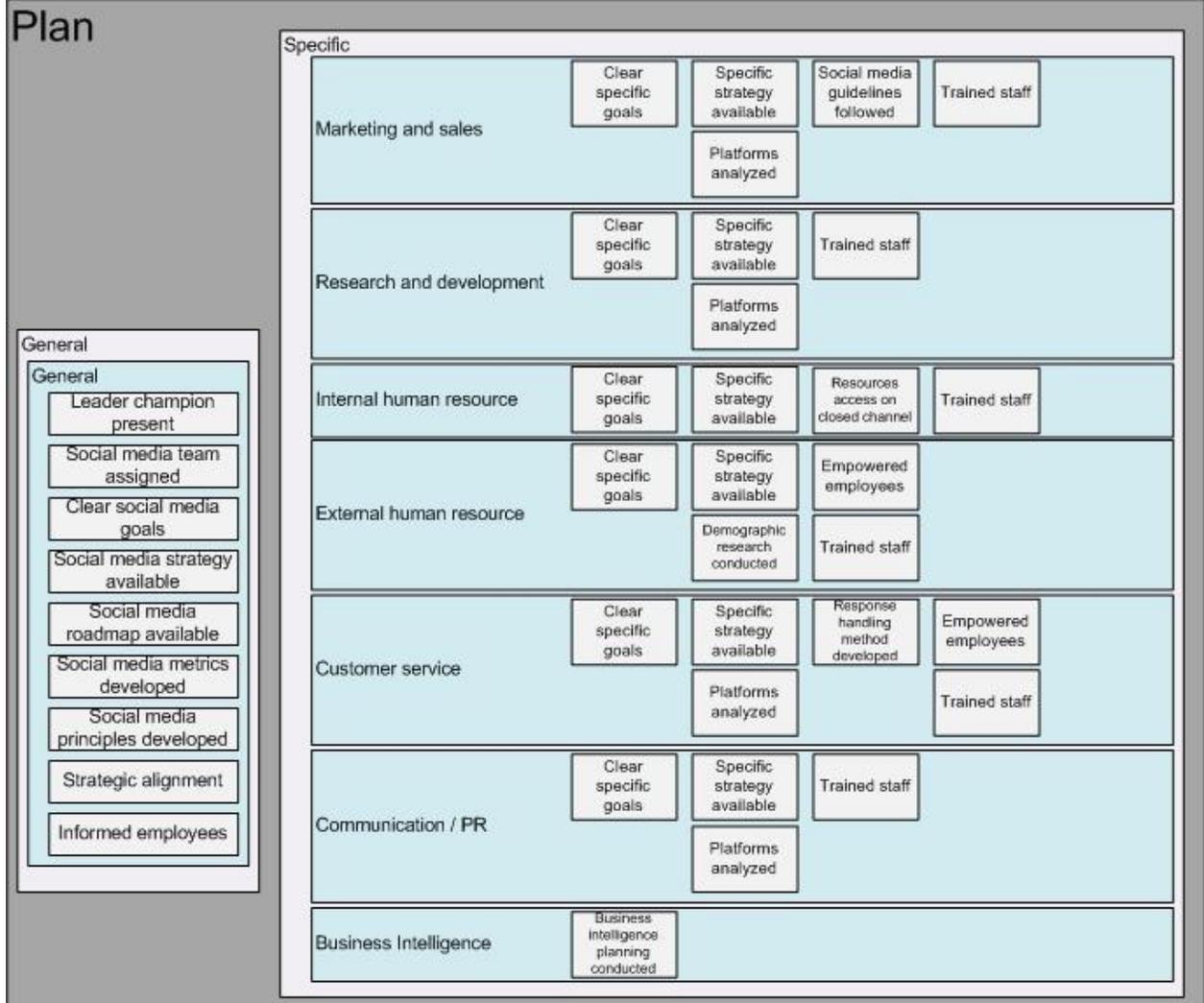


Figure 8: Social media maturity model based on group sessions

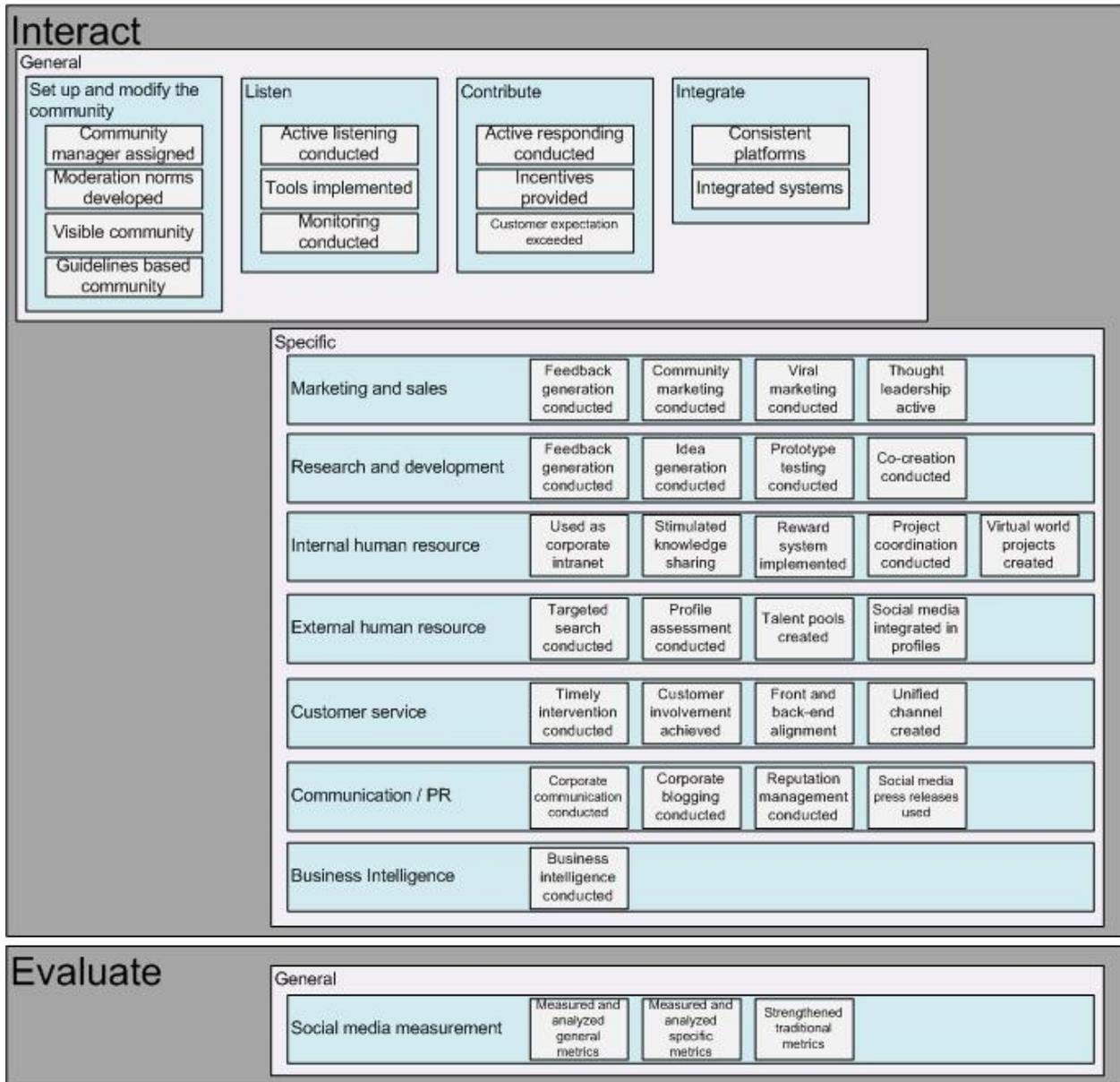


Figure 9: social media model based on group sessions

The model displayed in figures 8 and 9 and the maturity placements found in the group sessions (appendix 5) will be used in the next steps of the research. The social media tool will be constructed based on those figures.

6.3 Creating the tool

With the model completely filled out, the last step is to create the tool which will be used for the assessment and application of the model in organizations. The tool is created in Microsoft Excel. The choice for Excel is based on the usability of the program and the strengths of the program when it comes to query-based applications. Aside from that, using Excel ensures the tool can be dispersed quickly considering every organization these days has a computer which has Microsoft Excel.

The tool itself consists of a set of statements which have pre-defined answers which are used to create a set of tables and graphs which will show the maturity of the organization. As it stands now, the only thing needing to be checked is whether a certain capability is present within the organization or not. An example of such a statement would be the following. The capability 'social media strategy' is there to find out whether or not the organization has a social media strategy in place. The statement associated to this capability is: "There is a social media strategy implemented within the organization". The predefined answers which can be given to this statement are: "Yes", "No" and "N/A". Not applicable (N/A) means that the organization has deliberately chosen not to implement said capability. They do need to provide a good reason for not having done so however. For each capability one of those statements is defined. All statements and answers are placed on the first sheet of the Excel tool.

On the second sheet of the Excel file, the output is defined. The input in the first sheet is directly translated to a set of tables which show the presence or absence of capabilities, and a set of graphs which show the maturity of the organization with regard to the maximum score (blue graph is the organization, red graph is the maximum). Capabilities on this sheet are translated to single letters to avoid unnecessary clutter of the tables and model. An example would be that within the focus area "Set-up and modify" a set of four capabilities can be found: A, B, C and D. Each of these corresponds to a capability which is defined within the model. Which letter corresponds to which capability can be found in the documentary provided with the excel tool.

The third sheet of the Excel tool contains output by means of graphs. These graphs show how well the organization is doing in each focus area. This is done by means of radar plots for plan and interact, and a column diagram for evaluate (due to evaluate having only one focus area, which means a radar plot can't be used). These graphs clearly indicate how well an organization is doing. The fourth graph present in this sheet is the stage-graph which shows which percentage of that stage has been fulfilled based on the capabilities the organization has. For example, an organization could potentially score 80% in beginner, 75% in average, 70% in advanced, and 50% in expert.

The fourth sheet of the Excel tool contains the benchmark component of the tool. This consists of three large bar-graphs which display the maturity scores of the companies using the tool. Obviously, this section can be made anonymous on request. Aside from plotting the maturity scores of the companies participating, it also displays a bar which is the maximum attainable score with regard to maturity. This way, organizations can see how well they do and how well other organizations do.

The last sheet (which is actually a hidden sheet) details the logic behind the model. This is where the maturity calculations are made, and the decisions are made as to when a certain capability is

implemented, missing or not applicable. The logic consists of a series of nested if-statements which require no extra use of macro's, scripts or programming outside the ordinary standard Excel options.

In appendix 6, screenshots of the tool can be found.



Business validation

7. Business Validation

Validation of the model is done by means of applying the tool at several different organizations. The goal of the business validation is to find out whether or not the suggested focus areas and capabilities are used in businesses in the same way as suggested by the model, and whether or not the division of the focus areas and capabilities is correct. The process and reasoning is explained in chapter 3. It is important to note that when it comes to describing the social media maturity profiles, only the “basic” tables of the outcome are shown. The reason this is done is because of the sensitive nature and strategic information related to the social media use and information concerning social media efforts. The basic table only shows which capabilities have been implemented and does not show detailed information.

The business validation took place at several different organizations in several different industries. As explained in chapter 3, this is done to see if the model is broadly applicable and in order to get as much insights into the correctness of the model as possible. While in different industries, all organizations visited are larger organizations with 150+ employees (with the exception of the 50PlusBeurs), and all conduct some kind of social media. The organizations are different when it comes to their social media maturity. The interviews took place with either the social media manager, or the manager in charge of the social media efforts (not all organizations have given the name ‘social media manager’ to the person in charge of social media). Every validation session took roughly two hours: one hour to fill in the tool, and one hour for discussion and placement of the capabilities. In chapter 3, the validation session-questions and the course of the validation session have been explained. All validation sessions proceeded along those guidelines and were done in similar fashion.

The following organizations participated in the business validation:

- Robeco
- KLM
- Toyota
- De Financie Telegraaf
- VisitDenmark
- PlusMagazine
- Hyves
- 50PlusBeurs

As explained, the 50PlusBeurs does not have more than 150 employees. However, since the 50PlusBeurs is an expo, they actively engage over 100.000 customers. This makes them an interesting organization to look at.

The following section describes the outcome of the validation sessions. First, a short overview will be given of the organization and why they are using social media, second the maturity profiles will be discussed, third the feedback received from the interviewees will be discussed and last there will be a short conclusion. Following the business validation descriptions, a summary of all the received feedback and comments will be given.

7.1 Robeco

ROBECO

The Investment Engineers

Robeco, founded in Rotterdam in 1929, offers stock-products and services for institutional and private investors worldwide. The total of owned assets under management is around 150 billion Euros (as of December 31, 2010). Robeco stands for responsible investing. Factors in the field of environment, society and proper corporate governance are integrated in the investment processes and there is an exclusion policy. Robeco actively uses its suffrage and engages in dialogue with the companies it invests in. The average number of employees over 2010 is 1528.

The product mix consists of stocks and fixed-income, money market funds and alternative investments including private equity, hedge funds and structured products. The different strategies are maintained in Rotterdam (headquarters), Boston, Hong Kong, New York, Paris and Zurich.

For institutional and business clients, Robeco has offices in Bahrein, Great-China, Germany, France, Japan, Korea, Luxemburg, Spain, The United States and Switzerland. Robeco has a banking license in the Netherlands, where they sell directly to private customers. Robeco has an interest of 100% in Corestone in Zug (Switzerland), Harbor Capital Advisors (Chicago), Trandstend (Rotterdam) and in SAM Group (Switzerland). Aside from this, Robeco has interests in Canara Robeco Asset Management (49%) in Mumbai, and Robeco Teda (Tianjin, China). Robeco is part of the Rabobank group. De Rabobank is a worldwide leader when it comes to corporate social responsibility and durability.

7.1.1 The Interview

The interviewee at Robeco is Olivier van Bloemendaal. He is the social media manager at Robeco and is charged with the overall supervision of all social media efforts done by Robeco. He considers himself an expert when it comes to social media knowledge and is constantly trying to increase his knowledge on how to use social media for a business in the best possible way. He believes that Robeco will score very high when it comes to the use and application of social media, and very low when it comes to the planning of social media. As he puts it “We are doing a lot, but planning not so much. However, this is being worked on as we speak”. Robeco is currently developing their social media strategy and formalizing their goals.

Robeco primarily uses Twitter and LinkedIn as their preferred social media platforms. Twitter is used for a lot of different things including corporate communication, marketing and trend watching. LinkedIn is used for company branding and recruitment. Aside from this, they also have several LinkedIn groups. After filling in the model, the following maturity profile is found:

Focus Area \ Capability	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented	N/A	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Missing	Implemented
Marketing & Sales	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Customer Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Communication / Public Relations	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	N/A								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Integrate	Implemented	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	N/A	Implemented					
Research & Development	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Internal Human Resource	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Missing				
External Human Resource	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing					
Customer Service	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing					
Business intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Implemented	Missing						

Figure 10: Robeco maturity profile

The maturity score based on the model is indeed as Olivier has predicted. Robeco scores very high in the interact phase, and rather low (if applicable) in the plan phase. It clearly shows that while there is a lot of social media use, most of the planning for that use has not even been started.

7.1.2 Robeco model assessment

Olivier van Bloemendaal’s feedback on the model is very positive. When asking him about the completeness of the model, he said that he finds the model in its current state very complete. There is no lacking focus area and he thinks that it covers the use and application of social media extremely thorough. Aside from that, he suggests that it can be used extremely well as starting point for organizations to increase and improve their social media use. When asking him about the correctness of the different capabilities he said he had nothing to comment. The way the capabilities are placed on the

focus areas would also be the way he would apply social media within an organization. The planning which is currently being conducted at Robeco is also done nearly the same way it has been described in the model.

When asking him about the maturity ranking and the placement of the different capabilities on the maturity scale, he said that it matches his ideas about social media maturity. He had nothing to add or change to the model.

7.1.3 Conclusion

Robeco is a mature organization when it comes to the use of social media. With regard to their planning they still lack a couple of important capabilities. The overall reception of the model was good. Olivier van Bloemendaal had nothing to add with regard to completeness and correctness, nor did he have anything to add when it comes to the maturity placement of the capabilities. One suggestion by Olivier, which is not of any relevance to the research, is to turn this model into a book. He thinks there is a lot of money to be made.

7.2 Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM)



Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM) was founded on 7 October, 1919 to serve the Netherlands and its colonies. KLM is the oldest airline still operating under its original name today. KLM has been part of the AIR FRANCE KLM group since the merger in 2004. KLM is the core of the KLM Group, which further includes the wholly-owned subsidiaries KLM Cityhopper, transavia.com and Martinair.

With Air France, KLM is at the forefront of the European airline industry. Offering reliability and a healthy dose of Dutch pragmatism, 32,000 KLM employees work to provide innovative products for their customers and a safe, efficient, service-oriented operation with a proactive focus on sustainability. KLM strives to achieve profitable growth that contributes to both its own corporate aims and to economic and social development. KLM has a fleet of 116 airplanes, including 7 currently on order.

KLM works to create sustainable growth at Schiphol, to gain access to any market that will increase the quality of its network and to maintain a level playing field for all industry players. It also works to ensure a balance between the company's interests and those of the people living and working close to the airport.

7.2.1 The interview

The interviewee at KLM is Mirjam Esveld. She is the social media manager at KLM and is tasked with the supervision of KLM’s social media use and application. She believes KLM will score very high on all different parts of the model as they are very active on social media and their planning and strategy are extremely well formulated.

KLM uses social media mostly for customer support and interaction, marketing and ecommerce. They have profiles on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Especially the Facebook page, with over a million fans, is something very impressive. After filling in the social media tool, the following maturity profile is found:

Capability	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented								
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing					
External Human Resource	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented				
Customer Service	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented			
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Integrate	Implemented	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing					
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	Implemented	Implemented	N/A	Implemented	Missing				
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Customer Service	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Business intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Missing	Missing						

Figure 11: KLM maturity profile

The profile clearly shows KLM is very mature in both the planning and interaction, however they are somewhat lacking when it comes to evaluation. According to Mirjam, this is an initiative which is currently being worked on and she asked if the model could be applied again in a year so she could show that it would be a lot different than what it is now. In the planning phase, the only area currently scoring low is the internal human resource. So far, all use of social media at KLM has been externally focused. The process to start using social media internally has recently been started. Therefore, they still score low there. In the interaction phase, most of the capabilities missing are very high-level capabilities which are either in preparation or are simply not yet relevant or interesting for KLM. They are however working on them according to Mirjam.

7.2.2 KLM model assessment

Mirjam’s feedback on the model is very positive. When asked about the completeness of the model, she said she had nothing to add. KLM is either already doing all described capabilities, or researching or implementing them. According to her, this is basically all there is at the moment.

When asked about the correctness of the model she did have a comment. She suggested that keeping marketing & sales together as one focus area limits the applicability of the model. Several organizations

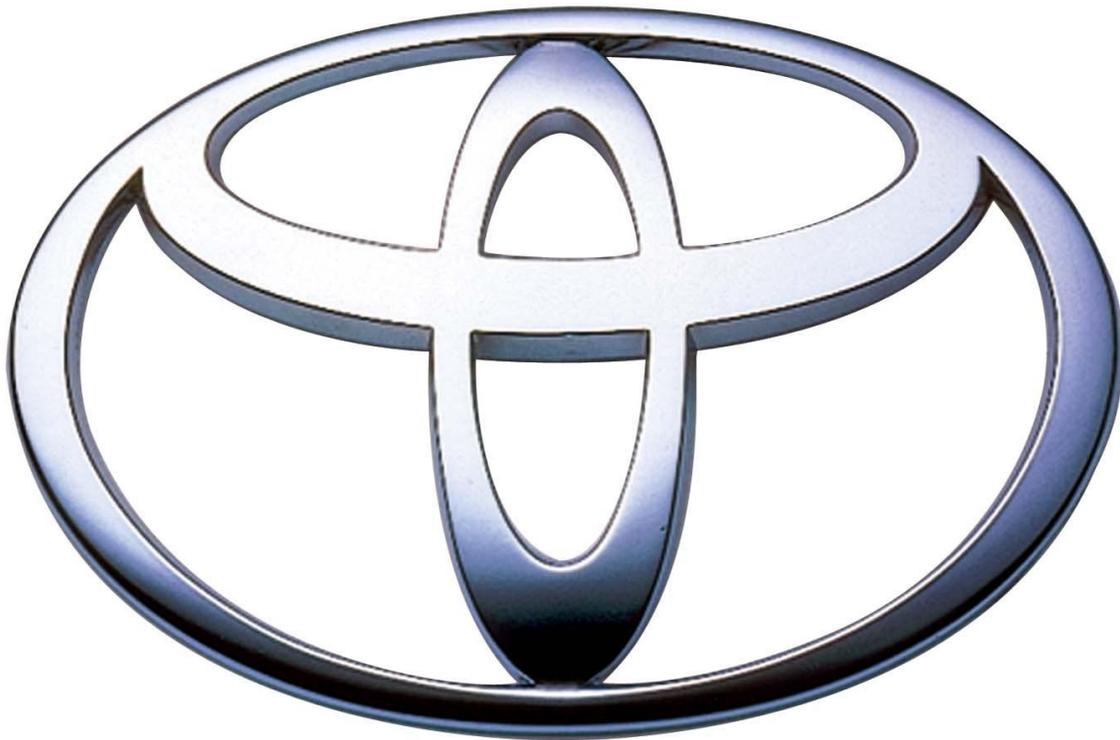
clearly separate their marketing and sales divisions for several different reasons. Therefore she suggested splitting up marketing and sales (perhaps it would have to be called e-commerce) to make it even more applicable than it already is.

When asked about the maturity placement of the capabilities she said that it was very much in line with how they did their social media implementations at KLM. They “started by doing” and later started to think about how to properly implement social media so that it might match their business strategy. This is reflected in the maturity placement in the model. She had nothing to add here.

7.2.3 Conclusion

KLM is a very mature organization when it comes to social media use. The reception of the model at KLM has been positive with one comment concerning the focus area marketing & sales, and that it might be better to split it apart. With regard to the placement of the capabilities on the maturity scale, Mirjam had nothing to add or suggest.

7.3 Toyota



Toyota Motor Corporation, abbreviated TMC, is a multinational automaker headquartered in Toyota, Aichi, Japan. In 2010, Toyota employed 317,734 people worldwide, and was the world's largest automobile manufacturer by production.

The company was founded by Kiichiro Toyoda in 1937 as a spinoff from his father's company Toyota Industries to create automobiles. Three years earlier, in 1934, while still a department of Toyota Industries, it created its first product, the Type A engine, and, in 1936, its first passenger car, the Toyota AA. Toyota Motor Corporation group companies are Toyota (including the Scion brand), Lexus, Daihatsu and Hino Motors, along with several "non-automotive" companies. TMC is part of the Toyota Group, one of the largest conglomerates in the world.

Toyota is headquartered in Toyota City, Aichi. Its Tokyo office is located in Bunkyo, Tokyo. Its Nagoya office is located in Nakamura-ku, Nagoya. In addition to manufacturing automobiles, Toyota provides financial services through its Toyota Financial Services division and also builds robots.

For this research, the headquarters in the Netherlands in Raamdonksveer has been visited. In the Netherlands, roughly 1500 employees work for Toyota.

7.3.1 The Interview

The interviewees at Toyota are Menno Damsté (Interactive Communication manager) and Raymond Caenen (Customer Relations & Telemarketing manager). Menno is responsible for all marketing and communication being conducted through social media (interactive communication). Raymond is responsible for all customer service related activities through social media. They both believe Toyota to be somewhat ‘in between’ when it comes to social media use. They know what to do with social media, but they think they can improve in several areas as well. Toyota mostly uses social media for marketing and customer service activities. They were forced into the use of social media when they had to deal with a brand-damaging event (massive amount of recalls of badly performing motor vehicles) and have been using it ever since. They are currently in the process of rethinking all their social media initiatives and they are working on a large scale social media strategy after which they will revise their social media use.

Toyota has no Facebook or Hyves page. They have a Twitter account which they frequently use for corporate communication and customer service, and an interactive website and blog which they use for marketing activities and customer interaction.

The following maturity profile is found:

Capability	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Missing	Missing
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
External Human Resource	Missing	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Missing				
Customer Service	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented			
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	N/A								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Implemented	Missing						
Integrate	Implemented	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing					
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
External Human Resource	Implemented	Implemented	N/A	Missing					
Customer Service	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing					
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Missing	Missing						

Figure 12: Toyota social media profile

The profile clearly shows that their original assumptions were correct. They are scoring above average on the interaction part, but are falling behind when it comes to planning. This is of course understandable seeing they were forced into the use of social media, and are now working on their formal social media strategies. At this time, they are not recruiting through social media, nor are they using social media internally.

7.3.2 Toyota model assessment

Overall, the reception of the model is positive. Both Menno and Raymond agree that they think it is a good model to make an assessment with. It allows for a quick insight, with an easy-to-use tool. When asked about the completeness of the model, they had one thing they both came up with at the same time. They noted that for a car manufacturer, partnering is extremely important and should be considered as a separate focus area. They felt that it did not really fit in any of the already existing focus areas and should therefore be added separately. However, it is important to note that this should only be done when the model would have to be used in a car manufacturer context only.

When it comes to the correctness of the model, they both had nothing to add. The model was structured well according to them, and they could not think of anything which had to be changed.

When it comes to the maturity placement of the capabilities, they agreed that the placement was correct. Their implementation (be it very hectic and fast) had gone along similar lines and they implemented most of the capabilities in the order in which they are described in the model. Adding to that, they found it impressive that the model acknowledged that organizations usually start with 'doing' and start their planning later.

7.3.3 Conclusion

Toyota is an average player when it comes to social media use. However, they are in the above average section. The reception of the model at Toyota is positive, however Menno and Raymond suggested that should the model be applied at the car manufacturing industry, there would have to be an extra focus area which takes the partnering into account. There are no other additions or changes to the model that Menno and Raymond could think of.

7.4 The Financial Telegraaf (TFT)



Telegraaf Media Groep NV (TMG) is a publicly quoted, Dutch media Group. They focus primarily on the field of newspapers, magazines and house-to-door magazines in the Netherlands. They also focus on other (media) sections, including a social networking site: Hyves. Aside from all this, information is broadcasted through the internet, TV-text, and mobile phone. TMG was previously known as the NV holding company De Telegraaf. De Telegraaf had an average of 3000 employees over 2011.

Operating under the name Holland Combinatie, TMG is also the editor of over a hundred house-to-door magazines including the 'Amsterdam ECHO' and 'Witte Weekblad'. In 2008, it took over the newspapers being printed by Argopress, which was given its original name 'WeekMedia BV' again. This house-to-door magazine company used to operate under the 'Perscombinatie' and contains the 'Amsterdam Stadsblad' and several other surrounding newspapers with local news.

For this research, the Financiële Telegraaf (Financial Telgraaf) has been visited. De Financiële Telegraaf is part of TMG, and is responsible for providing news on the financial sector. De Financiële Telegraaf has its own Wording department (the department responsible for deciding which articles will be placed and which will not) inside TMG and operates independently. They have their own reporters and journalists, working in the field. Roughly 300 employees work for the Financial Telegraaf.

7.4.1 The Interview

The interviewee at De Financiële Telegraaf (DFT) is Krijn Haasnoot. Krijn is the manager of the digital marketing at De Financiële Telegraaf and is, amongst other things, responsible for the social media use. Krijn considers himself very knowledgeable on social media and its use, especially within the context of a newspaper or news-related company. Krijn believes that DFT is beginner to moderately mature. They do a lot with regard to their social media in the marketing domain, but other domains and planning-wise there is not much going on. They are however in the process of developing a new strategy for all communication channels, including social media. DFT uses social media primarily for marketing. They are interested in brand recognition, and attracting more subscribers to their newspaper.

DFT has a Facebook page, which is a part of the main ‘De Telegraaf’ Facebook page. On this page new articles are published with links directly to them. The articles themselves are hosted on the website. Aside from a Facebook page, there is a Twitter account which is used for trend-watching and broadcasting information.

The following maturity profile is found:

Capability	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	N/A	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented
Marketing & Sales	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Customer Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Communication / Public Relations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Missing	Missing						
Integrate	Implemented	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing					
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Customer Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Communication / Public Relations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Business intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Missing	Missing						

Figure 13: DFT maturity profile

The profile clearly confirms Krijn’s assumption. As shown, there are not many focus areas that DFT focuses on with regard to its social media use. They are interested in marketing and general use and in those areas they do well. The planning phase on the other hand is clearly lacking. Their general planning is worked out nicely, but their specific marketing planning is not. This is in line with the fact that DFT is currently developing a strategy on which they will base the current and future social media initiatives. This clearly indicates that DFT is indeed in the beginner/moderate segment of social media maturity.

7.4.2 DFT model assessment

The reception of the model at DFT is positive. Krijn notes that such a model is something they would have wanted to have a few months ago when they were attempting to lay out their social media efforts. He finds that a model such as this, with the many options and reporting features is clearly something that has great value.

When asked about the completeness of the model, Krijn had a comment with regard to the usability within the newspaper market sector. According to Krijn, the Wording department within such a company is of such importance that it should get a separate focus area. The Wording department is responsible for many things and needs to use social media on a very specific way to keep themselves up to date on the most recent developments. He suggested that examples could be information gathering, analysis and trend watching. Thus, should the model be used within the situational context of a newspaper or magazine-based organization, the focus area would be the only thing that needs to be added.

When it comes to the correctness of the model, Krijn had nothing to add. He feels that the different capabilities within the focus areas are correct. There is nothing he can think of, except for the extra focus area, which would have to be added to the model.

When it comes to the placement of the capabilities within the focus areas, Krijn also has nothing to add. He feels that this is indeed the correct way to place the capabilities.

7.4.3 Conclusion

DFT is a beginner / average organization when it comes to social media use. The reception of the model is positive; however some comments are made with regard to the usability of the model within the newspaper and magazine industry. A suggestion is to add a focus area which focuses itself on the Wording department of the organization. There are no further comments with regard to correctness and placement of the capabilities on the maturity scale.

7.5 VisitDenmark



VisitDenmark is the national Danish tourism organization. Their goal is to market Denmark as a tourist destination abroad, with a focus on attempting to attract more holiday visitors and conference delegates who can improve the return on investment in the tourist industry. The marketing activities are carried out in close collaboration with the tourism industry and other integral players, for example through partnerships. Over 2011, VisitDenmark registered 500 employees on average.

VisitDenmark is situated all over the Europe with different kinds of international offices (small bureaus and larger headquarters). Their main headquarters is in Copenhagen. The Dutch headquarters is situated in Leiden. For this research, the Dutch headquarters in Leiden has been visited.

7.5.1 The Interview

The interviewee at VisitDenmark is Mette Carlsen. She is responsible for the marketing activities at VisitDenmark and as such has been involving herself with social media activities as well. VisitDenmark has independent offices which operate in different countries. Each of these offices is given the freedom to use social media the way they see fit. They do not need to conform to the standard set by the main office in Copenhagen. Because of this reason, there are different kinds of social media maturities within the different offices of VisitDenmark. For this interview, we focus on the Dutch office. The Dutch VisitDenmark office uses social media for marketing means and handling customer inquiries. Aside from this, they sometimes use social media for corporate communication. Mette thinks that VisitDenmark will score somewhere on the average section of the model. This will mainly be because of their focus on the social media use. There is not much planning going on at this moment.

VisitDenmark has a Facebook page, on which they focus on customer interaction and marketing activities, and a Twitter page, on which they focus on collecting information, brand sentiment, and customer feedback.

The following maturity profile is found:

Capability	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing
Marketing & Sales	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Customer Service	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Implemented			
Communication / Public Relations	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Implemented	Missing						
Integrate	Implemented	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing					
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Customer Service	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Missing	N/A	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Missing	Missing						

Figure 14: VisitDenmark social media profile

The profile confirms that which Mette already thought. They are quite mature in the interaction phase when it comes to their social media use. Customer service is completely implemented, and marketing only lacks the thought-leadership capability. Adding to this, they have a mature community and do well on the listening and contribution. However, when looking at the planning, we clearly see several problems. There is hardly any planning for the marketing and customer service components. The general planning is sorted till the development of metrics.

7.5.2 VisitDenmark model assessment

The reception of the model is positive. Mette thinks that such a model is a good base to start off a social media project with and is even interested in perhaps applying this model at their main headquarters as well to find out how well they do. According to her, the model provides a clear overview of the problem areas and due to the easy reporting it clearly shows what an organization should do to further improve on social media.

When asked about the correctness of the model, Mette had nothing to add. She feels that this division of focus areas and capabilities is correct and can think of nothing that needs to be changed.

When asked about the completeness of the model, Mette again had nothing to add. Through her experience at VisitDenmark she has not encountered other things that could be added.

When asked about the placement of the capabilities on the maturity scale, Mette feels that this is the way things should be done. If she was to start over in certain focus areas which have already implemented, she would have done things differently, and more in line with how the model is currently structuring the capabilities.

7.5.3 Conclusion

VisitDenmark is a moderately mature organization when it comes to social media use. This is mainly due to the lacking planning focus areas. In the interaction phase they are quite mature. No further additions or changes have been suggested to the model.

7.6 PlusMagazine



PlusMagazine is a magazine designed specifically for people above the age of 50. PlusMagazine is one of the largest monthly paid magazines in the Netherlands (300.000 copies each month). It contains articles about finance, health, beauty, lifestyle, travel, and so forth. Nearly every day new messages get published on the PlusMagazine website (PlusOnline.nl) and every month the magazine arrives with a new set of articles. Aside from articles, the PlusMagazine website offers special features that allow visitors to interact. This contains simple games and puzzles but also larger discussion groups, activity calendars and the bike-route planner.

PlusMagazine and its Wording department are part of the Senior Publications Nederland BV group (SPN). As explained, it owns 'PlusMagazine', but also 'Plus Woman', 'Plus Puzzles' and more. Aside from this, SPN is also extremely active on the market of sponsored magazines. In 2011, 300 employees worked at SPN and PlusMagazine on average.

7.6.1 The Interview

The interviewee at PlusMagazine is Leon Gueyen. Leon is responsible for all digital marketing (including social media) related issues. Therefore, he is responsible when it comes to the social media channels and the development of the social media strategies. Beforehand, Leon mentioned that the market his magazine is in is a difficult market to approach with social media. Considering the larger part of the customers is above the age of 50, social media is not very present in the day to day activities of their customers. However, they are making large progress and are constantly taking new initiatives to change this. Leon thinks that PlusMagazine is in the beginner phase of the social media use. They are currently trying out different kinds of social media initiatives to see which ones are successful and which ones are not. This results in a lot of experimenting with different tactics and initiatives. Up until recently, not much planning has been done by PlusMagazine. Since a few weeks, they have started a huge initiative to formalize their strategies and rethink why they are using social media. PlusMagazine uses social media mainly for customer reach and by reaching out to customers they are attempting to find new subscribers to their magazine. Aside from that, they use social media to find out which types of articles provide the most traffic to the website. The PlusOnline website hosts the articles which will be published by PlusMagazine. Every article receives a link through the social media channels. The idea is that PlusMagazine monitors the amount of hits that are generated through each of those different links. This gives them a general idea what they should and should not post on their social media channels.

PlusMagazine is present on Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is used primarily for customer contact, customer reach and marketing purposes. Twitter is used for overall corporate communication, trend watching, broadcasting new information concerning new articles which will soon be published, and social media monitoring of new thoughts and ideas.

The following social media profile is found:

Capability	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Focus Area									
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Missing
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Missing				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
External Human Resource	Missing	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Implemented				
Customer Service	Missing	Missing	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing			
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Missing	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Implemented	N/A	Implemented	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Missing	Missing						
Integrate	Missing	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing					
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
External Human Resource	Missing	Implemented	Implemented	Missing					
Customer Service	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing					
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Missing	Missing						

Figure 15: PlusMagazine social media profile

When looking at the profile, it is clear that Leon's ideas about the current state of PlusMagazine's social media are indeed correct. In every focus area, several capabilities are missing except for the 'set-up and modify the community', 'listen', and 'corporate communication' focus areas. This indicates that while those three focus areas are mature, PlusMagazine is indeed still in the phase where they are experimenting, trying to find out what they can do, and trying to find out which initiatives stick the most.

7.6.2 PlusMagazine model assessment

Overall, the model was assessed as being very solid and good. Leon concluded that this is something they could really use to find out what they need to do with their social media. Considering that they are currently in the startup phase of their social media efforts, Leon thinks that this tool could really help them find their way around social media. He noted to be very interested in receiving the output. Aside from a good tool, he finds that the tool is also very clear when it comes to the reporting. Leon found the table displaying the different capabilities on the maturity scale the most relevant as this could clearly show you where you currently are, and which options you have to continue even further.

When asked about the correctness of the model, Leon did have some comments. First of all, he noted that the amount of depth is something that should be considered. He understands that the tool, as it stands now, is meant to be an assessment of an organization's maturity followed by actual advice by consultants. However, perhaps in the future it should be taken into account that different capabilities can have different maturity levels as well (for example, social media strategy A could be more mature than social media strategy B). He suggested that should this tool be further developed, this could be very interesting. He also made it very clear that right now, as an intake-model to get an overview of an organization's social media maturity, the tool is very solid. Aside from this he also noted the importance of adding the focus area that deals with the Wording department. Considering the fact that the magazine industry relies heavily on the activities done by the Wording department, it is important to note them as a focus area as well.

When it comes to the completeness of the model, Leon had nothing further to add (except for the Wording department focus area and its potentially related capabilities). He believes that the tool as it stands is sufficient and has the right data in it.

When it comes to the maturity placement, Leon had nothing else to add. He notes that while PlusMagazine is experimenting and trying out new initiatives, this is mostly due to the difficult nature of their customers. Should he implement social media from scratch again he would follow the steps set by the model. Therefore, he found the placement of the capabilities just fine.

7.6.3 Conclusion

PlusMagazine is a beginner when it comes to social media. They are currently experimenting with social media to find out which initiatives stick and which don't. The reception of the model is very positive. It is seen as a good base to start from when it comes to a maturity assessment. It is suggested to add the Wording department focus area specifically for the newspaper and magazine industry, and it is suggested to look into potentially exploring the maturity that a capability can have as well (in the future). No further suggestions have been made.

7.7 Hyves



Hyves is a social networking site in the Netherlands with mainly Dutch visitors and members and competes in this country with sites such as Facebook and MySpace. In May 2010 Hyves had more than 10.3 million accounts. These correspond to two thirds of the size of the Dutch population (which stands at over 16 million in 2010); however these include multiple accounts per person and inactive accounts. The number of accounts had grown by over two million as compared to the 1.5 years earlier. Hyves can be used free of charge, but there is an option for a paid Premium Membership (called Goldmembership). Goldmembers have access to some extra features, such as the ability to use some more different smilies in their messages and more uploading-space for pictures. The creators have said that the basic form of Hyves will always be free.

In 2010, it became clear that the fast growth of Hyves was slowing down due to growth of Twitter and Facebook. Therefore Hyves announced extra measures to leave the competition further behind. These measures were successful, because Hyves welcomed its 10 millionth user in April 2010. Despite the perception that Hyves mostly has young members, the target group ages faster than it rejuvenates. The average age of a member at Hyves is 30 years old. Also, in that same month, Hyves announced Hyves Payments and Hyves Games, which allows users to play games and pay friends via the social network. 'Hyven' became a common word in Dutch and was therefore included in the authoritative Van Dale dictionary of Dutch.

Although Facebook is rapidly growing in the Netherlands, Hyves was still the most popular social network in 2010 with 10.6 million Hyves users and a 68% penetration. Hyves was sold to the Telegraaf Media Groep in November that year. Hyves had an average of 150 employees in 2010.

7.7.1 The Interview

The interviewee at Hyves is Mark de Vries. Mark is currently the CEO at Hyves and the overall responsible person with everything related to Hyves and its activities. Because Hyves is a social networking website, no maturity profile has been created. This is mainly because Hyves does not use social media in very large quantities for their organization. The only thing they do is advertisement to make their social networking website more known and attract more users. They are one of the bigger platforms and as such do not need to apply social media in their day to day activities when it comes to marketing, sales, and so forth. However, due to the knowledge and expertise at Hyves, it is still relevant to conduct the interview and ask for feedback on the generated model.

The first thing that Mark concluded after going through the model is that he found it very deep and accurate. He commended on the fact that organizations could really use such a model to start improving (or starting from scratch) on their social media efforts. The focus areas are clear, and the added capabilities are clear as well. This really gives organizations something to cling to according to him.

When asked about the correctness of the model, there was nothing he could add. He found the structure of the focus areas to be accurate, and the added capabilities were placed exactly where he would place them as well. Aside from the correct placement, he also commended on the naming of the focus areas and capabilities. They provided him with a quick idea of what each capability meant.

When asked about the completeness of the model, he suggested starting to develop the model even further by looking at the different capabilities in more detail. For example he mentioned that strategy A is not the same as strategy B, and that there might be a huge difference in maturity between those strategies. However, as a first assessment and a quick tool to gain insight in maturity he found that the model was successful and complete. He noted that an organization could greatly benefit from such a thing.

When asked about the placement of the capabilities on the maturity scale he could not think of any other way to place them. He found the placement to be good, well thought off, and clearly showing that a lot of work had been put in it. If he had to manually place the capabilities he would probably have done 95% the same. The 5% that would be different would depend on situational factors according to him. He understands perfectly why the placement of certain capabilities is done in the way the model is shown to him. It is a more generally accepted way and would be the best-fit for a generic model.

7.7.2 Conclusion

The reception of the model at Hyves is good. Mark mentioned two things when he was asked to discuss the correctness and completeness of the model. He suggested looking in more detail at certain capabilities to find if there are different maturity levels between those as well. He also suggested that he would probably place 95% of the capabilities on the same place when it comes to maturity. However, the remaining 5% would be placed differently due to situational factors. The current placement he found to be more generally accepted and the best-fit for such a model.

7.8 De 50PlusBeurs



With over 100.000 visitors, the 50PlusBeurs is world's largest event for the active 'Plusser' (person above the age of 50). The 50PlusBeurs offers 50.000 square meters of information, amusement and discount. Over 600 stands in 6 halls with workshops, lectures, presentations, and so forth. Aside from this, it offers many performances with music, show, dance and expositions. The 50PlusBeurs is held yearly in the third week of September.

The 50PlusBeurs started very small in 1983 in The Hague but has grown to a huge event over the years. This year it will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Each hall at the 50PlusBeurs has a different theme where visitors can enjoy different kinds of fields of interest. There is the option to gain information on vacation both in the Netherlands and abroad, financial or health advice on a large amount of different subjects, living, furniture, housing, and the list goes on. The 50PlusBeurs has 8 employees working on the preparation of the fair full time. During the fair itself, around 30 employees are working for the 50PlusBeurs.

Recently, the 50PlusBeurs has started with social media and is currently in the process of encouraging their visitors to start using social media more and more.

7.8.1 The Interview

The interviewee at the 50PlusBeurs is Peter van de Kerkhof. Peter is the fair manager at the 50PlusBeurs and is therefore the one person that knows about all issues related to both the running of the fair, and the organizational aspects of the fair. Peter is actively engaged with the social media efforts currently being conducted by the 50PlusBeurs. The 50PlusBeurs uses social media for two important things. First of all they are interested in getting their customers on social media and greatly support the interaction of customers through social media channels. Second, the focus lies on marketing and brand awareness which will eventually lead to reaching more people. Peter believes that the 50PlusBeurs is in the beginner / average stage, leaning more towards the average stage. They are currently experimenting with social media and they are finding out what type of things would be best suited for their customers. The customer base, above 50 years of age, is difficult to engage on social media.

The 50PlusBeurs uses four types of social media. Their main pages are on Facebook and Hyves. On both Facebook and Hyves the 50PlusBeurs has a company page where customers can enlist as fans or members. That way they can remain up to date on the different kinds of social media initiatives that the 50PlusBeurs is conducting. Aside from those two platforms, Twitter is used in a more business to business context. Twitter is used to monitor what is being said about the 50PlusBeurs, and what the overall sentiment is when the fair itself is actually running. Last, LinkedIn is used mainly to give a presence and for brand awareness purposes.

The following maturity profile is found:

Focus Area	Capability								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planning Phase									
General Planning	Implemented	N/A	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing				
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Customer Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Business Intelligence	N/A								
Interact Phase									
Set-up and Modify the Community	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented					
Listen	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Contribute	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented						
Integrate	Implemented	Missing							
Marketing & Sales	Implemented	Implemented	Missing	Missing					
Research & Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Internal Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
External Human Resource	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Customer Service	Implemented	N/A	Implemented	Missing					
Communication / Public Relations	Implemented	Missing	Missing	Missing					
Business Intelligence	Missing								
Evaluate Phase									
Social Media Measurement	Implemented	Missing	Missing						

Figure 16: 50PlusBeurs social media maturity profile

When looking at the profile, it shows that Peter’s original idea about the 50PlusBeurs is indeed correct. Planning wise a lot has been implemented in the specific areas, yet some of the general planning capabilities are missing. This indicates that they are indeed working on their social media and are just starting. In the interaction phase, we see the same. Several capabilities have been implemented and are

being conducted, yet most of the advanced and expert capabilities are not yet present. This is in line with Peter's original assumption about the average section of the model.

7.8.2 50PlusBeurs model assessment

When asked about the model, the reception is very positive. Peter said that he would have liked to have this model a little under a year ago when the social media activities of the 50PlusBeurs were slowly forming. This way he could have had a better idea of where to start and what to do. He thinks the model as it is right now is a good way of graphically showing what an organization has achieved, and still can achieve. He thinks this model is an excellent starting point for an organization to work with, and is also an excellent tool for any advisor or consultant to start their assessment with.

When asked about the correctness of the model, Peter had nothing to add. He mentioned that the focus areas were all pretty straight forward, yet that this is indeed the way social media is most looked at inside organizations (per different department or focus aspect). He could not think of any extra focus areas to be added when you would want to apply this model inside the event and fair-related industry.

When asked about the completeness of the model, there was nothing Peter could add. He said that all capabilities were things he recognized. Several of them had not been implemented at the 50PlusBeurs obviously, but most of the capabilities were familiar to him. He said that those capabilities indeed needed to be present inside such a model.

When asked about the maturity placement of the capabilities he said that the placement is the way he would have placed them as well. One thing he would have done different though. In the planning phase, the analysis of the platforms always comes after the strategy. He thinks that the analysis should be something that is part of the creation of the strategy. Adding both of them seems rather double because once you create a proper social media strategy, you already analyze the platforms. Asking about whether or not you've done the analysis is like asking whether or not you have created a strategy according to him.

7.8.3 Conclusions

The 50PlusBeurs is a beginner/average organization when it comes to their social media use. This reflects the original ideas by the fair manager, Peter van de Kerkhof. When asked about the correctness of the model, no additional suggestions have been made. When asked about the completeness, no additional suggestions have been made either. When asked about the maturity placement, one suggestion has been made. According to the interviewee, the capability about the analysis of the platforms and the capability of the strategy creation are doubles. When an organization creates a strategy for social media, analyzing the platforms is an essential step in this strategy creation process. Therefore, two capabilities are not necessary.

7.9 Business Validation Results

In the following section a summary of the results for each focus area will be given in order to highlight interesting findings per focus area, and results that stand out. Chapters 7.9.1 – 7.9.8 will deal with the ‘plan’ phase of the model, chapters 7.9.9 – 7.9.18 will deal with the ‘interact’ phase, and chapter 7.9.19 will deal with the ‘evaluate’ phase. The last chapter (7.9.20) will describe an overview of the main findings, and a summary of the remarks provided by all the participants in the business validation will be given.

7.9.1 General planning

Capability	Leader champion present	Social media team assigned	Clear social media goals	Social media strategy available	Social media roadmap available	Social media metrics developed	Social media principles developed	Strategic alignment	Informed employees
Times implemented	7	5	6	6	2	3	6	3	3

Table 13: findings general planning

The first thing that stands out in the general planning focus area, is that all capabilities have at least been implemented once. This shows that all the capabilities in this focus area are found in the businesses that participated in this validation session. The first four capabilities (leader champion to strategy) have been implemented by nearly all organizations. What stands out is that the social media principles have been implemented more than for example the roadmap and metrics. When looking at the different maturity profiles, we find that several organizations have implemented the principles, but not the roadmap and the metrics. However, when asked about this, all interviewees representing that organization said that their roadmap and metrics are either under development, or on the agenda to be implemented, and that they expect that their social media principles and policies will be updated once those metrics and roadmap have been developed. One organization, PlusMagazine, concluded that they had created some form of policy in order to ensure their employees would not do inappropriate things on social media, and that after they formalize their goals, strategy, roadmap and metrics they would probably completely overhaul those principles. This suggests that while not all organizations have implemented the capabilities on the lower maturity prior to ‘social media principles developed’, it is located on the right place because all of those organizations commented they would most likely revise their principles after implementing the lower maturity capabilities.

7.9.2 Marketing and sales planning

Capability	Clear specific goals	Specific strategy available	Platforms analyzed	Social media guidelines followed	Trained staff
Times implemented	4	3	6	4	3

Table 14: findings marketing and sales planning

First off, all capabilities have again been implemented at least once, meaning they are relevant to this focus area and the capabilities are indeed found in businesses. What stands out is that three organizations have not implemented a specific strategy for their marketing and sales, while they have implemented their other capabilities (De Telegraaf, VisitDenmark, Plusmagazine). All those organizations representatives said that they are in the process of creating a formal strategy for their marketing and sales in combination with social media, but that they have not implemented it yet. Because they are conducting social media, they train their staff to use social media, and they do follow the social media guidelines. When their strategies are formalized, their staff will be retrained to match the new strategies.

However, the capability ‘social media guidelines followed’ should be looked at in order to see whether or not it is on the right maturity level. The interviewees commented that they did not expect them to change anything with regards to following the guidelines after formalizing their strategies because those guidelines would not change. This suggests that the ‘social media guidelines followed’ capability might be on the wrong maturity level.

7.9.3 Research and development planning

Capability	Clear specific goals	Specific strategy available	Platforms analyzed	Trained staff
Times implemented	0	0	0	0

Table 15: Findings research and development planning

None of the organizations have implemented any capabilities in this focus area. During the group sessions, the experts already suggested that doing social media related to research and development would probably mean that the organization is on a very high maturity level. They did not expect many organizations to do this yet. Therefore, the fact that none of the organizations have implemented anything related to research and development planning can mean that this high maturity level simply has not been reached yet by the organizations. Further research is required to validate these findings in business context.

7.9.4 Internal human resource planning

Capability	Clear specific goals	Specific strategy available	Resource access on closed channel	Trained staff
Times implemented	1	0	0	0

Table 16: Findings internal human resource planning

One of the capabilities with regards to planning for internal social media has been implemented. KLM is currently working on a large initiative for implementing internal use of social media. Their goals have already been formalized, and their strategy is currently under development. When asked about the other capabilities, KLM noted that those capabilities are indeed what they are working on and what they expect to have implemented in one year. This suggests that while only one organization confirmed the correctness of the capabilities, they are found in business context.

7.9.5. External human resource planning

Capability	Clear specific goals	Specific strategy available	Demographic research conducted	Empowered employees	Trained staff
Times implemented	1	1	1	3	2

Table 17: Findings external human resource planning

All of the capabilities in this focus area have at least been implemented once. This means that the capabilities are applicable in business context and are used by the organizations that participated in this research. One organization, KLM, has implemented all capabilities. Something that stands out is that there is also one organization, PlusMagazine, who has empowered their employees to use social media for external human resource, and has trained them in the use of it, without having a proper strategy and goals, and without having done demographic research. As explained, PlusMagazine is currently in the process of creating their strategies and goals for social media and will, once they have been formalized, retrain their staff to properly use social media in line with the strategy, and will empower their employees on the required platforms. This suggests that even though the capabilities prior to ‘empowered employees’ and ‘trained staff’ have not been implemented yet, they are on the right

maturity level because their content will be adapted once the goals and strategy have been created, and the demographic research has been completed. Toyota has only empowered their employees to use social media for recruitment matters. They commented that while they have no goals and strategies for it (which is as they say: “a very bad thing...”) they do want to have their human resource employees present on the platforms.

7.9.6. Customer service planning

Capability	Clear specific goals	Specific strategy available	Platforms analyzed	Response handling method	Empowered employees	Trained staff
Times implemented	4	1	3	2	3	3

Table 18: Findings customer service planning

First off, all capabilities are implemented at least once, implying all capabilities are something that organizations implement or do in business context (based on the organizations that participated in this research). Second, what stands out is the one-time occurrence of the ‘Specific strategy available’ capability as opposed to the other capabilities. Out of all organizations, there is one, KLM, who has implemented all the capabilities and who has confirmed that the way these capabilities are placed is the way they have also implemented them. Aside from that, there is one organization, PlusMagazine, who has only analyzed the platform they conduct customer service activities on. PlusMagazine is currently formalizing their social media strategies and as explained in the previous sections, will work on all their other capabilities again once they are implemented. This means that the fact that PlusMagazine has only implemented ‘platforms analyzed’ does not necessarily mean that the placement of this capability is incorrect. Next to PlusMagazine there is one organization, Toyota, in which no social media strategy has been developed yet, whilst all the other capabilities have been implemented. This is due to the reason why Toyota has started social media: they were forced into it due to the massive amounts of recalls. They are currently developing a strategy after which they will revise all of their social media again according to the way the capabilities are presented in the model. Something similar is true for VisitDenmark. They also have trained and empowered employees who are allowed to post on social media channels without having proper goals and strategies implemented. Therefore, the customer service planning focus area could be a potential area for further research. What needs to be seen is whether or not there is some form of dependency amongst the capabilities or whether or not the empowered employees and trained staff should be positioned somewhere else.

7.9.7 Communications and public relations planning

Capability	Clear specific goals	Specific strategy available	Platforms analyzed	Trained staff
Times implemented	4	2	5	5

Table 19: Findings communications and public relations planning

All capabilities have been implemented at least once, and two organizations have implemented all of them in this focus area (KLM and 50PlusBeurs). This shows that the capabilities in this focus area are found in business context. Two things stand out. First off, there is the difference between the amounts of ‘platform analyzed’ implementations as opposed to the ‘specific strategy available’ implementations. Because these two capabilities are on the same maturity level, this does not necessarily mean that their placement is incorrect. In three organizations in which this phenomenon occurs, Robeco, Toyota and PlusMagazine, the social media strategy is being created while they are already conducting social media. Therefore it is well possible that an organization has already analyzed a platform to some extent and

starts to construct the social media strategy later. At both Toyota and PlusMagazine, the other capabilities will be revised once the social media strategy is complete, meaning that the ‘platforms analyzed’ and ‘trained staff’ capabilities will be re-implemented if needed. This suggests that the placement of these capabilities is correct even though the results from the business validation show that the ‘platforms analyzed’ capability and ‘trained staff’ capability are implemented more than the ‘specific strategy’. Whether or not Robeco will re-implement the ‘platforms analyzed’ and ‘trained staff’ capabilities is unknown.

7.9.8 Business intelligence planning

Capability	Business intelligence planning conducted
Times implemented	0

Table 20: Findings business intelligence planning

The ‘business intelligence planning conducted’ capability has not been implemented at any of the organizations. The experts during the group sessions placed business intelligence on the highest possible maturity level. This could suggest that no organizations participating in this research have achieved the highest maturity level yet.

7.9.9 Set up and modify the community

Capability	Community manager assigned	Moderation norms developed	Visible community	Guidelines based community
Times implemented	6	5	6	7

Table 21: Findings set up and modify the community

First off, a total of 5 organizations completely implemented the set-up and modify the community focus area with all associated capabilities in the order presented in the model. This is strong evidence towards the fact that this focus area is properly defined in the model both in terms of completeness and maturity. There is however one anomaly. De Telegraaf has made their community visible, and follows the guidelines for a good social media community, yet they have no community manager or moderation norms. When asked, the reply has been that they had no need for a separate community manager because only one person managed all the social media efforts, and as for moderation norms, it was also one person who followed the moderations norms set by the platforms they used. They had no need to develop extra moderation norms for themselves. Should their communities grow larger they would assign community managers and potentially develop extra moderation norms. Therefore, this can be considered a situational factor at the organization.

7.9.10 Listen

Capability	Active listening conducted	Tools implemented	Monitoring conducted
Times implemented	7	7	7

Table 22: Findings listen

All organizations have implemented the ‘listen’ focus area as defined in the model. This suggests that this focus area is properly defined in the model both in terms of completeness and maturity.

7.9.11 Contribute

Capability	Active responding conducted	Incentives provided	Customer expectation exceeded
Times implemented	7	5	3

Table 23: Findings contribute

All capabilities have at least been implemented once. The ‘active responding conducted’ has been implemented by all organizations. The ‘incentives provided’ by five organizations and the ‘customer expectations exceeded’ capability has been implemented by three organizations. No anomalies have been found. No high maturity capabilities have been implemented when the lower maturity capabilities have not been. The difference in implementation in this focus area simply suggests that there is a different maturity level amongst the participating organizations.

7.9.12 Integrate

Capability	Consistent platforms	Integrated systems
Times implemented	6	0

Table 24: Findings integrate

In this focus area, six organizations have implemented the capability ‘consistent platforms’. However, zero organizations have implemented the ‘integrated systems’ capability. Integrated systems with social media support are very new developments (social CRM, social media ERP modules, and so forth) and it is logical to assume that many organizations have not reached this high level of maturity yet. During the group sessions, this capability was placed on a very high maturity scale.

7.9.13 Marketing and sales use

Capability	Feedback generation conducted	Community marketing conducted	Viral marketing conducted	Thought leadership active
Times implemented	7	6	3	1

Table 25: Findings marketing and sales use

All of the capabilities in this focus area have been implemented at least once, meaning all of them are used in business context. Aside from this, no anomalies are found regarding higher maturity capabilities being implemented when lower maturity capabilities are not. One thing which has been found is that one organization, Robeco, suggested that they did not want to do viral marketing due to the service they provide. They did understand why this capability was implemented and thought it was a good choice for more commercially focused organizations. This does imply that situational factors can impact the type of social media marketing and sales efforts an organization wishes to do. The differences in implementation of the capabilities in this focus area can be explained by the fact that the organizations participating in this study are simply operating on different levels of maturity.

7.9.14 Research and development use

Capability	Feedback generation conducted	Community marketing conducted	Viral marketing conducted	Co-creation conducted
Times implemented	1	1	1	1

Table 26: Findings research and development use

The only organization which has implemented any (and all) of the research and development capabilities is Robeco. They commented on the research and development focus area as being complete and accurate. It matched how they implemented their social media use in this area. All other organizations either claimed not to have any interest in conducting research and development through social media

(for example, KLM, 50PlusBeurs, VisitDenmark and PlusMagazine) or simply had not gotten to it yet (for example Toyota and de Telegraaf).

7.9.15 Internal human resource use

Capability	Used as corporate intranet	Stimulated knowledge sharing	Reward system implemented	Project coordination conducted	Virtual world projects created
Times implemented	2	2	0	2	0

Table 27: Findings internal human resource use

Not many organizations that participated in this research use social media for internal means. Both KLM and Robeco conduct social media internally and both have implemented the first two capabilities. Neither of the two have implemented a reward system and both have done project coordination. Last, no virtual projects have been created yet. Both Robeco and KLM feel no need to implement a reward system as of yet because they have not made internal social media use obliged. The interviewee at Robeco hinted that when that time comes, they will implement it. Both Robeco and KLM commented not to have tried using virtual world projects, however do did find it interesting. Maturity wise, this focus area will require some extra attention. It is currently unclear whether or not the reward system not being implemented is a situational factor at both Robeco and KLM or whether not it's placed on the wrong maturity level.

7.9.16 External human resource use

Capability	Targetted search conducted	Profile assessment conducted	Talent pools created	Social media integrated in profiles
Times implemented	2	3	1	0

Table 28: Findings external human resource use

In this focus area, not all capabilities are implemented at the organizations participating in this research. The last capability, integration of social media in employee profiles, is considered to be a very high-level maturity capability and as such, has not been implemented at any organizations participating in this research. In the group sessions, the experts placed this on maturity level 18 out of 20, being very high. Therefore, the fact that this capability has not been implemented by any organization suggests that they are not mature enough to do so. What is interesting is that the second capability 'profile assessment conducted' is implemented more times than the previous capability 'targetted search conducted'. PlusMagazine has not implemented the targeted search capability, and has implemented the profile assessment capability. When asked why, they could not provide a clear answer as to why they did so. However, the other organizations that implemented these capabilities, Robeco and Toyota, commented that they implemented the 'external human resource use' capabilities in the order in which the model describes them. This could suggest that because PlusMagazine is currently struggling with their social media implementations, and is in a very immature state, it could be related to their current implementations and that this anomaly thus has no influence on the placement of the capabilities maturity wise.

7.9.17 Customer service use

Capability	Timly intervention conducted	Customer involvement achieved	Front and back-end alignment	Unified channel created
Times implemented	6	4	4	3

Table 29: Findings customer service use

In the customer service use focus area, all capabilities are implemented at least once, implying the completeness of this focus area with regards to business use. Aside from that, three organizations have implemented the entire focus area (Robeco, KLM and VisitDenmark). Their comments on the model are that they implemented the focus areas in the customer service use focus area according to the way the model describes them. There are no anomalies found with regards to higher maturity level capabilities being implemented when lower maturity level capabilities are not. All differences in times implemented for this focus area can be explained by the fact that the organizations participating in the study have different maturity levels when it comes to customer service.

7.9.18 Communication s and public relations

Capability	Corporate communication conducted	Corporate blogging conducted	Reputation management conducted	Social media press releases used
Times implemented	6	4	4	4

Table 30: Findings communications and public relations

All capabilities in this focus area have been implemented at least once. Three organizations have implemented the focus area completely (KLM, Toyota, PlusMagazine) and according to the way the model describes how it should be implemented. This suggests that the focus area is complete with regard to the different types of capabilities. One anomaly is found: VisitDenmark has implemented the use of social media press releases, but they have no blog and conduct no reputation management. This has been a deliberate choice by VisitDenmark. They feel no need to implement a corporate blog and do not need to conduct reputation management. They are however prepared for the fact that they might need to do so at some point. Therefore, this anomaly can be explained by means of a situational factor. Due to the situational choice by VisitDenmark not to implement these capabilities, it does not mean that the maturity placement in this focus area is incorrect.

7.9.19 Business intelligence use

Capability	Business intelligence conducted
Times implemented	0

Table 31: Findings business intelligence use

The ‘business intelligence conducted’ capability has not been implemented at any of the organizations. The experts during the group sessions placed business intelligence on the highest possible maturity level. This could suggest that no organizations participating in this research have achieved the highest maturity level yet. However, more research into business intelligence and social media will be required.

7.9.20 Social media measurement

Capability	Measured and analyzed general metrics	Measured and analyzed specific metrics	Strenghtend traditional metrics
Times implemented	7	1	0

Table 32: Findings social media measurement

All organizations participating in the study have implemented the first capability of social media measurement. They are doing some form of measuring and analyzing of their general social media metrics. Robeco takes it one step further and also attempts to analyze very specific, focus-area related metrics. None of the organizations are currently using social media to strengthen their traditional metrics with social media. This is explainable by the fact that many organizations are struggling with measuring and analyzing social media. Therefore, finding that zero organizations strengthen their traditional metrics

is not against expectations. This does not mean that the capability should not be part of the model. It merely shows that the organizations participating in this research are not mature enough to use social media in such a way. The experts during the group sessions acknowledged that organizations that do more than simply measuring their general metrics would be higher maturity organizations when it comes to social media measurement.

7.9.21 Summary and additional comments

Overall, the model reception has been good and positive. The organizations participating in the research all agreed that the model is thorough, and most of the anomalies can be explained by situational factors such as a deliberate choice not to implement a certain capability at this time. This does not mean that some focus areas will require more attention. This is more the case in the 'plan' part of the model than in the 'use' and 'evaluate' part of the model. Most of the focus areas in the 'use' and 'evaluate' part of the model appear to be complete and applicable based on the findings in this first business validation. Most anomalies have been found in the 'plan' part of the model. In several focus areas, capabilities on a high maturity level have been implemented where lower-level maturity capabilities have not. Aside from that, three focus areas have not been implemented at all. While this is most likely due to the high-maturity relating to those focus areas, it is something to consider and to take to the next validation session of the model. While further research in these focus areas could prove to be very interesting, it is not within the scope for this research project.

Several organizations have brought forward some interesting comments about the model and potential future research. With regard to the more general comments and feedback based on the validation session, the following things have been brought to light with regard to the positive reception of the model:

- All organizations that have been interviewed agreed that a model such as this would be a good base to start an assessment with.
- The model is considered to be well grounded, complete and with plenty of depth.
- All interviewees had ideas about the current state of the social media inside their organizations.
- At all organizations, the model reflected that idea nearly perfectly.
- The model is considered to be clear and can be understood easily.
- The model is considered to be a good way to look for new ways to conduct social media with.

Aside from the findings purely based on the amount of implemented capabilities, and the order in which the capabilities have been implemented, several interviewees had additional suggestions and ideas about the model which they brought to light during the interviews. Table 33 summarizes the additional comments made by the interviewee's.

Type	Suggested Change
Correctness	Splitting marketing and sales in two different focus areas because marketing and sales can be seen as two completely different types of departments with two completely different types of task-sets.
Correctness	Adding a partnering focus area when the model would have to be used within the context of the car manufacturing industry. Partnering is considered to be important and social media can contribute a lot to partnering for car manufacturers that it needs to have a separate focus area.
Correctness	Adding a wording focus area when the model would have to be used within the context of the newspaper and magazine industry. The wording has such an important role to fulfill within this sector, and social media can contribute so much to it, that it needs to have a separate focus area.
Completeness	Look into the maturity inside capabilities. This means that for example having a social media strategy would not be enough. It is important to look further to the distinct differences between the social media strategy of company X and company Y. This might show different levels of maturity inside the different capabilities as well.
Maturity	Look at the placement of the platform analysis capability. The platform analysis is a part of the social media strategy creation. Therefore, asking about both is rather double. Once an organization has a social media strategy, it is logical to assume they have already identified and analyzed the platforms they are looking to conduct their social media efforts on.

Table 33: Suggested additions to the model based on the business validation

While these are all good suggestions, most require further research and have not been included in this version of the model for that reason. Adding a Wording department or Partnering focus area would require extensive research in order to find out which types of capabilities would be required here. The same can be said for splitting Marketing and Sales into two focus areas. It would require a lot more research to identify and validate new capabilities for a potential sales focus area. The maturity inside the capabilities is also something that would require much more research, as it would require looking at the different maturity levels of every individual capability. Only looking at strategy could be an entire research project on its own. The last suggested change, merging the capabilities of platform analysis and strategy has been omitted as well. All experts in the study agreed that this would be the correct placement. Out of all the participants in the business validation, only one mentioned this potential change. Before changing the model, more support for this change is required.



Social media maturity model

8. The social media maturity model

After combining the interviews, group sessions, and business validation feedback, the model on the next page has been created (figure 17 and 18). It describes the proposed final social media maturity model. It depicts the three main phases, the general and specific focus areas with their capabilities, and the associated benefits per phase. The capabilities are listed based on their maturity from top to bottom in the 'general' focus areas and from left to right in the 'specific' focus areas. The general focus areas are something that all organizations should do regardless what type of social media implementation they are pursuing, and the specific focus areas can be looked at depending on what type of social media implementation needs to be done. It is important to look upon the capabilities as goals or results the organization needs to achieve (van Steenberg, 2011) in order to progress from low maturity to full maturity in social media.

The reason for creating the model in this form is to show how the social media maturity matrix found in the tool looks with all capabilities and focus areas named properly and shown in graphic form. In the tool, the capabilities are given letters to identify them using the legend. When using the tool, the interviewer will use this legend provided with the tool (see appendix 7) when something is unclear for the interviewee. This legend will explain him or her exactly which letter (A, B, C, and so forth) stands for which capability in which focus area. After the results are found, the interviewee(s) will receive a copy of this legend in order to interpret the model themselves. However, for the total look and feel of the model in its totality, and a clear overview of how the different focus areas and capabilities relate to each other, figures 17 and 18 have been constructed (the model has been cut in two due to its size). For a total and clear understanding of the social media maturity matrix as a whole, both the table found in the tool (appendix 6 and figure 19), and the model found in figure 17 and 18 need to be consulted. That way, someone using the model and interpreting its results can see exactly on which maturity level every individual capability stands (figure 19) and can also see how those capabilities relate to the whole field of social media maturity (the model in figure 17 and 18).

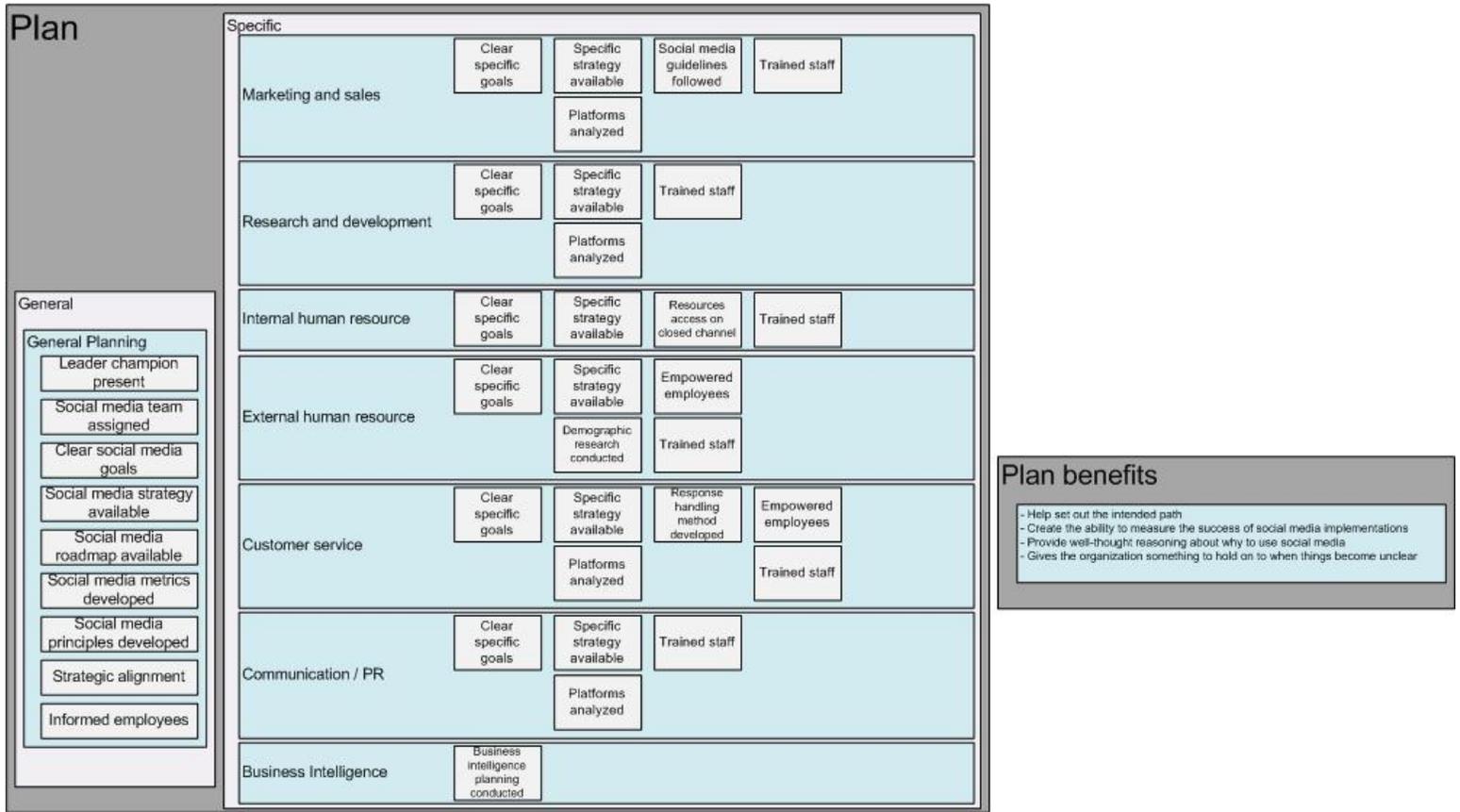


Figure 17: Plan phase of the social media maturity model

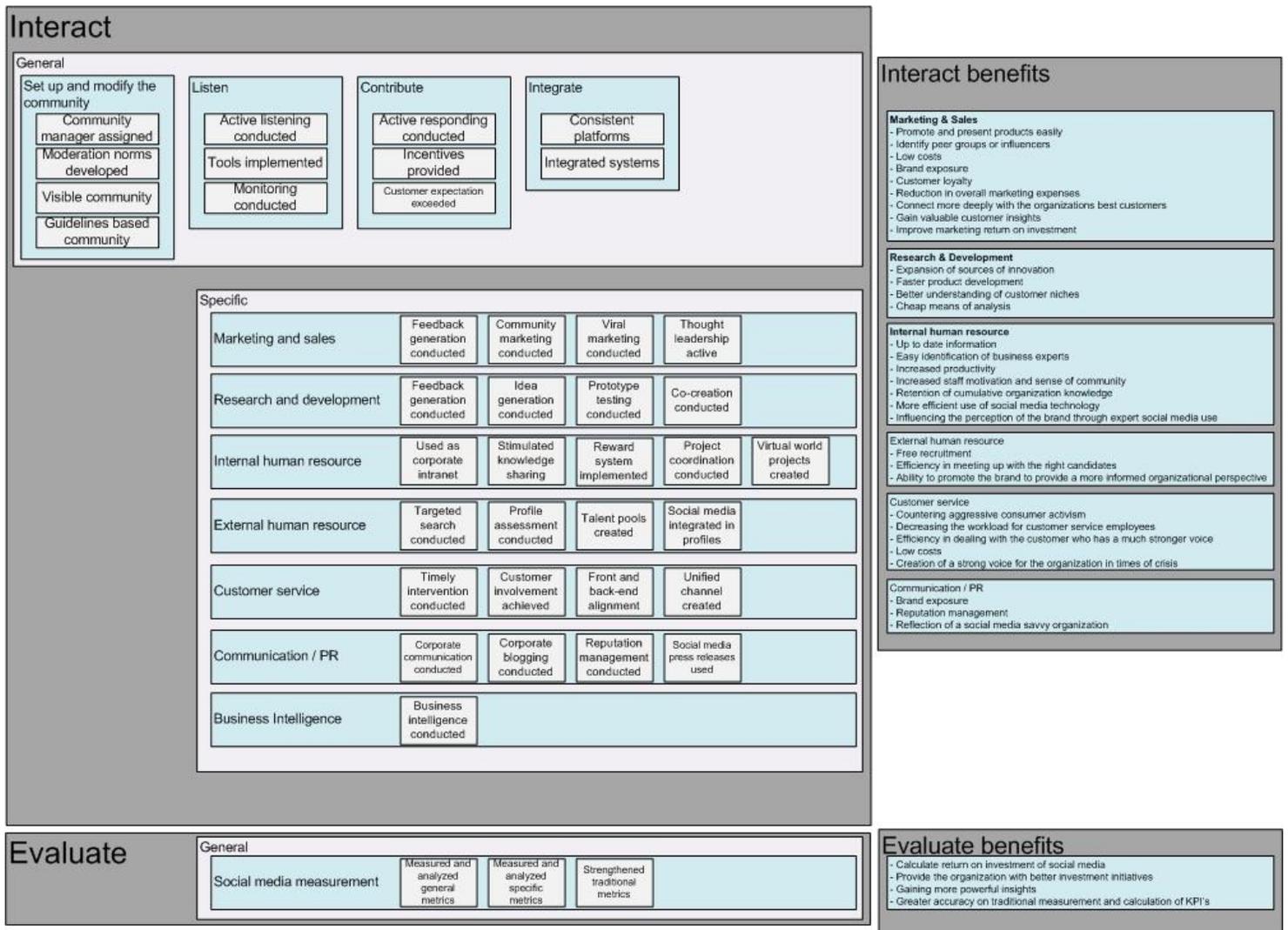


Figure 18: Interact and evaluate phase of the social media maturity model

Focus Area	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Planning Phase																						
General Planning			A. Implemented		B. Implemented	C. Implemented		D. Implemented	E. Implemented	F. Implemented	G. Implemented											
Marketing & Sales						A. Implemented	B. Implemented		D. Implemented	E. Implemented												
Research & Development															A. Implemented	B. Implemented				D. Implemented		
Internal Human Resource																						
External Human Resource			A. Implemented	B. Implemented	D. Implemented					A. Implemented	B. Implemented	C. Implemented	D. Implemented									
Customer Service				C. Implemented	E. Implemented																	
Communication / Public Relations						A. Implemented	B. Implemented	D. Implemented														
Business Intelligence																						A. Implemented
Interact Phase																						
Set-up and Modify the Community		A. Implemented	B. Implemented		C. Implemented	D. Implemented																
Listen		A. Implemented	B. Implemented		C. Implemented																	
Contribute										A. Implemented												
Integrate												B. Implemented				C. Implemented						
Marketing & Sales			A. Implemented		B. Implemented																	
Research & Development																						
Internal Human Resource			A. Implemented	B. Implemented																		
External Human Resource		A. Implemented	B. Implemented	C. Implemented									C. Implemented	D. Implemented							E. Implemented	D. Implemented
Customer Service																						
Communication / Public Relations		A. Implemented	B. Implemented							A. Implemented												
Business Intelligence						C. Implemented	D. Implemented															
Evaluate Phase																						
Social Media Measurement													A. Implemented	B. Implemented								C. Implemented

Figure 18: Capabilities placed on the maturity levels in the social media maturity model



Discussion & conclusion

9. Discussion

The findings in this research show that it is possible to create a maturity model in the domain of social media. The model, working with focus areas and capabilities, provides a good overview of the current possibilities when it comes to social media implementation and adaptation. The model combines a large body of literature, found by means of a structured literature approach, with expert knowledge and practical knowledge, elicited through interviews, group sessions, and application of the model in business context, concerning social media. All combined, this has led to the creation of the social media maturity model presented in this research.

9.1 Relevance and Implications

The creation of the model provides organizations with an opportunity to properly implement social media in their ways of working when starting from scratch. It also offers organizations that have already started using social media a means to further develop their social media efforts and identify potential problem areas. This model can be used for benchmarking purposes when applied in for example a large industry sector, or amongst different locations of one organization which all operate individually on social media. Because of the relative newness of social media, little has truly been researched when it comes to the application and benefits to be gained once implemented correctly. There is however, a large demand for scientific research on how to apply social media properly, as explained in chapter 1. This model fits that need and in its current form can be used already as a base for social media assessment and growth.

Aside from this practical value, the model also adds to the literature available on social media. While there is quite some literature to be found, there is hardly any literature that combines the different aspects of a social media implementation as this research has done. Most of the work focusses on a specific department or domain of social media (marketing & sales, return on investment, and so forth) and not so much on the total body that social media has to offer. Aside from this, literature can be found that focusses on earning money through social media fast, or changing the mindset of the employees when starting to use social media for different kinds of purposes. This research combines both the practical application of social media in different kinds of business departments, with the changes required from the employees and mindset in one model which can be used in business context.

The model, and construction method of the model is structured along the steps set out by the previous work done in the field of focus area maturity matrixes. As explained in chapter 3, this research follows the steps dictated by van Steenbergen et al. (2010) in order to come to the creation of the maturity model. Their research focusses on creating a method on how to properly construct a focus area maturity model, and this research has followed that process up until the last two steps. The maturity model acknowledges the way organizations currently start with social media. All organizations participating in this research noted that they all started by doing social media first, and planning for social media later. This type of progressions translates into how the capabilities have been placed on the maturity scales after the interviews and group sessions had been completed. Social media maturity models are scarce, but they are available. None of them use the technique of using focus areas and capabilities, but focus more on the CMM (Capability Maturity Model) construction of maturity models. When comparing those

models to this research, it is found that the way the maturity is structured is roughly the same as it is structured in this research. In the S3M model (van Luxemburg & Zwiggelaar, 2011), we see that it starts out with employees in the organization slowly starting to use social media and pushing for organizational use and policies (much like the leader-champions in this research) and eventually ends up with strategic alignment and high-level implementation in business processes and systems (much like the expert-segment of the social media maturity model in this research). Other examples of social media maturity models exist. Most of them are however based upon stating certain stages which an organization passes through and nothing more. An example of such a model is the model by Chad Pollit (Pollit, 2011). In this model, certain stages are named such as: Dormant, Testing, Coordinating and Empowering. Those terms then reflect certain steps the organization can take regarding social media. The model made by Sean Corcoran (Corcoran, 2011) describes a similar stage-based model where the organizations pass from Laggard, to Innovator, based on a set of stages with related activities the organizations can undertake.

All the previously mentioned models describe a similar structure with regards to maturity as the social media maturity model created in this research does. Organizations start by trying out new things, start formalizing their thoughts and strategies for social media, and eventually end up with strategically aligned social media initiatives which provide the organization with enormous benefits. The big difference when comparing such models to this research project is that in the suggested S3M model and the stage models, there are neither clear steps to take nor any information for an organization on where they should start with social media when they decide to implement it. It simply states several steps an organization can pass through, not how to get to those steps to begin with.

9.2 Limitations

While the research has been thorough and time-consuming, there are limitations. First of all, the literature concerning social media is constantly changing and renewing. It is a new field, where a lot of interest lies. This means that it is unavoidable that knowledge and best-practices change rapidly. New articles are published weekly and new strategies, techniques and methods of application are found every month. This means that even though the literature study has been done by means of a scientific process, and covered over 300 articles and other types of literature, it is constantly changing and updating. It is possible that more recent articles which could have a lot of relevance have not been included in the research. While this might be a serious issue, in reality it is not as problematic as it might seem. In all used types of literature in this research, there is some form of consensus on how to use social media. It is likely that any new types of literature will follow along this consensus, with perhaps some small deviations. That said, it is possible that important literature has not been included in this research, however it is unlikely that said literature will be drastically different from the bulk of literature used in this research.

Second, the use of experts and their background are important to look at. While they are all from different backgrounds and have different types of experience, they have one thing in common: they are all consultants working for Accenture Netherlands. A logical conclusion here would be that it is possible that all those experts have opinions based on an Accenture policy with regards to social media use. However, it is important to note that at Accenture, there is no formal policy with regard to social media as of yet. They are working on different kinds of social media initiatives, but all of the knowledge

available as of now is a collection of experiences that their employees have. These experiences all come from practical use and application of social media both at Accenture clients and non-Accenture clients. It has not been influenced yet by a formal policy or way of working with social media that has been formulated by Accenture.

Third, during the interview sessions and group sessions, three new focus areas have been identified: Business Intelligence, Corporate communication / Public relations and Integrate. These focus areas have not been identified in the literature study, and as such have no support coming forth from the literature study done in this research. Business intelligence has even less support. All experts simply agreed that social media in combination with business intelligence would be powerful. However, none of them could come up with proper capabilities or maturity placements within this focus area. Thus, while validated in business context that business intelligence could be a powerful tool for organizations, the actual use of social media for business intelligence purposes is currently still unclear. The same can be said with regard to corporate communication and PR and Integrate. The only difference here is that the experts did know several potential capabilities. Therefore, these capabilities have been validated in business context and all organizations that conducted corporate communication and PR and focused on integration with help of social media agreed that the capabilities were placed correctly. However, there is no scientific literature present in this research that backs this claim up.

Fourth, the business validation could be a potential limitation. It has been a thorough business validation, at eight different organizations; all structured according to the same process as explained in chapter 3. However the fact that eight organizations have been visited, all in different industries might weigh against the validity of the model. In order to properly generalize, it is important to look at different kinds of organizations to see how the model would fare in those industries. Due to time-constraints it has not been possible to validate the model in different industries amongst several organizations inside those industries. While this could be a limitation, the fact that all organizations agreed that the model had loads of practical value implies that it can be assumed that this trend would continue to become apparent should more organizations be visited. Potential feedback when visiting more organizations within one industry would be that within certain industries, the value of the current state of the model would be less than in other industries due to missing important focus areas (such as the wording focus area in the newspaper and magazine industry).

Fifth, because of the fact that no organization is currently fully mature, the model can never be 100% validated. In order to properly validate a maturity model, one (or more) organization(s) needs to be fully mature in order to see if all capabilities and focus areas would indeed be implemented in the order that they have been structured on the maturity scale in the model. Because this is not the case (yet one came very close) this is a limitation to the research. However, would this model be applied in a years' time (updated to match the new found literature and research), the chances are that organizations will be much closer (if not completely) to full maturity.

9.3 Future research

The maturity model is not finished, as the construction of a maturity model is an iterative process that could potentially take months, even years. Therefore, several things could still be done in the future to strengthen and expand this model further.

First of all, the findings in the business validation need to be addressed. This encompasses conducting further research in the focus areas that yielded conflicting results that could not be properly explained. Examples of these kinds of results are: having high maturity capabilities implemented, when the lower maturity capabilities are not, and focus areas of which none of the organizations participating in this study have implemented any capabilities.

Already brought forward by several experts, much future research can be done in looking at the maturity within different capabilities. This means that while an organization can for example have a social media strategy implemented, this strategy could have a level of maturity associated to it as well. An organization with a well-researched strategy which aligns perfectly with their business strategy would score much higher in the strategy capability than an organization that has only written some general strategical ideas concerning their social media use. This could allow for a much more detailed maturity assessment. On the one hand it would look at whether certain important aspects have been implemented, and on the other hand it will look at how mature those implemented aspects are. The downside of expanding the model this way will be that it in order to fully apply it at an organization, it will require the cooperation of multiple people. Assuming that there is a large organization with different departments using social media, no single person will know everything of every social media use within that organization. This means that while it might be an interesting change to the model to give it more depth, it would require a sacrifice on the agility and quickness when it comes to the actual assessment.

The validation of the model can be expanded further. It should be applied in different industries and at different organizations within that industry to test the content of the model even further. A good idea would be to look at multiple newspaper-related organizations or multiple airline industries to gain better insights in their practical social media application, and to see whether or not the social media maturity model still holds up the way it has held up in this research. Building on this point, future research could focus on expanding the model where possible to allow for a more situational use. This could mean adding more focus areas to the model which could be deactivated if they are not needed (for example: deactivating a Wording department focus area when applying the model in the car industry). That way the model could be tailored better to allow a wider set of circumstances within an industry: adding the Wording department focus area for the newspaper industry, adding the partnering focus area for the car manufacturer industry, and adding potential new focus areas for other types of industries as well.

Future research should be done to find out whether certain situational factors are of influence on social media use as well. This means that for example the organization size, industry, types of employees, types of organization (more bureaucratic/horizontal/and so forth) has an influence on how social media should be implemented. Once this becomes apparent, it will be possible to add situational factors to the model. That way some sort of ideal situation can be programmed in the social media tool to allow for an even better idea of where the organization is now, and where they should be heading. This would be much

like the work in the field of Software Product Management done by Van de Weerd et al. (van de Weerd, Bekkers, & Brinkkemper, 2010).

Due to the constantly changing scientific knowledge and types of application of social media, it is important that future research also focusses on maintaining the model. Every month new research is done and new conclusions are drawn within the social media domain. Therefore, it is important that the model is regularly updated and adapted to keep up with these changes. It is possible that in one year, several things will have to be changed to the model. They will most likely not be groundbreaking in a way that the entire model needs an overhaul, but it is well possible that small changes need to be made as new things are researched. Changes can for example be new capabilities, new focus areas, and so forth.

All experts in the study noted that they felt that business intelligence is something important in relation to social media. However, because this conclusion was drawn during the interviews and group sessions, and because the experts could not truly bring under words what kinds of things should be done when it comes to business intelligence and social media, this has not been implemented yet in the model. Future research should focus on attempting to find what use social media can be in the context of business intelligence. This way the focus area currently named business intelligence can be further expanded with more capabilities and better maturity placement within the model. The same can be said for the corporate communication and public relations focus area and the integrate focus area. These focus areas have also been constructed during the interviews and group sessions. However, unlike with business intelligence, the experts all knew several things which could be done with social media within these focus areas and so the focus areas could be filled with capabilities which could then be tested in the business validation. It might still be interesting to do more research on the relation of social media and integration and social media and corporate communication and PR to potentially find more capabilities or different relations than those currently in the model.

9.4 Concluding

With the use of the social media maturity model constructed in this research, it can be easier for organizations to deal with the difficulties they have concerning their social media implementations. The model created, and results found, prove that there is a very great demand for such a social media model which will help organizations not only analyze where they are now, but also provide them with new areas where they can shift their attention to when it comes to utilizing social media. While this is only the first version of the model, it is already being received with open arms by the organizations that participated in this research. This positive reception stimulates the desire for more iterations and more research to elaborate the model even further. At the start of this research project, the research question aimed at finding out if it would be possible to create a social media maturity model based on the current available literature, expert knowledge and practical applications of social media. Based on the findings in this research, the answer to that question is most definitely yes. Mark Zuckerberg said: "In the next hundred years information won't be just pushed out to people, it will be shared among the millions of connections people have. Advertising will change. You will need to get into these connections". This social media maturity model, and its next versions, can help an organization tap into these connections and allow them to keep up with the changes in the media... at least for the coming hundred years.

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