

# Linking business goals and social media activities

A method for the utilization of social business

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## Abstract

Social media use is no longer a choice for most organizations. It has developed into a required component of business presence in modern society. The differentiating characteristic of social media compared to other business presence is that the interaction is public. Organizations struggle to adapt social media into their business strategy. Due to a lack of understanding of how to correctly integrate social media, organizations tend to just do *something* with it. Social media strategies tend to neglect the link with underlying goals of an organization.

This research focusses on that gap of understanding. It attempts to develop a method that facilitates organizations to deploy social media activities in alignment with their business goals.

Before the method can be developed, a model needs to be constructed that aligns typical business goals to typical social media activities. The resulting model is validated through a five round Delphi study involving 9 experts in the field of social business. The model contains 12 common business goals, each with a variety of designated social media activities that are specifically written in detail for a particular goal.

The Social Business Method covers the deployment of this model. It consists of three main steps to arrive at a social business strategy that suits the organization at hand:

1. Assess the current situation through an assessment of the current business and social media activity, business opportunities and weaknesses.
2. Apply the Social Business Model by determining the business goals of the organization and aligning these with suitable social media activities.
3. Formalize a social business strategy by transforming the given social media activities from the Social Business Model into practical activities formed in a social business strategy.

The method is developed using the method engineering discipline and depicted with a process-deliverable diagram. It is evaluated through workshops where it was applied in practice with executives of small businesses. The evaluation however is still incomplete and a validation has not been attempted.

The advantage of the method is that it facilitates a large part of the thinking process that requires an organization to assess why it is using social media and how it can best be used to achieve their business goals. The main disadvantage is that it still requires knowledge of as well the organization as well as what is possible with social media on a detailed level. This leads to a situation where often multiple people or parties need to be involved in order to finish the method.

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## 1. Introduction

Social media use is no longer a choice for most organizations. It has developed into a required component of business presence in modern society (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Smith & Zook, 2011). Social media has fundamentally changed the way people interact among themselves and with organizations (Kietzmann, et al., 2011; Qualman, 2012), succeeding the postal address, fax number, telephone number, and email address. The differentiating characteristic of social media is that the interaction is not private, but public (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010). The effectiveness of one-way outbound broadcasting of businesses is decreasing, with old marketing tactics being superseded by interactive two-way dialogues (Safko, 2010; Brown, 2012). People have become accustomed to new engagement tactics and play a large role themselves in what some call participation marketing (Weinberg, 2009). This shift has created a higher level of transparency for organizations, creating the possibility to humanize an organization while at the same time enlarging the responsibility over their actions towards their customers (Qualman, 2012).

The corporate responsibility is partially enlarged because social media facilitates the spreading of recommendations by friends and peers. According to research done by Qualman (2012), 76% of people trust other people's opinion about a brand, opposed to 15% relying on traditional brand advertising. A survey by Nielsen (2013) among consumers (n=29000) shows 84% of consumers trust recommendations from people they know, while 68% trust online consumer opinions and 42% trust online banner advertisements. It is a *"fundamental shift in power"* (Safko, 2010, p.5) towards customers: from being informed by corporate messages to being informed through transactions with people they know and trust. These transactions cannot be controlled by organizations like an advertisement. Consequently, organizations have increasingly less control over what is being written about their brand and products (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Excluding themselves from taking part in the online discussions regarding their brand and products merely keeps an organization in the dark (Smith & Zook, 2011), making it evident a need exists for a new approach for customer communication in order to adapt to this change. This is a huge challenge for businesses (Kietzmann, et al., 2011).

The evolving interaction between customer and business was discussed by Dellarocas (2003), who suspected online feedback mechanisms to have a wide impact on organizations, arguing that it would not merely affect trust building and cooperation, but also *"activities such as customer acquisition and retention, brand building, product development, and quality assurance"* (p.1422), thereby having a much wider field of application than a large group of firms is aware of today. Underestimated by the parties involved in a social media network are the strong interdependencies they have with each other. *"The power of online feedback mechanisms has its roots in the strategic side effects brought about by the increased interdependencies they create among firms, their customers, their partners, and their competitors."* (Dellarocas, 2003, p.1422). Precisely this increased dependency of organizations more or less forces their presence on social platforms.

The dependency for consumers is less obvious, making it interesting to look at the reasons behind this massive online consumer activity. Clearly, consumers are not obliged to share their opinion about a brand or service. As suggested by Henning-Thurau et al. (2004), the main reasons for

consumers are social benefits, concern for other consumers, economic incentives, and self-worth. Earls (2003) approaches this less individualistic, instead argues with the principle of the consumer acting as part of a herd. The underlying thought here is that word of mouth, or at least the trigger behind the phenomena, works in context of groups and not individuals. It is a natural movement that creates the incentive to act. This increase of user activity further increases the incentive for organizations to establish themselves on social media channels.

Some channels of social media have been around since before the year 2000, such as blogs and social networking sites (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Booth & Matic, 2011). As with any technology, it took some time for social media to develop and achieve mainstream popularity. Now that social media has achieved this, customer expectations of online presence and interaction has evolved. Customers expect better service in the form of presence on multiple channels and consistency of interaction quality, increasing the pressure on organizations to participate (Deloitte, 2013).

Social media has gained a massive increase in popularity in recent years, specifically since 2008 (Jones, 2013). As Smith (2009, p.559) states, it has caused an online revolution: *"This (social media) movement is dominating the way we use the internet, and the leading social platforms (...) have moved into the mainstream"*, with mainstream referring to massive global usage, or as explained by Shirky (2008): *"Communication tools don't get socially interesting until they get technologically boring. The invention of a tool doesn't create change: it has to have been round long enough that most of society is using it."* This brought us to the phase where most organizations feel the need to join in on social media activity. Because the largest part of society makes use of it, the feeling within firms is that they cannot stay behind. Another point of interest for organizations is the research possibility, thanks to the large amount of data the social media platforms possess of their users (Smith, 2009).

The expansion of social media is still progressing. As of the first quarter of 2013, over half of the world's online population is an active user on Facebook (eMarketer, 2013). More importantly, it is increasingly embraced by all demographics, which consequently means that nowadays all target audiences can be reached through social media (Forbes, 2013). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) agree, noting that due to the demographic spread of social media, making use of social media should be of interest to any organization. Through continuous technical improvements, sharing content about brand experiences will become progressively easier for consumers, which in turn makes it increasingly attractive for organizations to take part.



## 1.1 Problem definition

Despite the continuous rise of social media use, organizations struggle to adapt social media into their business strategy (Kietzmann, et al., 2011). Polling 1235 small businesses, Manta (2013) reports that 61% struggle to see any return on investment on their social media activities. Furthermore, most small businesses admit to turn to online resources when wondering how to apply social media activities. While plentiful, these sources can be misleading in the sense that their guides and tips are prone to be unavoidably generic, missing out on one of the fundamentals of making it work for an organization: by adapting it to the organization at hand.

Businesses tend to initially focus on the return on investment of starting with and performing activities on social media (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). This makes sense from an investment point of view but neglects how social media works on different levels. Instead arguments are made to measure return on investment through non-financial factors (Arnold, 2011). Often organizations begin exploring social media once they realize their competitors are socially active, when they notice their customers demand their presence on social media, or when they are being made aware of anecdotal references of success. Of the organizations that received the impulse to start integrating social business into their daily business, a relatively small amount is able to get the expected results out of it (Manta, 2013). This is likely the case because of a combination of factors, such as: insufficient knowledge; unrealistic expectations; unawareness of for which business goals social media is used; and the deployment of activities which do not aid their actual goals.

Due to a lack of understanding of how to correctly integrate social media, organizations tend to just do *something* with it, without proper awareness of what their goals are. It then remains the question whether these organizations apply the right activities and utilize these in the right way in order to reach the business goals they in fact want to achieve (Evans, 2012). This problem causes organizations to spend high amounts of resources on activities that do not aid the organization and do not result in the required return on investment. (Gilfoil & Jobs, 2012; Duffy, 2012). Unprepared social media activity also risks potential brand reputation damage (Arnold & Solis, 2011). Many theories on how businesses should perform social media activities can be found in literature (Safko, 2010; Evans, 2012) as well as online (Mashable, 2012; Social Media Examiner, 2013). These tend to focus on ways to learn and start using a particular social media platform or tool, but neglect the link with underlying goals of an organization and which activities on social media they can utilize to support those goals.

The problem statement can therefore be defined as:

- *A lack of knowledge among organizations on how social media can help achieve business goals results in mispending resources on social media activities.*

## 1.2 Research trigger

Budeco (2012) has created a list of business goals and activities (table 1) which they use in consultations and workshops with their clients. The list tries to connect the business goals with particular activities that a company can apply to get a step closer to achieving particular objectives.

Goals	Activities
Increase brand awareness	Create shareable/likeable content; Advertise; Encourage appreciation
Generate leads	Advertise; Show appreciation; Create relevant content; Converse; Monitor; Involve and stimulate employees
Involve influencers	Develop relationships with influencers; Converse; Provide information; Monitor
Improve reputation	Spread relevant content; React; Converse; Encourage appreciation
Recruit new employees	Monitor; Advertise; Create shareable/likeable content; Converse; Get referrals
Retain customers	Monitor; React; Converse; Publish cases; Ask appreciation; Keep customers updated
Save costs	Monitor; React; Social webcare

Table 1. List of social media goals & activities by Budeco (2012)

The list consists of 7 distinctive ‘popular’ goals and their respective ‘to-do’- activities, which Budeco has assembled based on their own experiences and ideas. However, the goals and the activities on the list are not validated in any way. To further apply the list effectively it is deemed needed to perform research upon with a bird’s eye point of view and an academic perspective. The aim of this process is to use this list as inspiration to develop a more effective method for the utilization of social business. If the ‘initial’ model is mentioned in this work, it refers to table 1.

## 1.3 Research questions

The aforementioned problem statement is addressed by the following main research question:

- How can organizations be facilitated in deploying social media activities in alignment with their business goals?

The focus of the question is on the need for alignment between the goals of an organization and the deployment of activities using social media. This requires research into these two components and their alignment, which is divided among the following four sub research questions:

1. *What are typical business goals?*

In order to remain competitive and healthy, all organizations strive to achieve particular business goals. The aim of this sub research question is to find out which business goals that can be affected by social media activities, are being pursued most often. The ‘typical’ in the question stands for the business goals that are most likely to be pursued.

## 2. *What are typical social media activities?*

This sub research question will attempt to answer which activities using any type of social media are typical to be deployed. Finding 'typical' social media activities means it is about the commonness in which they are applied currently by organizations or are advised to do so.

## 3. *Which social media activities need to be utilized to pursue which business goal?*

After the business goals and social media activities are identified, the third sub question is focused on their alignment. Specifically on how organizations can deploy certain social media activities in association with a particular goal they have set out to achieve.

## 4. *How can the gained social business knowledge be transformed into a method and what steps does this method require in order to facilitate organizations?*

The gained knowledge on social media activities and business goals from the aforementioned sub questions needs to be utilized into a functional artifact, a method containing the use of a model.

This set of research questions form the path to create the two main deliverables of this research project. These deliverables are the Social Business Model and the Social Business Method. These concepts will be sufficiently explained and discussed in chapter 2.

## **1.4 Relevance**

### **Scientific**

Taking the rise of social media popularity in the last decade into account, it can be argued that scientific research in the field of social media is still in its very early stages. Even so, several scholars have highlighted the importance for organizations to align their social media strategies to their business goals or strategic objectives (Kietzmann, 2011; Evans, 2012; Yomego, 2013). Few social media methods or frameworks currently exist in scientific literature, but most importantly no method exists that can help organizations decide how to apply a social media strategy based on their business goals or objectives. This research will fill this gap by presenting a method designed specifically for this purpose.

### **Social**

Organizations that are not aware of the possibilities available to them with social media and how they should start are unlikely to successfully use it as an extension of their business presence. Additionally, organizations that do grasp the fundamentals of social media but still lack the understanding of how to properly apply social media activities in a way that is right for their specific business situation are still prone to wasting resources on projects and activities that subsequently do not pay off. Instead, using a wrong approach and mindset can potentially lead to brand damage (Gallaughier & Ransbotham, 2010). This research delivers insight in the importance of utilizing social media activities that suit particular situations. Consequently the resulting method can help those struggling or starting with social media to apply those activities according to their own objectives. Ultimately this will help improve social media strategies.

## 1.5 Glossary

It is assumable that most terms used in this work are sufficiently comprehensible. However, as some terms know different interpretations, additional explanations for some core terms are given to indicate how they are interpreted in the scope of this research.

- **Social media** – Due to its widespread use, *social media* knows many definitions. A frequently used definition is one by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010, p.61): “*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.*”
- **Social business** – The term *social business* in this study refers to the use of social media in business. Specifically, it implies “*by using social tools, a company can generate greater value to all its constituents*” (Merchant, 2013), meaning utilizing social tools to aid all parts of an organization. This should not to be confused with a different meaning of social business, originating from the “*make profits and meaning*” perspective of Mohammed Yunus (Forbes, 2010), in which social business is defined as “*a non-loss, non-dividend company dedicated entirely to achieve a social goal*”.
- **Business goal** – A *business goal* can be seen as a target that reflects organizational values (Ward & Peppard, 2007) When mentioning a *business goal* in this research specifically, it is meant as a goal set by an organization which is at least partially achieved through the use of social media activities.
- **Social media activity** – An accumulation of social media activities can form a social media strategy, or in other words the social business of an organization. While defining social business, Kiron et al. (2012, p.5) thereby giving a definition of a *social media activity* as “*activities that use social media, social software and social networks, to enable more efficient, effective and mutually useful connections between people, information and assets*”.
- **Content** – Content refers to User Generated Content (UGC), which stands for the publically available media content created by people through means of using, among others, social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In this research organizations that deploy social media activities are considered the users for their own generated content.
- **Platform** – Platforms can be described as Web 2.0 social media applications (Culnan, McHugh & Zubillaga, 2010). The currently most well-known platforms are social networks Facebook and LinkedIn, media sharing service YouTube and microblogging service Twitter.
- **Channel** – Often referred to in the context of *social media channels*, meaning the type of communication it provides. These channels are distinguished in types such as blogs, photo sharing and social networks. (Evans, 2012).

## 2. Research approach

In this chapter the applied research approach is described in six sections. First the chosen research method of design science research is discussed. The design science research method facilitates an overview of the research environment, the knowledge base, the activities and the deliverables that are produced by them. This overview is subsequently linked to the research steps in the second section. These research steps are then covered in the remaining sections of this chapter.

### 2.1 Design science research

To be in a position to give answers to the research questions and work towards a method, empirical research will be executed based on design science research by Hevner et al. (2004), as depicted in figure 1. The goal of design science research is to develop an artifact with the intention to solve organizational problems (Hevner et al., 2004). The artifact of this research project is a method for the utilization of social business.

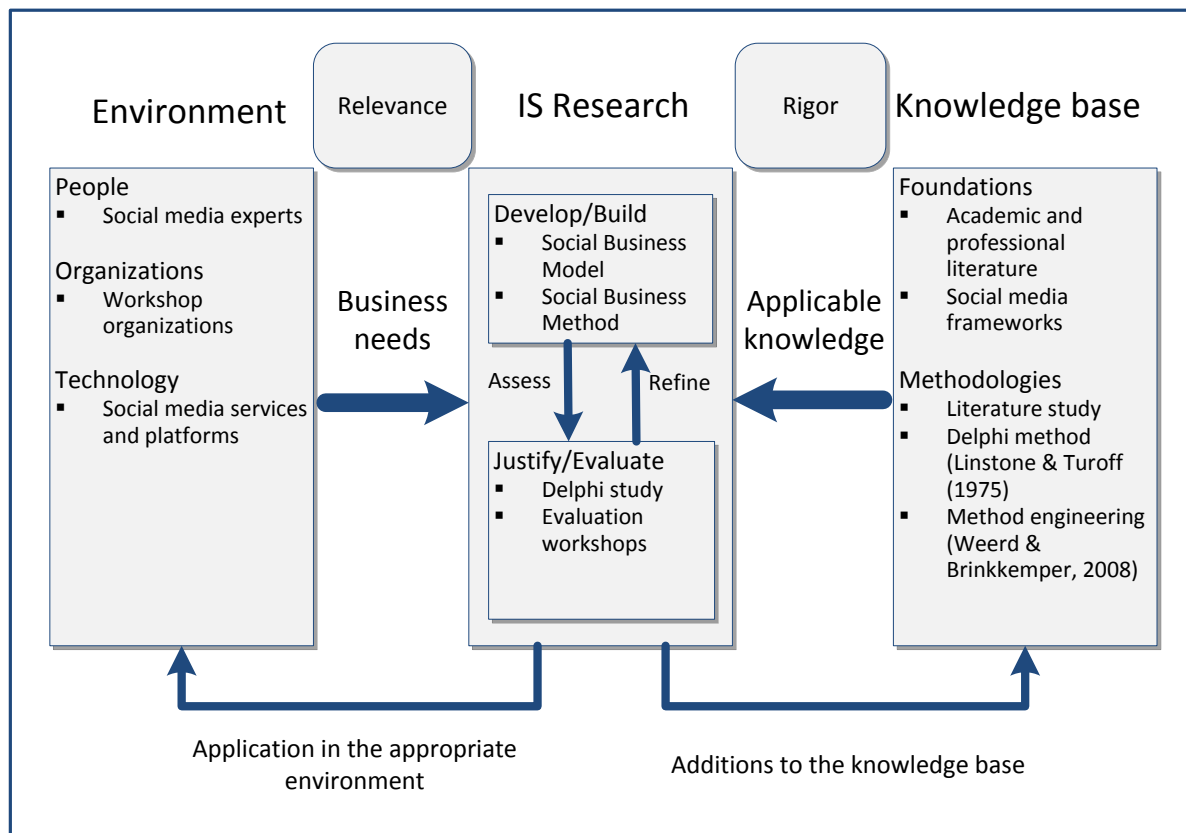


Figure 1. Design science research applied to this research (Hevner et al., 2004)

The design science research model in figure 1 centers on the development of a social business method. This method, the Social Business Method, should facilitate the practical use of social media for business purposes. The method contains an internal model, the Social Business Model, which is validated with a Delphi study. The Social Business Method is finally evaluated through workshops.

The left part of the model covers the environmental necessities of the research. Social media experts are required as participants for the Delphi study. Organizations are needed for conduct the

evaluation workshops. Business executives or high level managers are required here because the participants in these workshops should have a comprehensive view on all aspects of their organization. Another environmental aspect is the technical innovation of social media services and platforms. The right part of the model covers the applied knowledge base. This covers the knowledge foundations and specific methodologies that are used or applied during this research.

## 2.2 Research steps

Figure 2 displays the main research steps of the project, for each indicating which (sub) research questions they will answer and which deliverables they lead to. The environment and knowledge base components from the research method in figure 1 are displayed in their support role at specific research steps. However, some entries from figure 1 are omitted to keep a clear structure.

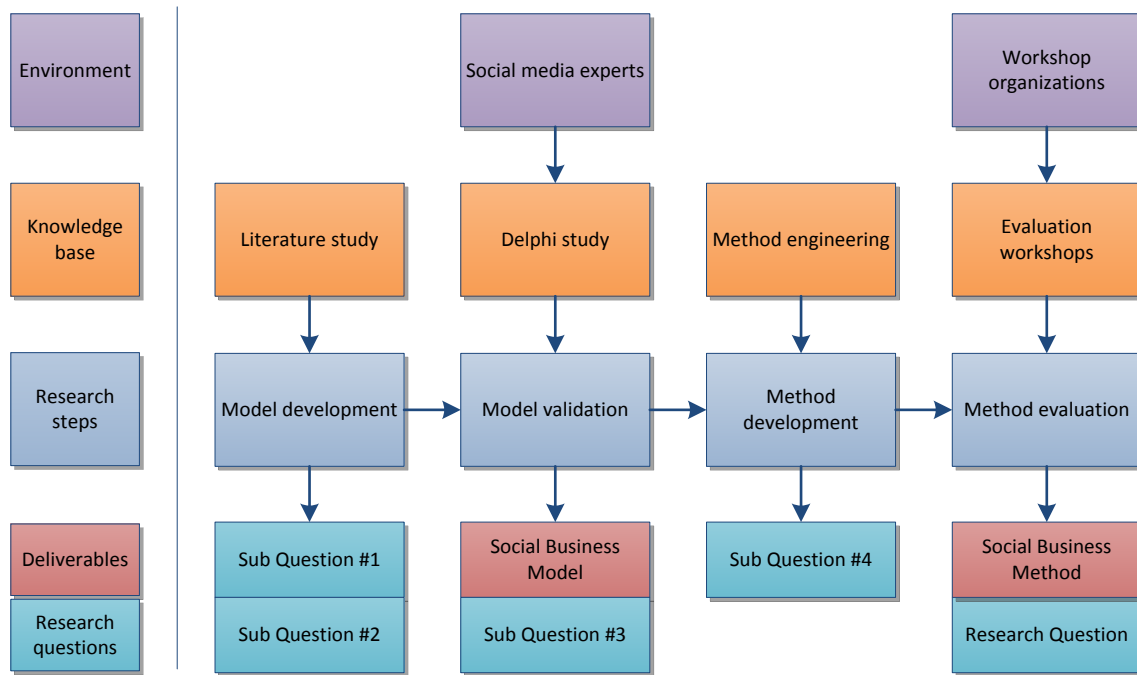


Figure 2. Visualization of the research steps

The first step of the research is model development, where a literature study will elicit business goals and social media activities from academic and professional literature.. The elicitation process is described in the next chapter. The first research step attempts to answer the first two sub questions. This triggers the model validation, where a Delphi study is deployed in which an expert panel is used to validate the model. The validated model triggers the next research step of method development, in which method steps are formed around the use of the model. Finally the method evaluation through workshops will conclude the research and answer the main research question.

## 2.3 Model development

The foundation for the model development is the initial model presented in table 1 in the research trigger section, chapter 1.2. This is the initial model as conceived by Budeco. The development of the Social Business Model involves two parts. One part is a literature study to the business goals presented in the initial model. This assessment of business goals already existing in the model is

performed to determine whether they fit the criteria of the research and to what extent they are supported by literature. The other part of the model development concerns a literature study for additional findings through an elicitation of business goals and social media activities not yet existing in the model. The literature study, goals elicitation, and activities elicitation are described in the following sections. Additionally, several restrictions of the model development are discussed.

### 2.3.1. Literature study

The targeted outcome of the literature study is to have a processed set of usable data to construct the first new version of the model. This means it is mainly about collecting a wide amount of ideas on business goals and finding common characteristics of thought among scholars. The same then applies to social media activities that can be of use to these business goals. Because of its library size, the search engine scholar.google.com was chosen to collect relevant literature. The search terms are given in table 2. As the core of the research is about social media, most of the search entries contained these two words, accompanied by a search term from category 2. Double quotation marks were used around concepts, for example: “social media”, instructing the search engine to omit results in which only one word of the concept was present. In case a concept had a popular abbreviation, it was used in case the full length concept did not yield sufficient results. An example of this is ‘return on investment’. Concepts with frequently used word versions were also deemed interchangeably, such as ‘recruiting’ and ‘recruitment’, or business ‘goals’ and business ‘objectives’. These equivalent terms were deemed interchangeable in the search queries.

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Social media	Business goals	Brand awareness
	Return on investment	Leads
	Business continuity	Reputation
	Activities	Advertising
	Advertising	Influencers
	Monitoring	Cost saving
	Marketing	Recruiting

Table 2. Literature study search terms

The literature is selected on relevance of the abstract to the topic and the number of citations. No time period range was applied. While social media in business is a relatively new subject in scientific research, business goals have an extended presence. An article on brand awareness from the year 1990 can hold valuable insights for the discussion on whether or not it is a suitable goal for social media activities to contribute to. For a piece of literature to be included, it had to be available through Google Scholar or UBULink. The chosen literature was further used to check relevant related work through citations. When searching for and researching business goals (category 3) specifically, the link to social media was not necessarily required. This part of the literature study was about finding common goals for organizations, before assessing which ones could be influenced by social media activities. When researching social media activities, literature that was already selected in previous searches were also searched internally. More detail on how the business goals and social media activities were researched and how the collected data was processed is given in the following sections.

### 2.3.2. Business goals elicitation

After the literature study identified relevant business goals, a matrix in Microsoft Excel was constructed to capture the findings in an overview. The findings were mapped by source and categorized by goal. The goals were dispersed into categories, whereby each category was placed on a similar level of detail. The importance of this was for instance to avoid situations where a category was interpreted as several sub categories. The current business goals in the initial model (table 1) were studied by comparison with findings from the literature study, as well as with other respectable sources on the internet such as professional technical websites and blogs. The latter category will be found through web search and tools such as Google Alerts.

Business goals can take multiple forms in sources. Goal discovery in the selected sources can for instance be related to objectives, challenges, important uses or reasons of participation. As the findings from literature are unavoidably written in different perspectives and contexts, it is likely for findings to be connected to each other even though they are written differently. An hypothetical example: if one article distinguishes the goal ‘increased website traffic’; and another article defines the goal ‘generate sales leads and revenue’, then these can be seen as subcategories of the same business goal: generate leads. To show an example of this, a snippet of the business goal matrix is shown in figure 3. It gives an example of two business goals and findings of literature mentions that are split up if they refer to the same business goal. No specific coding of the findings took place at this level because the overview the matrix provided was sufficient. The business goals as indicated on the left of figure 3 received green coding in case sufficient support was identified.

Business goals	Budeco (2013)	[W] Yomego (2013)	Kaske et al. (2010)	[W] Marketwire (2012)
Increase brand awareness	Increase brand awareness	Awareness Reach	Greater reach	Increase brand presence
Generate leads	Generate leads	Website traffic	Improved business generation	Increased website traffic
		Market share increase		

Figure 3. Part of business goal elicitation matrix

Despite that the aim of the model is focused on social media, this does not mean that the goals are specifically tailored towards social media. It is driven away from goals such as gaining online followers or raising a certain amount of likes on a Facebook page. This would lead to a too specific and high-leveled definition, widening the scope of the model too far. Thus the challenge of this process is to determine a set of similarly-leveled business goals which each support the main goal of an organization: continuity and/or growth through the means of profit.

This approach has some limitations. First of all, a contributing source has to be of reliable origin. However, because of the limited amount of scientific articles that discuss the matter of social media activities in detail, other online sources were used as well. These include social media agencies, online social media magazines, and industry-related research organizations. To ensure a required level of quality, the validity of these sources was checked on reputation, support and/or



collaborations with industry leading corporations. This led to some sources being omitted, in this case online social media blogs such as Social Media Today (2013) and Talent Evolution (2013) It was however considered necessary to check these types of sources for the exploration of the field, as they provide a more recent view of the trends, development and possibilities of online technology.

Another limitation is that most of the sources have their focus on a particular element of social media. Therefore they tend to be unselective, with some articles mentioning more common goals, while other articles might take those for granted. However, because of the bird's eye view nature of this elicitation, this is not deemed to be harmful. Ultimately, the aim of the literature goal elicitation is not to finalize the model, but to broaden the view on the model and its goals. The sources serve as means of support for the usability of particular goals.

### **2.3.3. Social media activities elicitation**

Similar to the business goals elicitation, the social media activities were gathered from scientific and professional literature. It has to be noted that an activity specifically requires to be performed by means of social media. Eventually each goal must have a set of activities. An activity can be applicable for several goals, but could still differ in detail for a specific goal. The links of the activities to the goals are of high importance because they form the consultation to companies of what actions to perform. The linked activities will then function as part of the model.

Like with the goal elicitation, Microsoft Excel was again used to collect and compare the social media activities. The findings were mapped in a matrix by category and source. The point of this step is helping extend the view on activities.

More so than the business goals, the social media activities are very specific and are more likely to stand apart from other activities. The challenge of the activities elicitation is to avoid overlapping between activities and to make sure they are clear as well as comprehensible. Ultimately they must be understood by business owners who have little experience with social media.

### **2.3.4. Criteria**

The goal is for the model to be as widely applicable as possible, so it is usable by a larger amount of organizations. For the model to be effective however, certain criteria are required. The most important two criteria are:

- For a business goal to be included in the model, it must be affectible through the use of social media activities.
- A social media activity must make use of social media. This further means that activities are included which in principle can also be partially deployed without social media.

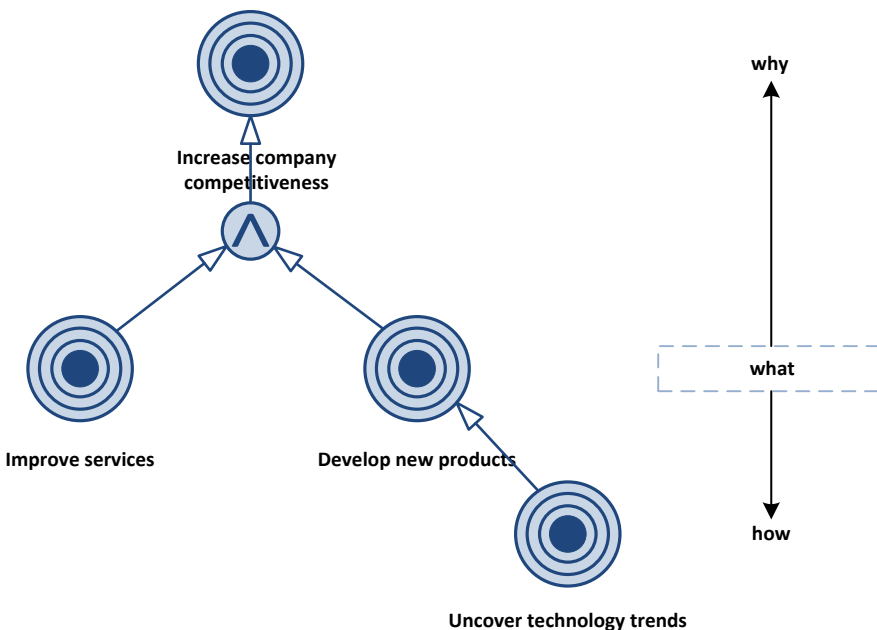
Further restrictions relate to the abstraction level, timelessness and the scope of model.

#### **Abstraction level**

The selection of business goals and social media activities for the model was required to be performed thoroughly. First of all, boundaries had to be set for the abstraction level of the goals. An example: one could argue that building customer loyalty and satisfaction is one of their business

goals; another would say managing customer relationships is theirs. However, both ultimately support the same business goal, namely that of customer retention. It has to be emphasized that this attention to detail is key to the model. Markovic and Kowalkiewics (2008) address this hurdle with a why- what-how decomposition, seen on the right of figure 4.

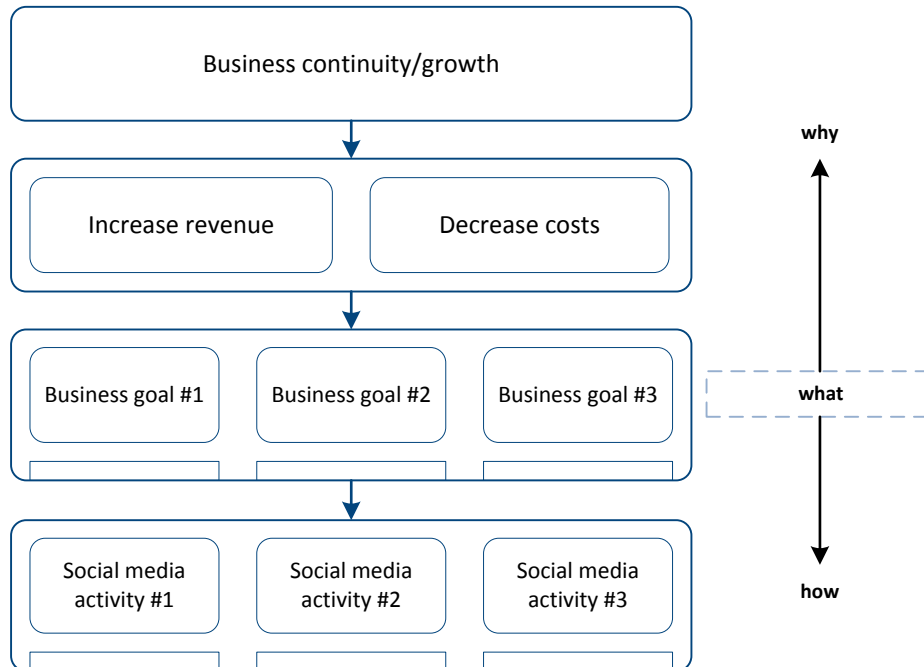
The example shown in figure 4 highlights the abstraction issue. All four elements could be argued to be an example of a business goal. Utilizing a why-what-how decomposition at the appropriate levels helps to create a consistent hierarchy of business goals. In the example, ‘increase company competitiveness’ is shown as the highest (why) business goal, with ‘improve services’ and ‘develop new products’ as middle (what) business goals and ‘uncover technology trends’ as the lowest (how) goal. The highest goal is supported by the middle goal in terms of success, just like the middle goal is supported by the lower goal. (Markovic & Kowalkiewics, 2008).



**Figure 4. Business goal decomposition (Markovic & Kowalkiewicz, 2008)**

A similar annotation is applied in this research (figure 5). The highest drive of organizations is composed under the term ‘why’, which is seen as achieving business continuity or growth through use of increasing revenue and/or decreasing costs. This overarching principle of an organization’s existence further functions as the reason why the lower leveled business goals are in place. These more specific business goals are seen as ‘what’ needs to be achieved to make sure the top objective of the organization keeps being pursued.

However, deflecting from the theory behind the example of Markovic and Kowalkiewics (2008), the lowest and third level of ‘how’, with the example of ‘uncover technology trends’ would in this research be formulated as an activity that supports a middle level business goal.



**Figure 5. Schematic representation of the abstraction level based on an annotation by Markovic & Kowalkiewicz (2008)**

The social media activities are added in the schematic figure for overview. In this research they are composed as ‘how’ a business goal can be achieved. It is important to keep the discussed abstraction distinctions of this section in check throughout the development of the model.

### **Timelessness**

Rapid technological advancements result in strong familiarities and habits with platforms and services which merely exist a few years. For these platforms and services, potential global reach is growing as worldwide accessibility to internet and hardware is ever increasing. However, this innovative environment also creates a highly competitive market in which multinational corporations as well as entrepreneurs and startups are constantly seeking for new services which are feasible with the available technology at that present moment. However difficult it may be to reach the top, it is always more difficult to stay on top due to the nature of innovation and how different generations of companies adapt to the rules of the current generation in order to be successful at this moment (Forbes, 2012a). Furthermore, laws and regulations possibly further affect the allowance of certain activities, like for example privacy laws affecting the legality of different ways of advertisement. Applying this timelessness to the model means that specific mentions of platforms should be avoided, and a general generic formulation of activities is required to avoid dependency on current services.

### **Scope**

In an ideal situation, the model and method are globally usable by any organization. However, small and medium enterprises in the Netherlands make up over 99% of the organizations of the Dutch industry (MKB Servicedesk, 2013). As the research is aimed towards easing applying social media, it is far more likely that the deliverables can be of assistance to this group of organizations.

## 2.4 Model validation

After the model development as described in the previous section produced the model components, a validation was performed with the Delphi method in collaboration with a panel of nine social business experts. The Delphi method was originally developed as a forecasting method on the technology impact on warfare by the RAND Corporation in the 1950's (RAND Corporation, 2013). It is used in this research as a method for reaching an expert consensus on the contents of the Social Business Model. Through a five-round Delphi study, answers and additional feedback were collected from the panel, then processed and returned to the panel. A more detailed description of the Delphi preparation is given in chapter 4. This discusses the formation of the expert panel, the data analysis process, the validation process, and the decision process used during the Delphi study.

## 2.5 Method development

The Social Business Model described in the previous sections functions as an integrated part of the Social Business Method. This method is developed using the method engineering discipline.

### Method engineering

Following the outline of the steps, the construction of the method was performed with method engineering, defined as *“the engineering discipline to design, construct and adapt methods, techniques and tools for the development of information systems”* (Brinkkemper, 1996, p.276). Method engineering is used in this research to design and construct the Social Business Method. For this research, a method is seen as an approach to perform a project, structured in processes with corresponding deliverables (Brinkkemper, 1996). In terms of this research, a method can be used to facilitate the process of developing a social business strategy. A method can be displayed by a Process-Deliverable Diagram (PDD). The PDD in this research is developed using the modeling technique described in Weerd and Brinkkemper (2008). A PDD is an effective way to present a method because it gives a clear overview of the required steps to perform the method, as well as the checkpoints that are created by those steps. The developed PDD in this research displays the processes, also called activities, and the deliverables, also called concepts, of the Social Business Method. An activity is depicted by a rounded rectangle. Its purpose is to concisely explain what needs to be done. The activities form a path of steps with each activity being linked to a particular deliverable. The deliverables can be associated with each other, for example in the way of being a part of another deliverable or by providing input to another deliverable. While a deliverable is always written in all caps and in singular form, it can still refer to a number of objects that are stored in that deliverable.

### Method development process

The Social Business Method consists of several steps that guide the user through the process of deploying the Social Business Model. First, these steps had to be determined. This involved assessing the step-by-step process required to use the Social Business Model correctly. Secondly, it had to be determined what the deliverable of the method would be and what information it would have to entail, which would also indicate what concepts were further required while deploying the Social Business Method. Using method engineering, the steps were divided into activities which were linked to particular concepts. The method development was followed by a method evaluation, which is discussed in the next section.

## 2.6 Method evaluation

A method evaluation took place with the goal of optimizing the steps of the method. The evaluation for the method was twofold. The first part was undertaken through workshops and involved testing the method. The second part involved a small survey with participants of these workshops. The final method contains the developed model as a step and is extended by further steps of how the model should be utilized. Workshops were arranged with InOffice Woerden en Het Klooster, small businesses located in Woerden, the Netherlands.

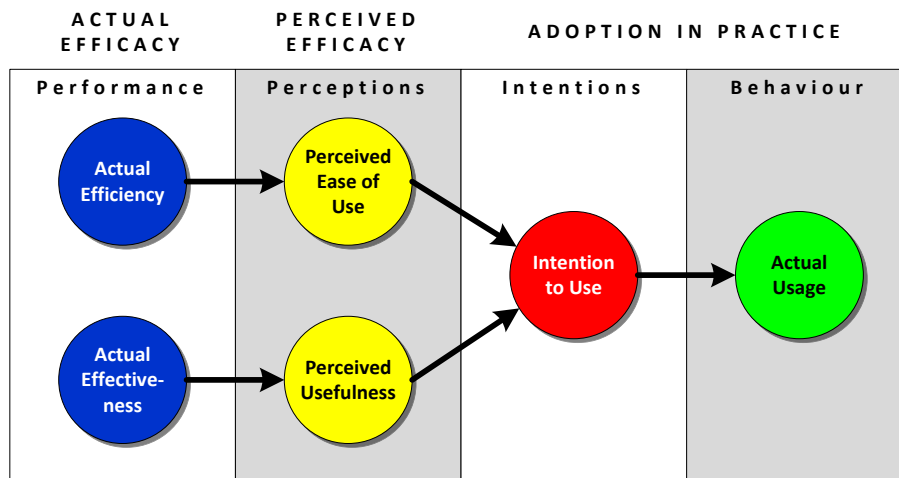


Figure 6. Method Evaluation Model by Moody (2003)

The Method Evaluation Model is displayed in figure 6, depicting the concepts of a method evaluation theory from Moody (2003). It consists of the following six variables, divided in three constructs:

- Actual efficacy (Performance)
  - Actual Efficiency
  - Actual Effectiveness
- Perceived efficacy (Perceptions)
  - Perceived Ease of Use
  - Perceived Usefulness
- Adoption in practice (Intentions & Behavior)
  - Intention to Use
  - Actual Usage

The questionnaire contained questions based on the above variables. The questions were altered based on the subject of evaluation. Some irrelevant questions were omitted. It was decided to only look at the evaluation results of the constructs Actual efficacy and Perceived efficacy, because the variable Intention to Use was influenced due to the circumstances of the workshop. The nature of the workshop entailed that bias was involved for the organization in question regarding interest in deploying social media and were therefore likely to respond positively to the intention to use the method. The variable of Actual Usage fell outside of the scope of the evaluation.

### 3. Literature review

This chapter discusses social media applicability in business through existing models, methods and frameworks. It further provides a literature platform on the elements of the trigger model from Budeco (figure 1). Additionally, scientific and professional literature on business goals and social media activities will be discussed.

#### 3.1 Social media fundamentals

Two aspects often mentioned as the foundation of social media are Web2.0 and User Generated Content. Web 2.0 enables participation, collaboration and interaction among people (Bebensee, Helms, & Spruit, 2012). Its technical functionalities such as Flash; RSS; and AJAX, are the building foundation for social media use (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). According to O’Reilly & Battelle (2009) Web 2.0 network applications such as eBay, YouTube and Facebook serve, among other functions, as a medium to harness collective intelligence. It is arguable that this in turn makes the web gradually more intelligent, or richer, through the content that its users generate. The User Generated Content (UGC) aspect stands for the publically available media content created by people through means of using, among others, social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The effects social media has brought to business cannot be underestimated, with many different aspects of business having been severely altered. The 3-M framework (figure 7) of Gallagher & Rasbotham (2010) depicts the fundamental change social media has brought to communication between organizational entities and customers.

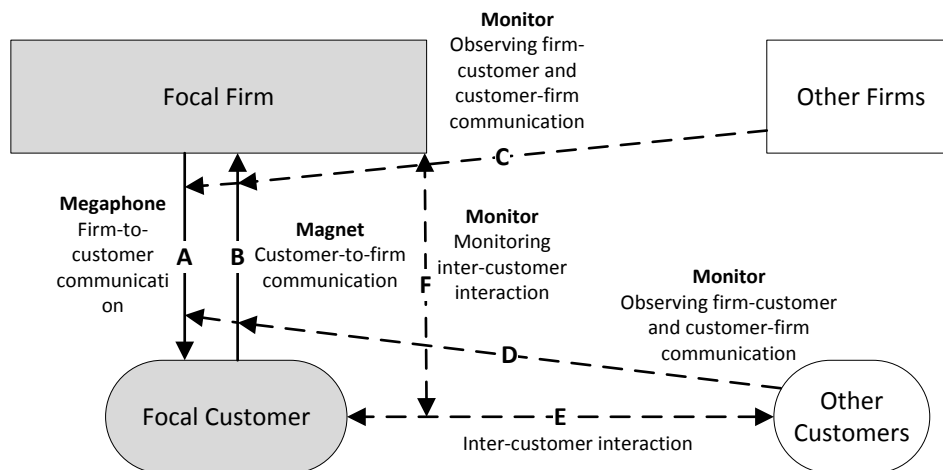


Figure 7. The 3-M Framework by Gallagher & Rasbotham (2010)

The solid lines represent the communication paths which were already present, while the dotted lines represent forms of communication made possible through social media. The M’s in the 3-M framework stand for the terms megaphone, magnet and monitor. Megaphone (A) stands for the broadcasting of a firm’s messages and magnet (B) for capturing inbound customer messages. These components were to some degree already available prior to social media. Monitor stands for intercepting communication which is relevant to a firm, but not produced by or aimed directly at the firm. Gallagher & Rasbotham (2010) identify four different monitoring mechanisms, each of which highlights the change social media has brought to customer dialog and the information

organizations can obtain from it. Organizations used to not be able to read what customers were saying to each other about for example their brand or products. Any organization (C) or customer (D) can monitor the interaction between another organization and their customers, and inter-customer interaction (E) can be monitored by as well by organizations (F). Most of this seems to be out of control for organizations, yet they also provide many opportunities for them. The framework further shows that many forms of monitoring are used between different parties that were not possible prior to social media.

### 3.2 Social media frameworks

Kietzmann, et al. (2011) divided social media functionalities in a honeycomb of seven building blocks (Figure 8). The purpose of functionally splitting up social media in this manner is to improve the understanding of the different social media principles. These principles are portrayed by the building blocks: identity; conversations; sharing; presence; relationships; reputation; and groups. The framework consists of two parts: the left honeycomb includes a short description on the meaning of each functional block; and the right honeycomb describes the implications each aspect has on firms.

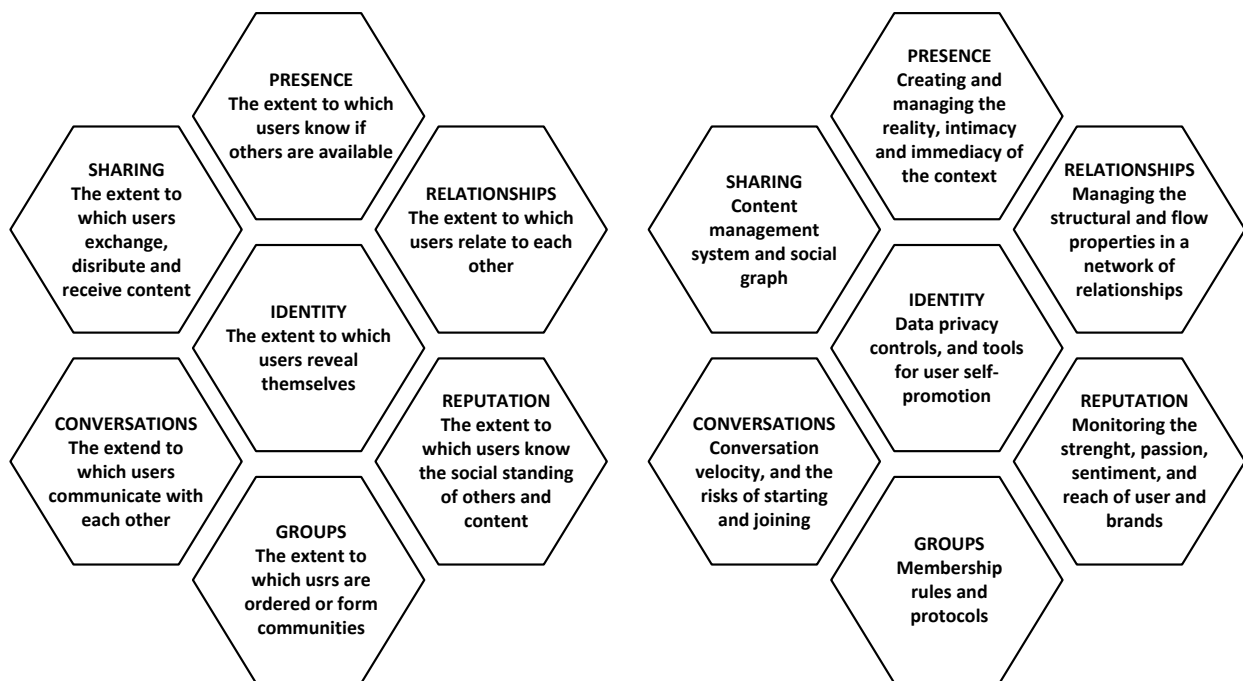


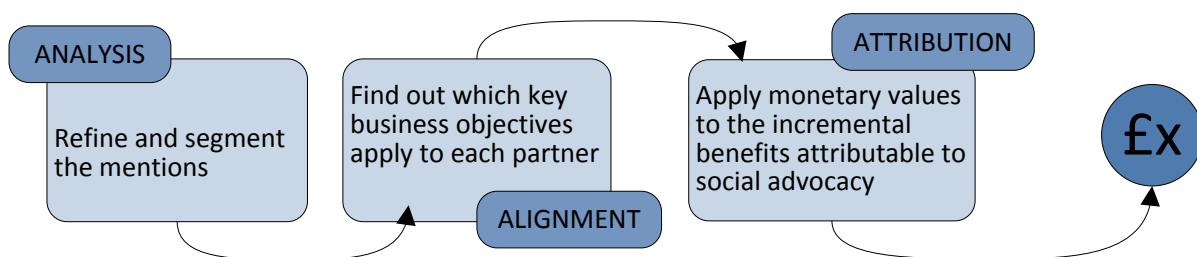
Figure 8. Kietzmann, et al. (2011) Honeycomb of social media

Kietzmann, et al. (2011) further present the guideline of the 4 C's: cognize; congruity; curate; and chase, which roughly translate to the needs of an organization to prepare; plan; control; and monitor their activity on social media. The idea behind the 4 C's is to provide instructions for using the honeycomb framework. Kietzmann, et al., (2011) argue that it is important during the planning stage to develop a strategy which aligns with the goals of the firm.

A case study by Senadheera, Warren, & Leitch (2011) analyzed the aid of the honeycomb framework with the use of social media services among Australian banks. While the framework

appears to cover all aspects of social media, it has certain limitations. They found that the framework can be useful to measure the increase of social media services adoption. They also perceive it as a helpful framework for monitoring their surroundings for benefit of their strategy. However, they point out that because it is centered on the technological strengths of particular social media services, the strength of a particular business performance remains very subjective. Further discussions cover the applicability of the framework universally, as it is not taking regional social media services into consideration, nor changes in the social media landscape. Furthermore, the framework gives organizations large amount of freedom, but with freedom comes responsibility. Many organizations are not sufficiently capable to determine their own strategy with aligned activities. Reading the honeycomb framework would advise a firm which wants to share more content to utilize YouTube, yet the framework cannot answer what actions that firm should apply to make that work in their favor. However, if the framework makes anything clear, it is the evident fact that to truly engage with social media, it is required to employ more than one platform. All these reasons illustrate the need for a less time-framed, platform-independent model to form the basis of a social media strategy. Therefore it was useful to analyze the honeycomb framework of Kietzmann et al. (2011) in preparation of creating a social media method.

Another recent effort to develop a social media model with objectives and goals can be found in the white paper from Yomego (2013), in which a starting point for a framework for assessing a value for social media advocacy is proposed. The core of this framework is shown in figure 9. It should be noted that the author states a lot of the framework is up for debate. In fact, it is Yomego's notion that this might be a framework that will be under constant development, which is understandable considering the rapidity of the changes in the social media landscape. They further argue that the specific goals and the amount of them shown in the framework are up for debate, which is likely because there is no absolute right number as each organizational case has its unique elements. Yet it is being made clear that a shortlist needs to exist to provide a starting point. This once again proves the need for the existence of a versatile method.



**Figure 9. Yomego's (2013) framework for social media advocacy**

Similar to the framework of Kietzmann, et al. (2011), a platform-based view is taken on the action level, in Yomego's case explained through a list of direct and indirect 'social interactions'. The same risks apply here regarding to the changes in the social media landscape. It also leaves an organization in the dark on which activities actually need to be applied in order to get closer to fulfilling a particular objective.



Additionally, the paper is solely written from a return-on-investment (ROI) point of view, based on dividing value among the strategic objectives of the organizations. The crux with this approach in social media is that its link to ROI is a recently much debated topic with very little consensus on whether or not traditional ROI can and should be applied to social media activities (Fisher, 2009; Hoffman & Fodor, 2010; Arnold, 2011). Nevertheless Yomego tries to attempt feat this by identifying the objectives, attributing values and adding those together, before subtracting the made investment. However, a review of the Yomego framework by Econsultancy (Econsultancy, 2013) further points out that in order to simplify this process, the attribution of values is done equally for all objectives. Thus the framework not only withholds the user of knowing which actions to perform in which scenario, but it also applies restrictions in the value given to a particular social interaction.

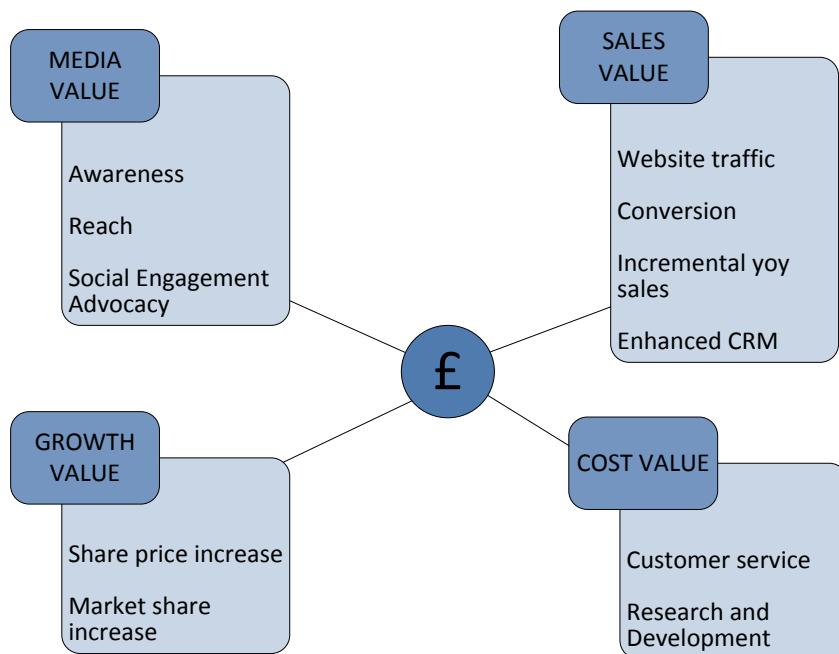


Figure 10. Yomego's (2013) strategic objectives

As depicted in Figure 10, the intriguing aspect of the Yomego framework is that it has a thoroughly goal-oriented approach of social media utilization from a firm's perspective, with a broad overview of possible business goals. However, the business goals in the model seem to be questionably aligned regarding their abstraction level, with for instance incremental year on year sales being affected by many of the other objectives.

IBM (2013) released a framework titled 'Social Media Analytics' (figure 11) with the goal of helping organizations solve business problems. The framework is the underlying structure for an IBM software product, and consists of four central capabilities:

- Assess – Monitor what is socially happening to your organization.
- Segment – Categorize and assess target groups.
- Relate – Measure sentiment with related topics.
- Discover – Analyze seemingly unrelated concepts that could impact your brand.

As the name suggests, their framework is aimed towards the analytics of customer content. Because the framework is the underlying thought for an IBM software product for social media, it focuses on the required functionalities for this software, which is mainly a monitoring tool.

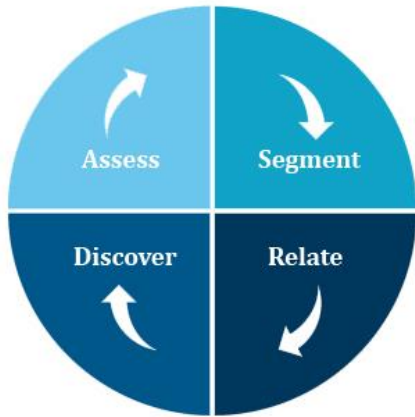


Figure 11. Social Media Analytics framework (IBM, 2013)

The monitoring perspective can be seen by the passive trigger of the framework. The notion of IBM (2013) of the importance of monitoring in gaining understanding of customer behavior is shared by the framework part ‘analyse’ by Yomego (2013)

To conclude this section: the mentioned frameworks in this chapter might not all perfectly illustrate the need for a goal-oriented social media method. However, they do give us insight in the way organizations and scholars try and tackle the issues they have of integrating social media into their business, thereby suggesting what improvements might be needed.

### 3.3 Initial business goals

The trigger of this research contained a list of frequently occurring goals (table 3), which is used as the starting point for the literature review. Each item on the list will be briefly discussed.

Business goals
Increase brand awareness
Generate leads
Involve influencers
Improve reputation
Recruit new employees
Retain customers
Save costs

Table 3. Budeco list business goals

#### Increase brand awareness

In their research, Hoyer & Brown (1990) define brand awareness as: “a rudimentary level of brand knowledge involving, at the least, recognition of the brand name”, arguing that awareness is the lowest form of brand knowledge. Oh (2000, p.140) classifies brand awareness as a part of brand

value, referring to brand awareness as *“the degree of name recognition ...”* opposed to brand class indicating the quality level. It is important in this study to distinguish awareness from class or quality because social media is unlikely to directly contribute to the latter two factors. For the purpose of this study, brand awareness will be perceived as the recognition of the brand name, with key elements being increased reach and exposure. A report by Stelzner (2013) among marketers (n=>3000) found that an increase in exposure is considered to be social media marketing’s most important benefit, with 92% of marketers indicating that social media has helped increase brand exposure, making it not unusual that increasing brand awareness is a frequently sought after goal.

Brand awareness affects consumer decisions by *“influencing which brands enter the consideration set”* (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000, p.1), where the consideration set is a way of explaining the serious purchasing options a consumer takes in mind. Through this, brand awareness also influences uninformed consumers who make a decision based on what is known to them (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000.) This plays into the strengths of people making a connection with your organization and products when facing your brand. Therefore the goal of increasing awareness of a brand merely implies that the mass reach of the recognition of a brand is extended. This is important for most organizations because the probability increases that the brand is mentioned and thus recommended among their connection (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000).

### **Generate leads**

Leads generally refer to sales leads or the marketing term lead generation. These terms have not been well defined in recent scientific literature. Leads have been described as *“names of people or companies who may be prime prospects for a firm’s product or service”* Morey & McCann (1983). Online business dictionaries define a sales lead as *“generating prospective consumers of a product or service”* (Investopedia, 2013), and *“inquiry, referral, or other information, obtained through advertisements or other means, that identifies a potential customer (prospect)”* (Business Dictionary, 2013). These definitions highlight that whoever might be interested in the organization is merely a prospect. Organizations want these prospects as they can become future customers. Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden (2011, p.2) specifically point out that *“blogs are proving to be a useful method of generating sales leads”*, which could be translated into a social media platform providing potential customers with possible persuasive information. A survey of IBM (2012) among people with experience in social business activities (n=599) suggests 51% use social business to generate sales leads and revenue while 74% adding that they intended to use social business for this objective in the following two years.

The distinction of leads with sales and revenue needs to be highlighted. Leads can be seen as one of the first steps in the sales process. According to the abstraction level as explained in chapter 3.1, revenue as a goal is a different level opposed to the business goals targeted in this research. Together the goals work towards achieving revenue. Sales is mentioned as the objective of ‘incremental year-on-year sales’ by Yomego (2013), alongside objectives as ‘website traffic’, ‘conversion’ and ‘enhanced CRM’ under the heading ‘sales value’. Yomego uses the viewpoint of return on investment metrics to calculate the amount of sales through social media. However, mentions of gaining sales through social media actually describe the process leading up to sale, except for the actual sale. The functionality of social media is wide and growing, but if a potential

client currently gains interest in a product through social media, then drawn towards a website of the organization or a meeting with a salesperson, that is where the actual sale takes place. The preceding process to the sale is lead generation, which is as far as social media reaches. For this research it therefore appears to be wise to not use leads and sales synonymously.

### **Involve influencers**

While influencers have been around as long as products and services have, through social media they can let their voices be heard to a continually growing crowd. A comprehensive definition for influencers by Keller, Fay & Berry (2007, p.2): *“everyday consumers who are substantially more likely than the average to seek out information and to share ideas, information, and recommendations with other people”*. The word ‘substantially’ may be considered vague, yet it is essential for describing influencers, because technically they are not any different than anyone else. They are most likely consumers of the same product or service which they are influencing other consumers with. Or they at least appear to be, in the eyes of those other consumers, meaning that they could be persuaded by organizations to influence for their brand. The difference with other consumers does not necessarily lie in what influencers do, but in the effect of the influence they possess on their connections and on the connections of those connections (Booth & Matic, 2011). The influence does not necessarily have to be positive. It can also cause a negative wave about a brand or product in which the quality of the influencer determines its effect (Freberg et al., 2011). Brown (2012, p.XV) agrees that it is more about change in any direction than simply in a positive form, describing an influencer as *“anyone who has the ability to change people’s perception about a concept, idea or product leading to a change in online behaviour and buying decisions”*.

Involving influencers to assist in broadcasting your messages is mentioned as a business goal by IBM (2012), and Brown (2012), who emphasizes the importance of influencers for amplifying your message. A theory by Brown (2012) places influencers in different tiers, and strongly argues for their interconnections and how the word of mouth spreads from tier to tier. Booth & Matic (2011) use a similar structure for tiering influencer blogs. There is little question that influencers possess a certain power in modern marketing and that it could be beneficial for organizations to explore their surroundings in this area: who are possible influencers and what are they worth for our brand? But while software products do exist to help organizations cooperate with influencers, it can be challenging to identify, target and involve specific influencers who they deem fitting to aid their brand (Keller, Fay & Berry, 2007; Brown, 2010; Evans, 2012).

### **Improve reputation**

Fombrun (1996 cited in Turban & Cable, 2003, p.734) defines corporate reputation as *“a perceptual representation of a firm’s overall appeal compared to other leading rivals”*, where ‘perceptual’ refers to the immediate noticeability through senses. For a consumer this means having a cognitive association with a particular brand or organization. For an organization this ideally leads to the customer choosing their product during a purchasing decision. *“In essence, reputation is about how trust between parties is developed, assessed and maintained”* (Kietzmann et al., 2012, p.4). While many organizations are new to working on establishing trust through social media channels, a lack of appropriate reputation measuring with the current technologies do not provide much help to make it less complex for them (Kietzmann et al., 2012).

Organizational reputation is a relative value because of the constant comparison with their competitors, which means that improving reputation is a continuous process. Just like how firms compete for customers, they also compete for having the best reputation (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Obviously these two concepts seem closely related. However, a positive reputation can have more advantages for organizations besides influencing an individual's purchasing choices, such as investment and career decisions (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990).

Media exposure is one of the key influencers on the reputation of an organization (Turban & Cable, 2003). Social media facilitates a relatively new way for organizations to create their own media exposure through online content. However, as a vastly popular and growing form of media it is unquestionable that it has large potential for generating exposure. Research on viral online content suggests that reputation can be particularly boosted by content which is positive and/or practically useful (Berger & Milkman, 2012).

### **Recruit employees**

*"Recruitment includes those practices and activities with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees"*, defined by Barber (1998 cited in Breugh & Starke, 2000, p.407).

Research by Kiron et al. (2012) among 3000 managers suggested that 'acquiring and retaining employees' to be the third most important challenge out of eight that social software could contribute to. The social network LinkedIn has amassed over 225 million member profiles (LinkedIn, 2013), which are practically targetable online resumes for recruiters. Recruiting through social media is on the rise and has lowered the barrier of communication.

### **Retain customers**

According to scholars and industry sources, acquiring new customers can be substantially more expensive than retaining current customers (Rust & Zahorik, 1993; Kaske, Kügler, & Smolnik, 2012; CIM, 2010), with figures ranging between three to thirty times as much. This likely differs between organization types such as B2C and B2B, but for any organization it is enough incentive to attempt maintaining strong relationships with their customers. Social media offers possibilities to interact in new ways with customers and it provides a new outlet for the publication of this relationship.

Kaske, Kügler, & Smolnik (2012) mention customer retention as one of the main social media benefits, besides among others improved customer communication and the avoidance of outrages, both of which could indirectly also influence retaining customers. They also mention that the major social media platforms contain tools to measure online customer retention tracking, such as the length of their subscription.

### **Save costs**

Cost saving is a frequently mentioned term for firms when speaking about social media. Defined as *"spending less than previously spent or less than quoted options"* (Yale, 2013), or in other words: spending less than projected. However, spending on social media per firm is higher than expected, and is growing annually (Booth & Matic, 2011). If organizations spend that much on implementing and running social media in their organization, how are costs saved? Many organizations struggle to understand the ROI (return on investment) of social media (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010; Arnold,

2011), which consequently makes it difficult to determine the costs saved through it. A point Arnold (2011) likes to extend on: if success on social media is measured in non-financial terms, the struggle to measure ROI is also removed and firms can focus on achieving their actual social media objectives.

Yomego (2013) uses cost value, or cost reduction as they later call it, as one of the pillars of their social media framework. More specifically it is there to support the objectives of customer service and research & development. So while the author claims many organizations use social media to reduce costs, it descends another level to explain which practical goals can influence cost reduction. These arguments leads to the conclusion that cost saving is higher up in the business goal hierarchy. For some, reducing costs can still be one of the targets they want to hit when executing social media, but it does not seem the best of starting perspectives to achieve success, as it misses the core point of what social media should mean for an organization. Cost saving is rather is a consequence of utilizing social media in the right way for lower leveled goals of an organization.

### **3.4 Business goals**

Very little scientific literature mentions specific business goals in relation to activity on social media or social networks. The key of the goal elicitation is that if it cannot be argued that a business goal can be influenced by social media activity, it is not suitable for inclusion in the model.

Kiron et al. (2012) conducted a survey in collaboration with Deloitte questioning the primary challenges that firms were facing in the near future. There was no emphasis on social media in this question. The top three responses were: growing revenue; innovating for competitive differentiation; and reducing costs and increasing efficiencies. These are all general goals with a high abstraction level. The initial model of Budeco has cost reduction as a business goal too, as well as Yomego, 2013; Kiron et al., 2012; Culnan, McHugh & Zubillaga (2010). However, all organizations ultimately strive to grow more revenue while reducing costs, as it is a financial package required ensuring continuity of their business. The other most important strategic objectives set by Yomego (2013) are depicted in Figure 10. Most of these objectives are financially oriented (Incremental year on year sales; share price increase; conversion) and were therefore deemed unfit for consideration because the abstraction level puts direct financial results above the business goals that are searched for.

Culnan, McHugh & Zubillaga (2010) mention how social media can serve as a platform to improve your customer service, which is echoed by IBM (2012), who in their research found that customer service is one of the fastest growing areas in social business adoption, with 63% of companies expected to use social media to provide service to customers in the following two years. This business goal was also supported by (Kaske, Kügler, & Smolnik, 2012; Brown, 2010; and Grembergen, Haes, & Moons, 2005).

A whitepaper from Marketwire (Marketwire, 2012) identified four business goals: increased brand presence; increased positive brand sentiment; development of relationships for future partnership opportunities; and increased website traffic. The online Social Media Examiner (Social Media Examiner, 2012) magazine wrote the following main business goals on a similar detail level: raise brand awareness; drive website traffic; increase website visitor loyalty; and increase conversion

rates. All these suggestions can be traced back to one of the initial business goals. Safko (2010) mentions how social media is about communication with your customers, naming building trust and credibility as a business objective, as well as building consideration among potential customers. This however is relatable to improving brand reputation. Another suggestion was the promotion of new products, by Evans (2012), however this was deemed more as an activity suggestion as it is not on the same level.

Kiron et al. (2012) mentions the objective of gaining market insight by an example of using a social community to identify changes in customer preferences. This can alert an organization of a change in customer needs or wishes that would be otherwise unknown.

Arnold (2011) mentions organizations should avoid being able to resolve issues, referring to using social media as a way of managing risks. The result of the survey conducted by Kiron et al. (2012) also mentions managing risk as one of the most important uses of social software. Through monitoring and being able to react to situations, risk can be avoided or lowered.

Arnold (2011) further suggests that engaged employees are more profitable, productive and loyal. IBM (2012) mentions that enabling a more effective internal collaboration between employees using social business is seen as one of the main goals that companies want to achieve. Grembergen, Haes, & Moons, (2005) further added that in their research, being a caring organization for employees was the most frequently mentioned business goal.

**Business goals elicitation findings**

The literature study and the business goals elicitation refined the initial model into the version used for the start of the Delphi validation. The main focus in this process was on the goal abstraction level and whether or not a business goal can actually be supported by social media activities. This process was managed in a Microsoft Excel matrix. For the goal elicitation, a part of the matrix is shown in appendix I. The result of the goal elicitation is shown in table 4. It contains the business goals that were deemed most applicable based on the findings in literature and the goal elicitation.

<b>Business goals</b>
Increase brand awareness
Generate leads
Involve influencers
Improve reputation
Recruit employees
Retain customers
Improve customer service
Gain market insight
Involve employees
Manage risks

Table 4. Goals of the social business model based on the literature review

Several changes were made to the list of business goals throughout the business goal elicitation process. Chapter 2.3 described the decision criteria and process for determining the candidate business goals for the Delphi study. As visible in table 4, four business goals were added to the list:

- Improve customer service
- Gain market insight
- Involve employees
- Manage risks

The improvement of customer service was supported by several sources (Kaske, Kügler, & Smolnik, 2012; IBM, 2012; Brown, 2010; Culnan, McHugh & Zubillaga, 2010; Grembergen, Haes, & Moons, 2005). There has been a rise in organizations providing customer service using social media. Particularly the social network Facebook and the microblogging facilitator Twitter seem to be mentioned as platforms to provide this. The goal of gaining market insight is explained by Kiron et al. (2012) by an example of using a social community to identify changes in customer preferences. As it was a unique goal that did not overlap with any existing goal, it was deemed a suitable business goal for the model. Employee involvement in the use of social media is also added, supported by Arnold (2011); IBM (2012); and Grembergen, Haes, & Moons (2005). The goal of manage risks was added based on support by Kiron et al. (2012) and Arnold (2011).

The business goal of cost saving was removed from the list. As explained in the abstraction level section of chapter 2.3, the goal does not comply with the criteria of level alignment compared to the other business goals. Additionally, the financial aspect of social media is still misunderstood in terms of measuring success (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010; Arnold, 2011). Therefore the goal save costs is omitted from the model from now on.

The selected business goals and their definitions at this stage of the research are given in appendix A. All goals are defined through their title; description; and a reference to the source it is constructed on.

### **3.5 Social media activities**

For clarity, social media activities exclusively refers to activities undertaken using a social media platform. Very little scientific literature mentions specific activities using social media or social networks. On the other hand, many online sources can be found of online social media magazines, blogs, and corporate consultancies, which present their way of looking at applying social media for business. The reason for this is that it is possible for these sources to generate content on for example social media trends far quicker than an academic article being published.

Nonetheless, there have been mentions of social media activities in recent research. In a study to the value of social media, Nair (2011) lists five ways of social media experimenting by organizations: co-creating; listening and monitoring; connecting the value chain; engaging customers; and serving customers. As Nair (2011) notes, most organizations are not familiar to be on the listening side of interaction, while social media is a lot about listening and monitoring.



Thackeray et al. (2008), in a marketing study of applying social media, mentions two main reasons behind the potential of social media for business: the ability to engage consumers directly in the creative process, and the way social media facilitates word-of-mouth marketing. Ways of including consumers in the creative process are by letting them create customer generated content, or by letting them share feedback and reviews.

Gallaugher & Ransbotham (2010) agree, saying social media allows firms to apply a different kind of interaction and dialog with customers, and that firms can take advantage from responding to customer ideas. Furthermore, they list mediating customer to customer dialog as an activity, to increase the control of what is being said about your firm or brand.

Most of these mentions so far have somehow to do with engagement. By allowing the customer to get closer to the organization, advantages on both sides can be reached. To get this engagement, the first step is usually to monitor customer and surroundings. Smith & Zook (2011) note how monitoring can be applied through monitoring customer opinions about your product, company or competition; by monitoring issues that could have an impact on your brand; and by monitoring influencers in your marketplace.

Advertising is “paid, one-way promotional communication in any mass media” (Tuten, 2008). Mass media can be a newspaper, radio, or a social platform. Advertising has changed considerably since the mainstream adoption of social media. The promotion mix part of advertising is decreasing in its original form (Mangolds & Faulds, 2009). Nevertheless, that does not mean advertising is a thing of the past: it is simply adapting and can still be applied effectively. Prior to the social media era, measuring the impact of the traditional form of online advertising was about website analytics such as amount of visitors, page views and cost per click (Fisher, 2009). Through the user data social media platforms gather from their users, advertisements gained a lot of targeting potential. The information organizations are able to gather from their customers is enormous.

Dellarocas (2003) mentions how the ability to share reviews and feedback online has affected the decision making process of people, and therefore the effect of traditional advertising. Hanna (2011) concludes social media platforms have started a revolution of marketing, advertising, and promotions. Qualman (2012) mentions that consumers are more turned towards each other for advice on purchases through social media than affected by traditional forms of advertising. Tuten (2008) agrees, explains how the advertising industry has come up with new forms of advertising to relate to consumers’ lifestyle. Advertising online is diverse and does not necessarily need to be paid for by a firm. It could also be unpaid or paid for indirectly. Tuten (2008) has three problems with the general definitions: it being paid, one-way and on mass media. IBM (2011) distinguishes three types of media: paid media; owned media; and earned media. Microblogging has a significant effect on the success of a product for its involvement very near the purchase decision. Selflessly sharing expertise with others motivates positive word of mouth (Jansen et al., 2009).

### **Social media activities elicitation findings**

Similar to the business goals elicitation, the social media activities elicitation process was managed in a Microsoft Excel matrix. A part of the matrix is shown in appendix J. Compared to the business goals, the social media activities are a more difficult group of components to manage. The main

reason for this is that they rely heavily on their association with particular business goals. Additionally, the activities are rarer and more difficult to elicit from scientific literature.

The criteria for the selection of the social media are discussed in chapter 2.3. The resulting list of social media activities based on the elicitation process can be found in table 5.

<b>Social media activities</b>
Spread shareable / likeable content
Advertise
Encourage customer appreciation
Spread relevant content
Converse
React
Monitor
Provide exclusiveness to followers
Integrate the product in a social application or game
Encourage customer to contribute creatively

**Table 5. Social media activities of the social business model based on the literature review**

As visible in table 5, the following social media activities were added to the list based on the elicitation from the literature.

- Provide exclusive content and offers to followers (Duffy, 2012)
- Integrate the product in a social application or game (Qualman, 2012)
- Encourage customer to contribute creatively (IBM, 2012; Gallagher & Ransbotham, 2010; Thackeray et al., 2008; Nair, 2011)

The source behind the idea is noted behind the activity. The activities were selected based on their uniqueness and in further agreement with the criteria. Several activities that were found in the initial model (table 1) were omitted during this process. Social media activities such as ‘show appreciation (to customers)’ and ‘provide information (to customers)’ could not be supported by any literature findings. The same was the case for ‘developing relationships with influencers’, ‘ask appreciation (from followers)’, ‘keep customers updated’ and ‘social webcare’. At this point of the research they were omitted from the list of activities. However, the point here is not that they are activities that should not be performed under any circumstance. The goal of this process however was to find typical social media activities and these were not mentioned in their particular form. The realization here was that just because no available scientific literature was mentioning these activities, did not have to mean they cannot be aligned with a possible business goal.

The selected social media activities after this research step are given in appendix B. The activities are also defined through their title; description; and a reference to the source it is constructed on.

## 4. Delphi results

This chapter covers the process and results of the Delphi study. First the preparation of the Delphi study is described, continuing from the research approach chapter 2.6. Then an overview is given of the result of the literature review and the list of business goals derived from it.

### 4.1 Delphi preparation

The preparation describes the background of the Delphi method and the modifications that were made from the original method to the method used in this research. It also describes the expert panel was formed and explains how the data was analyzed. Finally the validation and decision processes of the Delphi study are explained.

#### Background

Delphi was developed by the RAND Corporation in the 1950's (RAND Corporation, 2013). Originally used by RAND as a forecasting method on the technology impact on warfare, today Delphi is adopted in a variety of research fields, but has been particularly popular in IS/IT research (Skulmoski, Hartman & Krahn, 2007). Delphi as explained by Linstone & Turoff (1975) is used to structure a group communication process through the means of individual input. The two main elements of Delphi according to Gordon (1994) are anonymity and feedback. The anonymity does not merely refer to the anonymity of being unacknowledged in written results, but also unawareness of further participant information during the study. This means that during the validation, an expert is not aware of how many experts are in the panel and what the identity is of these participants. This characteristic is also referred to as "*avoiding direct confrontation of the experts with one another.*" Dalkey & Helmer (1963, p. 458), and is in place to exclude bias by behavior of participants following the loudest voice in the room. The advantage is that this removes barriers that arise with conference rooms meetings (Gordon, 1994). Another advantage is that it also removes the impracticality of arranging a sequence of events with a large group of people on a particular geographical location. It has been noted that after participation has been verbally agreed upon, participant attrition tends to be very low (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004), which is an important aspect in a study based on returning feedback and reaching a consensus.

#### Method modifications

As mentioned previously, Delphi studies in the IS/IT research field have been relatively popular in recent times. Skulmoski, Hartman & Krahn (2007) created an overview of nine studies that fulfill these requirements. These studies were analyzed if available in preparation for executing the Delphi study. Further studies and works concerning Delphi were searched for using scholar.google.com to learn more about how the method was applied in different scenarios.

While mainly employed as a forecasting method, Linstone & Turoff (1975) note that Delphi has a wider application area, including the development of the structure of a model. Okoli and Pawlowski (2004) agree, distinguishing two types of applications for the Delphi method: Forecasting and Issue Identification/Prioritization; and Concept/Framework Development. The latter type conforms to this research process.

Traditionally, the scope of Delphi research is fairly small. In classic examples given by Gordon (1994) a single question is asked to estimate a date for a certain event, or a prediction of an amount of requirements. An elaborate discussion is created through the arguments used to defend their predictions. However, more recent research particularly in the IS research domain have applied the Delphi method in a more elaborate way. Instead of starting the Delphi validation process with opinion-forming input and a question, (part of) a concept model was used in first round.

Most of the assessed IS/IT research Delphi studies by Skulmoski, Hartman & Krahn (2007) contain two or three rounds. Originally a similar three round setup was planned for this study, but due to the wide scope of the model this was extended into five rounds. It must be noted however that while this study sees each survey as a separate round, other studies apply a looser idea of what a round is. For example, according to Skulmoski, Hartman & Krahn (2007), the Delphi study of Schmidt et al. (2001) applies three rounds, which are called phases, but the first round contains two elements which cannot be performed without consulting the panelists at least twice. Also, one of the elements of the third round is that the *“process continues until strong consensus is reached or plateaus”* (p.13), meaning that additional moments of contact occurred with the panel, in the case of the Schmidt et al. (2001) study, this means two to four extra rounds.

In this Delphi study however, each of the five rounds contains a new proposal of the model, based on either literature study or feedback from previous validation rounds, which is proposed to the members of the panel. Thus for clarity, each round is considered to be a moment of contact with the panelists in which they are given the opportunity to give input.

Many Delphi studies in the IS/IT field apply prioritizing or ranking on the studied elements (Schmidt et al., 2001; Keil, Tiwana, & Bush, 2002; Brungs & Jamieson, 2005). As the business goals and social media activities are considered uniquely case-dependent, this is not deemed relevant for the elements in the Social Business Model. Therefore, the validation does not contain a prioritization task for the panel to place these elements in a particular order.

### **Expert panel**

The first draft list of participating experts was conceived by Budeco. This list contained 19 names which were personally known to the organization. All potential participants on the list were selected for their acknowledged work experience with social media. The 19 potential participants were individually contacted through by email to request their participation in the Delphi validation panel. The email can be found in appendix C. Of the 19 potential participants 15 responded positively to the request. Of this group, 11 were available for participation in the following weeks. The other four participants were unavailable to start the Delphi validation due to the holiday season, but indicated that they would be available for participation in the validation at a later stage.

The selected 11 participants were contacted with an invitation to fill in the first survey form. They were given a detailed explanation of the purpose of the method; the scope; and what it would be later used for. Nine experts responded to the first survey form, thereby forming the Delphi expert panel. Therefore the net response rate was 47.4%. Each panel member has a different professional background and is active for a different organization (table 6).

Name	Title	Organization	Experience*
Rob van den Brink	Social Business Analyst	The Webcare Factory	3
Henk-Jan Geel	Social Marketeer	Bright Mind Media	4
Oliver de Leeuw	Owner	Nameshapers	6
Rick Mans	Social Business Lead	Capgemini	10
Frank Meeuwssen	Digital strategist	The Incredible Adventure starts here...	15
Jos Veldwijk	Director	Veldmerk	6
Paulus Veltman	Speaker   Innovator	Newnataq	7
Hans Versteegh	Advisor and trainer	Welzijn 3.0	10
Bas Westland	Managing Partner	e-people	10

Table 6. Delphi expert panel

\*Years of work experience with social media

The panelists have a minimum experience of 3 years applying social media professionally with clients from a rich variety of sectors, including backgrounds in health care, communication and marketing, with markets in B2C (business to consumer) as well as B2B (business to business), increasing the variation in perspectives on the model and what could be included in it. This is a favorable setting for the validation, because eventually successfully applying social business can highly depend on the specifics of an organization and their clients.

### Data analysis

The analysis of the result data handled qualitative data. The tool Microsoft Excel was used to gather the data from the Delphi study for analysis. Different techniques were used depending on the type of data, but in general color schemes were used to keep track of the panel's opinions and to identify levels of agreement and the needed course of action.

Color coding was applied to some rounds of the Delphi study. Because each round contained a different format with varying questions, it was not feasible to apply the same coding throughout the entire Delphi study. As the surveys became more qualitative over time, color coding became more important, while in the first few rounds quantitative results were more common.

The main concept of the color coding was based on the answers the experts provided. As the idea of Delphi is that the experts collectively agree on the course of action, individual contact was made in case a participant disagreed with the consensus. Whether this was done depended on the answer provided. The following distinctions were made:

- Agreed (empty field; agreeing)
- Resourceful (ideas; tips)
- Disagreed (accepted disagreeing)
- Disagreed (non-accepted disagreeing)

In most cases, agreed feedback represents an empty field, or a short statement of agreement. This feedback was ignored from this point forward. Resourceful feedback was saved and stored for later purposes, such as examples. Disagreed feedback was either accepted or non-accepted, based on the criteria explained in chapter 2.3. Accepted disagreed feedback resulted in a change in the proposed

model of the following round. Non-accepted disagreed feedback resulted in feedback to the particular expert. This means the subject of disagreement was explained in an email at the start of the next round. The expert was consequently invited to reconsider his opinion based on the extra explanation.

### Validation process

The road from concept model to validated model is shown in figure 12, depicting the validation process used during the Delphi study. Each round features the process of a sent survey, feedback from the panel and reformulations to the model.

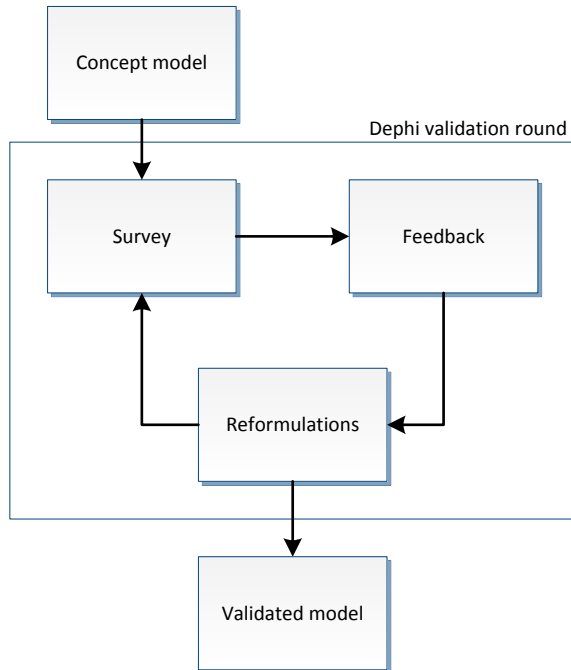
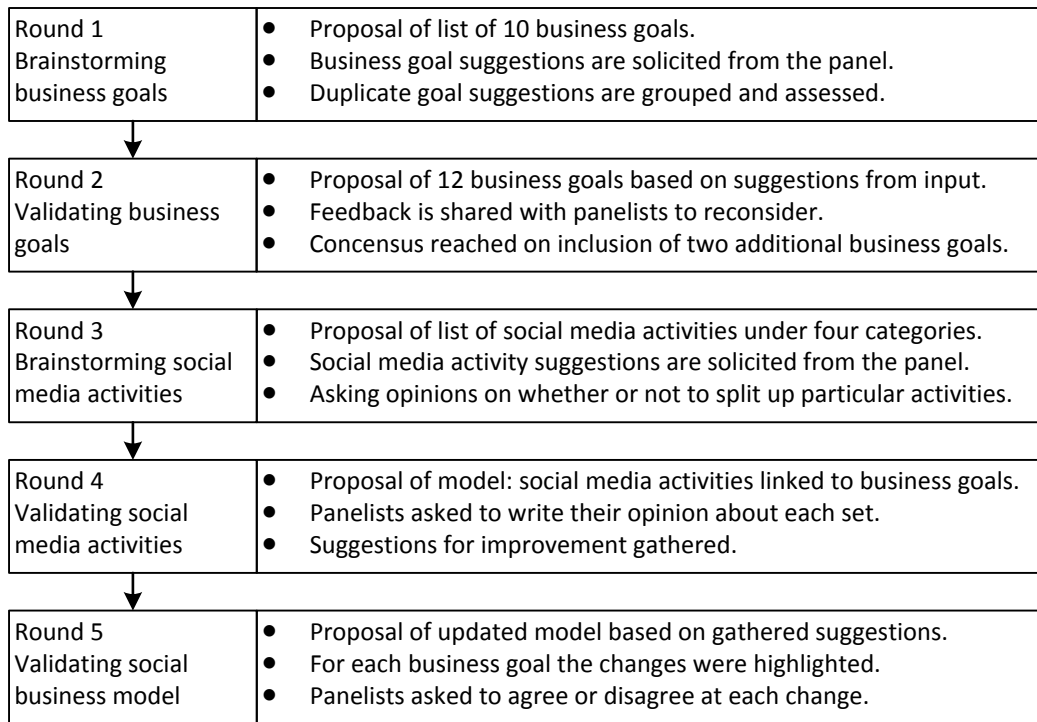


Figure 12. Delphi validation process

The basic format and scope of the method was explained to the participants. The exact amount of validation rounds was hard to predict and could not be specifically mentioned prior to the start of the validation. This was largely due to the limited knowledge of the participants and the unpredictability of their input. This resulted in a weak predictability of what the outcome would be of each of the rounds because of a lack of previous experience with the appliance of Delphi method. Originally, three rounds were planned, but during the validation it became apparent that additional rounds had to be organized in order to utilize new ideas which were solicited from the panel.

All rounds of the Delphi validation include both closed and open questions. The closed questions force the participant to either agree or disagree with the inclusion of an element. The open questions often contain requests, either for brainstorming ideas or for giving explanations about indicated choices.

In the first round for instance the partial objective is to gather opinions from a different viewpoint to consider in further rounds, while in later rounds the objective is to gain a consensus on a particular proposal. An overview of the context of the five validation rounds is shown in figure 13.



**Figure 13. Applied Delphi rounds process based on Schmidt (2001)**

The process overview is based on a phase survey description from Schmidt (2001). It highlights the main courses of action during the rounds and how these influenced the model process.

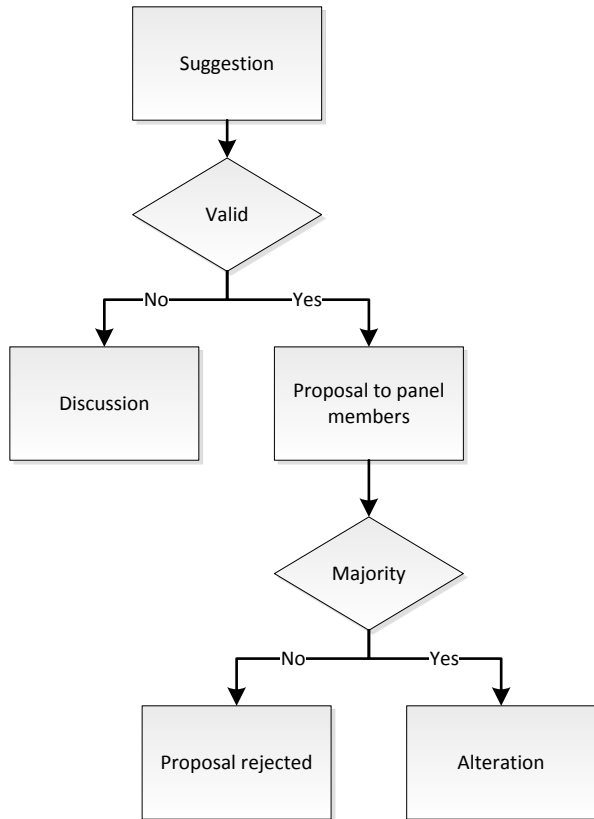
### Decision process

The nature of the Delphi validation means a lot of decisions for or against model alterations have to be made. It is only logical that a group of remote panelists are likely to disagree on matters, based on their experience, background or field of work.

Other Delphi studies have used statistical analysis through Kendall's *W* (Skulmoski, Hartman & Krahn, 2007) or Spearman's correlation coefficient (Linstone et al., 1975) to assess ranking decisions. However, since this Delphi study is based on a relatively small expert panel without any form of ranking in the survey feedback, it was opted to choose for a more simplified approach for the decision process with a strong focus on qualitative analysis. In order to keep structure in this decision process, a workflow was used (figure 14).

Suggestions were first assessed on validity. If a suggestion was deemed invalid, it would be explained to the panel member why the suggestion was not accepted for proposal. If the suggestion was deemed valid, it was proposed to the panelists in the following survey round. The rule here is that if the majority agrees, the proposal is accepted and an alteration is made in the model. If the majority disagrees, the proposal is rejected and the suggestion is omitted.

For a suggestion to be considered valid, it requires to be on topic and contain a valuable idea. For example, a panel member suggesting an alteration based on argumentation that was not taken into account previously. However, if the response is directed to a subject already discussed and closed for discussion after a previous round, it will no longer be taken into consideration. If a response is directed on topic but merely underlines what has been said previously or in the survey, it will not be considered as a valuable response.



**Figure 14. Applied Delphi decision process workflow**



## 4.2 Delphi round 1

The first round of the Delphi study concerned the list of business goals based on the literature study was proposed to the participants of the expert panel. The survey form can be found in appendix D.

Business goal	Description
Increase brand awareness	Creating a basic level of brand knowledge involving at least recognition of the brand name.
Generate leads	Generating prospective consumers of a product or service.
Involve influencers	Involving individuals who have the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others.
Improve reputation	Improving the perceptual representation of a firm's overall appeal
Recruit employees	Activities with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees.
Retain customers	Retain customers to ensure they repeat purchasing and make references to new potential customers.
Improve customer service	Improve the provision of service before, during, and after a purchase.
Gain market insight	Keep up to date on market innovations, competitor activities and customer requirements.
Involve employees	Engage employees to expand a firm's network and improve internal collaboration
Manage risks	Resolve issues which potentially threaten a firm's reputation.

**Table 7. Round 1 business goals and their descriptions.**

The following questions were asked to the participants:

- For each and every goal on the list:
  - Can this business goal be achieved better, faster and/or cheaper with the correct use of social media?
- If you filled in “No” for any business goal, explain why the use of social media cannot add value to this business goal.
- Are there any other business goals that are more fitting in this list?
- Do you have any further suggestions or remarks?

The reason that the participants were only asked to provide an explanation in case they filled in “No” for any business goal has several reasons. Partially it is because the aim was to make the survey as little time consuming as possible for the participants while still collecting quality data. The other part of the reason is that in this Delphi study it was about finding a consensus for the model, and the focus had to be on non-agreeing answers as they were of higher interest than agreeing answers. Another small part of the reason is that if a participant felt like adding a comment, this was still possible. Also the last question was whether they had any further suggestions or remarks.

The goals of ‘Involve influencers’ and ‘Manage risks’ each received one ‘No’, whilst all other goals received full support in the survey from the expert panel. One expert said that involving influencers was a farfetched idea that would not be efficiently applicable, because the right kind of influencers would not be active on social media. The expert added *“At least, when we are talking about*

*management and boards of directors*". While this assumption cannot be ruled out completely, it more importantly does not align with the meaning of the business goal. Management and board of directors can be seen as a type of influencers, but the scope of influencers contains a much wider range of people. This was shared with the concerning panel member, who agreed with the explanation and inclusion of the business goal.

Business goal	Yes	No
Increase brand awareness	9	0
Generate leads	9	0
Involve influencers	8	1
Improve reputation	9	0
Recruit employees	9	0
Retain customers	9	0
Improve customer service	9	0
Gain market insight	9	0
Involve employees	9	0
Manage risks	8	1

**Table 8. Delphi round 1 results overview**

Another expert was of the opinion that social media could not help with the goal of managing risks. And another expert mentioned having doubt about the inclusion of managing risks. The issue here was with the Dutch word for manage, '*beheersen*', which could be interpreted as a derivate from "*heersen*" meaning being in control or having something completely in your power. This clearly collides with the fundamentals of the freedom of social media. However, it was the correct use of the word in the given context of risks. Despite the added explanation, it was evident that the way this goal was presented raised some confusion. Therefore it was decided that for this business goal, an attempt needed to be made in Round 2 to agree to a consensus, based on the received feedback.

### **Suggested additions**

Round 1 produced a large amount of suggestions for additional goals that the expert panel found missing in the list provided (Table 9).

Suggestion	Existing business goal
Cost saving (2x)	
Open innovation/co-creation	-
Generate ideas / virtual collaboration (co-creation)	-
Product development	-
Product innovation with customers	-
Fundraising	Generate leads
Involve customers	Retain customers
Raise and increase interests of potential customers	Generate leads
Increase reach outside of existing clientele	Increase brand awareness
Collect input for product or services development	Gain market insight
Gauge and analyze sentiment	Improve reputation / Gain market insight
Contribute to customer experience	Retain customers
Let customers share their enthusiasm	Involve influencers / Retain customers

Increase employee productivity	-
Direct sales	Generate leads
Cross/upselling	Generate leads / Retain customers

**Table 9. Delphi round 1 goal suggestions.**

Most of the suggestions were retraceable to the business goals which were already proposed, which are indicated in the column ‘Existing business goal’. This means that the suggestion was either a differently phrased version of the goal already proposed, or the suggestion was a goal which was on a different abstraction level as explained in chapter 4.4. The suggestions deemed to fit in this category were excluded from consideration for inclusion in the model. The panelists who suggested such goals were notified of this conclusion and asked whether or not they agreed with the explanation why this was done.

Two panel members suggested cost saving as a business goal. This was regarded unsuitable for inclusion as this goal does not fit in the scope of the model according to the explanation given in chapter 2.3. Both panelists were notified and explained in what light cost saving was seen in this model.

Four suggestions steered in the direction of product development in collaboration with other entities. The suggestions had differentiating wording, but ultimately boiled down to a similar idea: product development; product innovation with customers; generate ideas / virtual collaboration (co-creation); and open innovation/co-creation. Co-creation is the joint creation of value between an organization and its customers (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Contrasting to the traditional approach of innovation, the creation of value can be focused towards the experience of value by the user of the product or service (Kristensson, Matthing, & Johansson, 2008). Co-creation can be seen as a social approach for product development with the objective to gather wishes, needs and preferences of customers (Piller, Vossen, & Ihl, 2012). The potential is there for social media to aid customer-oriented innovation and development, therefore the business goal ‘Advance innovation/development’ was proposed to the panel members for inclusion in the model.

One expert suggested the business goal of ‘Increase employee productivity’. When the topic of social media at the workplace comes across, it is often placed in a negative light. Internet access use would cause most employees to waste time at work and most of that internet activity would be attributed to time spent on social media (Forbes, 2012b). While some research has been performed towards social media attributing to work productivity (Patel, 2010), not much has been written about the link between the two phenomena. The area was not covered by any of the current goals and added to the list of valid suggestions to be proposed to the panel in the following round.

### **Round conclusion**

At this point, no definite changes were made in the model yet. Temporary changes were made to the business goals as part of the proposal to the panel members in the following round.

## **4.3 Delphi round 2**

The input from round 1 was used to decide on the survey form for round 2. The survey form of round 2 can be found in appendix E. Suggestions were made by the panelists for omitting certain goals or adding currently missing goals. Other remarks were made about the ambiguity of

particular goals or their descriptions. In this round these suggestions were proposed to the entire panel.

The following questions were asked:

- For the goal of ‘manage risks’:
  - Is it better if this goal is revised to ‘limiting reputation damage’?
  - If you filled in “No” for this question, explain why.
- For the goals of ‘advance innovation/development’ and ‘increase employee productivity’:
  - Can this business goal be achieved better, faster and/or cheaper with the correct use of social media?
  - If you filled in “No” for any business goal, explain why.
- Do you have any further suggestions or remarks?

<b>Business goal</b>	<b>Description</b>
Limit reputation damage	Limit the potential reputation damage of an organization.

**Table 10. Round 2 proposed changed business goal and its description.**

The question of changing manage risks into limiting reputation damage was made given the confusion the business goal created. It was derived from the analysis that the business goal was mostly about avoiding reputational risks and limiting the potential damage those risks could create. The proposal was received negatively, with five of the nine panel members answering “No” opposed to four answering “Yes”. The reasons given for the rejection varied: *“This takes it as a given that damage is already done, which is a considerable assumption”*; *“I do not think of it as a goal on its own”*; *“I find limit reputation damage not a business goal. Reputation management gets more in that direction”*. The two other explanations argued that the goal could be merged with other goals, specifically: *“Product innovation”* and *“Improve reputation or merged into Reputation Management”*. However, these proposals would miss the component of dealing with risks. Instead the first proposal lays more focus on decreasing the chance of risks, where the second proposal would eliminate risk completely. Assessing the results from both rounds, more panel members were opposed changing ‘manage risks’, than opposed retaining it in the first round. Furthermore, despite that the proposed change was based on their feedback, the two panel members who questioned the goal in the first round did not agree on the proposed change. Based on these reasons, it was decided to not change ‘manage risk’ in the model.

<b>Business goal</b>	<b>Description</b>
Advance innovation/development	Advancing innovation and/or development with the input of customers or followers.
Increase employee productivity	Increasing the productivity of employees through the input of tools for collaboration and communication.

**Table 11. Round 2 proposed new business goals and their descriptions.**

Based on the analysis of Round 1, two new business goals and their descriptions (table 11) were proposed to the panel. The proposed additions to the model were supported. All panel members supported the business goal of advancing innovation and development, while all but one panel members supported the business goal of increasing employee productivity. The reason stated was

that “(it) is comparable with making profit. It is too general in comparison with other (business goals)”.

### Round conclusion

Two additional business goals were suggested in this round. Because there was no sufficient proof to drop either suggestion, the business goals ‘advance innovation/development’ and ‘increase employee productivity’ were added to the model. Thanks to these additions, the model now contained twelve business goals. This means that five new business goals were added in comparison to the initial model.

Business goal	Description
Increase brand awareness	Creating a basic level of brand knowledge involving at least recognition of the brand name.
Generate leads	Generating prospective consumers of a product or service.
Involve influencers	Involving individuals who have the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others.
Improve reputation	Improving the perceptual representation of a firm’s overall appeal
Recruit employees	Activities with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees.
Retain customers	Retain customers to ensure they repeat purchasing and make references to new potential customers.
Improve customer service	Improve the provision of service before, during, and after a purchase.
Gain market insight	Keep up to date on market innovations, competitor activities and customer requirements.
Involve employees	Engage employees to expand a firm’s external network and improve internal collaboration
Manage risks	Resolve issues which potentially threaten a firm’s reputation.
Advance innovation/development	Advancing innovation and/or development with the input of customers or followers.
Increase employee productivity	Increasing the productivity of employees through the input of tools for collaboration and communication.

Table 12. Business goals after round 2.

### 4.4 Delphi round 3

After two survey rounds, the process for the final list of business goals had been completed. For round 3, the topic of questions was changed from business goals to social media activities. The survey form can be found in appendix F. The initial model contained several activities per goal. The amount of activities was not set in stone, instead depending on the amount of applicable examples that could be thought of. This freedom makes sense and the same mindset is applied in this study. It should be avoided to apply limitation trying to conform to made-up rules that are merely in place to give the model more appeal. Through the analysis of the complete collection of social media activities it was found that they were placeable under the following three activity categories:

- Presence - the creation and spreading of content, including advertisements
- Engagement - converse, react, and stimulate
- Analysis - monitor customer sentiment, the market, and competition

Category	Description
Presence	Spread shareable/likeable content Spread relevant content Social advertising
Engagement	React Converse Stimulate involvement Offer exclusivity Facilitate shareability
Analysis	Monitoring

Table 13. Round 3 proposed social media activities per category.

Each category had one or more proposed activities (table 14). The idea behind the categories was to provide boundaries for suggestions from the panel members. The reason behind this was that in the first round the panelists were openly asked for goal suggestions, resulting in a large amount of suggestions that were already covered by other goals. For round three, a hierarchy approach was chosen to decrease the chance of this happening, while still giving the panel members the chance to contribute with their creative input.

Social media activity	Description
Spread shareable/likeable content	Spreading of content which is easy to like or interesting to share.
Spread relevant content	Spreading content which shows products, services or expertise.
Social advertising	Advertising on social platforms.
React	Reacting on or liking content.
Converse	Engage in interaction by listening and having conversations.
Stimulate involvement	Stimulate customers to share ideas, feedback, or content.
Offer exclusivity	Offering exclusive content, offers, or promotions.
Facilitate shareability	Facilitate sharing of content with social media buttons.
Monitoring	Monitoring what is being said on social platforms.

Table 14. Round 3 proposed social media activities and their descriptions.

The following questions were asked:

- For each category:
  - Indicate for each activity whether or not it is appropriate in the model.
  - If you filled in “No” for this question, explain why.
  - Are there other activities that you find more fitting in this list?
- Advertisement is a broad term. Would you suggest splitting it up, and if yes, how?
- Monitoring is a broad term. Would you suggest splitting it up, and if yes, how?
- Do you have any further suggestions or remarks?

Contrary to expectations based on Round 1, the panelists did not suggest many activities which were deemed unacceptable according to the criteria. The questionnaire setup likely influenced this difference. However, none of the suggestions were sufficiently unique from an already existing business goal in the proposal (Table 15). This means that the setup used in this round might have also contributed to limited creative input from the panelist.

Suggestion	Existing social media activity
Invite for co-moderation	Stimulate involvement
Webcare	Converse
Simply asking for reactions	Stimulate involvement
Reporting (sharing findings)	Spread relevant content

Table 15. Delphi round 3 social media suggestions.

The first question regarding whether or not an activity is appropriate for model inclusion got mixed results. Some activities received multiple answers of “No”, however in the explanation this often referred to category placement instead of the activity itself.

Social media activity	Yes	No
Spread shareable/likeable content	9	0
Spread relevant content	9	0
Social advertising	7	2
React	8	1
Converse	9	0
Stimulate involvement	9	0
Offer exclusivity	7	2
Faciliate shareability	7	2
Monitoring	9	0

Table 16. Delphi round 3 results overview.

For the activity ‘Social advertising’, one panelist was opposed having advertising under the category ‘Presence’, claiming that it would literally be like paying for your presence (“*Adverteren is je plek kopen, geen echte presence dus*”). Another panelist mentioned how social business models should be careful with implementing advertising components because of the many marketers that have not adapted yet to the new way of applying advertisements on social platforms. From further comments it becomes clear however that the panelist in question does think advertising is a valid component for the model. Likewise, the activities ‘React’ and ‘Offer exclusivity’ were not seen as a type of ‘Engagement’ by a panelist, as they would not be a form of mutual engagement. Another panelist agreed, questioning if offering exclusivity does not fit better under the tag ‘Presence’ instead in the form of a content strategy. These doubts from panelists were all related to the category the activity was placed in. Their answer did not necessarily mean the activities themselves were inappropriate. Besides this, most of the expert panelists still agreed on the appropriateness of the social media activities. It likely means a few critical views were placed on the categories, the implementation of which in this Round possibly influenced the results. However, these responses were not expected as such because the focus in the questionnaire was on the relevance of the activities compared with the earlier defined business goals. The panel was not asked to give their opinion on the given categories, but in retrospect it is natural and likely a positive sign that this did occur. It showed the dangers of trying to add sublevel categories into the model and the difficulty that would create to arrive to a consensus among the panel. It also proved the alertness and criticalness of the panelists.

At this point it was not clear what form the social media activities would take in the model. The proposed list of activities was a mere example of how it could look like. Some activities did not

seem to be on the same level or of the same importance as other activities. For example the broad concepts of advertising and monitoring can be split up in a variety of ways.

### **Advertising**

The idea of advertisement in the model seemed to be connected to a lot of possible activities applicable for a lot of different business goals. Therefore it was deemed too present to define it as a simple activity called 'advertising' as it would not practically explain what needed to be done for a particular goal. One thought was to divide advertisements among current and potential customers. However, then there were alternatives such as advertisements aimed at particular demographic; advertisements aimed at connections of customers; advertisements aimed at influencers of potential customers; and created content could be further advertised upon to increase the reach. For these reasons it was proposed in this round as a single activity, yet opinions were gathered about if there would be a better way to apply advertising into the model.

It was explained to the panelists that these were considered to be wide concepts and they were asked whether they would split up either of the two phenomena, and if yes how they would approach this. The responses to this question varied. Of the panelists that gave input on this matter, one suggested splitting up advertisements among three categories: contextual advertisements; business pages/profiles; and commercial updates on the profiles of employees. Another panelist noted that advertising was substantially different than content, further suggesting advertisement to be split up by channel and per target group. Another panelist partially agrees on this, mentioning advertising campaigns should be aimed at a particular target group for specific activities or programs. A different idea by one panelist was to divide advertisement activities into short and long-term objectives: by differentiating between advertisements for rapid conversions; advertisements for brand awareness; and different levels in between. Another panelist suggested adding an extra activity specifically geared towards branded content, while leaving the activity of advertising the same.

Only one panelist suggested that advertising should not be split up in the model: *"Advertising is mainly done to increase reach or to spread content among those that are likely interested"*. The underlying thought of this particular comment is that advertising is seen as an additional activity to aid a previously undertaken activity. It still indicates two fundamentally different objectives in the form of increasing reach or specific targeting, but has a more practical explanation which possibly does not require as much of a split of activities as with the other suggestions.

Assessing the feedback, it is clear that different approaches are at play. None of which seems to have the upper hand in terms of quantitative support. Suggested categories such as business profiles and employee profiles steer more towards activities of content creation. Similar to the suggestion of branded content, this underlines the point made earlier that the two activities of spreading content and advertising are closely related. One way of thinking about advertising on social media is that every move an organization makes is a form of advertising your brand. From another point of view it is arguable advertising starts when organizations make use of monetary options within social platforms. The latter would follow the logic of content being created and then advertised upon through choice. Following this thought, content is required for advertising to take place.



Splitting up advertising activities among the different channels has to be dismissed on the grounds of generalizing the model for social media now and the future. A few suggestions were made in the direction of specializing advertising for target groups. As one of the fundamentals of social media advertising, this seems wise for organizations to take on for the effectiveness of advertisements. Differentiating between the lengths of an objective when it comes to advertising seems difficult to implement in the model, because the activities are linked to business goals which are not specifically aimed at a certain timeframe. They theoretically could be temporarily set up to reach short term goals, but this flexibility should be reflected through the activities.

### **Monitoring**

Shortly described it refers to listening to what happens around you as an organization. One panelist tipped that while monitoring is about listening, measuring and interpreting is of similar importance in order to learn from experiences and improve upon future activities. The activity of monitoring was agreed upon by the entire panel, but one panelist disagreed with the placement of the category 'Analysis' for monitoring. The explanation of this was actually the difference between listening (monitoring) and the measuring and interpreting (analysis).

Via this view it is straightforward to link to the software perspective of social media monitoring tools. Another panelist mentioned that within these tools it is common to divide monitoring into collecting, analyzing and engagement. The question is how much the model should reflect a common software product. The adoption of these products is unknown. One panelist suggested splitting up monitoring into content; sentiment; engagement sales; different KPI's; and further mentioned monitoring can be quantitative as well as qualitative. One panelist suggested splitting this into monitoring conversion and monitoring sentiment. One panelist suggested splitting on competition, leads, customers and your own brand. Another panelist suggested analytics, monitoring and intelligence. Nothing near a consensus seemed to appear out of this task. As with advertising, it seems that many applicable activities exist, and they could be related to the organization and the objectives that are set out.

### **Round conclusion**

The main objective of round 3 was similar to round 1: getting the panel members to use their own unique views on the proposed model to gather ideas that were possibly overlooked. Therefore no changes were made to the model at this point.

Concerning the categories, in particular advertising and monitoring, they tend to cause confusion and disagreement and clearly create an extra obstacle in reaching a consensus. The result of this round suggests that for the activities to be effectively aligned with the goals, they need to be specifically written for them.

## **4.5 Delphi round 4**

The focal point of the fourth round was to introduce the model as one. The survey incorporated initial questions regarding the link between business goals and social media activities. The survey form can be found in appendix G. A set of activities was given per goal, which basically means that a concept version of the complete model was shown to the panel. For each goal, the expert panel was asked to give their opinion on the set of activities and their connection with the goal. All members

filled in the survey. As this round saw the first proposal of the complete model, it contained many possible links between goals and activities. To handle the large amount of Delphi feedback the feedback was aggregated in the following four groups:

- **Agreed** (empty field; agreeing)
- **Resourceful** (ideas; tips)
- **Disagreed** (accepted disagreeing)
- **Disagreed** (non-accepted disagreeing)

	Increase brand awareness	Improve reputation	Generate leads	Involve influencers	Recruit employees	Retain customers	Improve customer service	Gain market insight	Advance innovation /development	Involve employees	Increase employee productivity	Manage risks
<b>Expert #1</b>	Agreed	Disagreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Resourceful	Resourceful	Agreed
<b>Expert #2</b>	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed
<b>Expert #3</b>	Resourceful	Disagreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Disagreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Disagreed
<b>Expert #4</b>	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed
<b>Expert #5</b>	Resourceful	Disagreed	Agreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Disagreed	Resourceful	Resourceful	Agreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Resourceful
<b>Expert #6</b>	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed
<b>Expert #7</b>	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Resourceful
<b>Expert #8</b>	Disagreed	Resourceful	Resourceful	Resourceful	Disagreed	Resourceful	Disagreed	Resourceful	Resourceful	Resourceful	Resourceful	Resourceful
<b>Expert #9</b>	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Agreed	Resourceful	Agreed	Disagreed

**Table 17. Delphi round 4 results overview.**

In table 17 an overview is given of the round’s result. Nine matches were placed in the disagreed category, meaning that further discussion with specific panelists was necessary. This was undertaken and agreements were reached.

On the goal of reputation improvement, one panelist had the opinion that the way of responding to ‘bad mouthing’ is an important aspect for reputation improvement. However, the business goal concerns the improvement of reputation and not the prevention of reputation damage. Another panelist hinted that employees should be given the opportunity to speak on behalf of the organization as a form of improving reputation. This activity is already covered by activities under the goal of involving employees.

On the goal of generating leads, a panelist suggested making network analyses of target groups. Many different ways exist to apply this, from manually searching for interesting connections of current connections, to a diverse set of analytical software. As it was not entirely clear what type of analysis was meant, the panelist was asked to further extend this idea into a practical example for an average organization.

On the same goal, another expert noted that the activities of converting and relevant content can be merged into one activity. The same suggestion was made for the activities of holding converting conversations and searching for opportunities using search terms.

### Round conclusion

Many ideas were shared in the fourth round due to the openness of the questions. This led to qualitative discussions. No definitive changes were made at this point, however for the new proposal of round 5 these changes were included.

## 4.6 Delphi round 5

The purpose of the fifth and final round of the Delphi process was to finalize the model. The feedback from Round 4 was assessed and used in this questionnaire. Round 5 mainly focused on the comments and feedback received in round 4 and the changes that were then proposed. The survey had a similar setup as the previous one. However, instead of proposing the entire model and all its components, only the components that were subject to change were proposed. This was mainly done to avoid giving a participant the opportunity to disagree with their own choices in the last round, causing mismatches. The survey form of round 5 can be found in appendix H.

	Social adverteren om het aantal likes	Het bestaande netwerk	Het zoeken naar en volgen van	Beïnvloeders stimuleren en	Netwerk van medewerkers	Klanten betrekken (door co-branding)	Luisteren naar en reageren op	Luisteren naar en reageren op	Luisteren naar wat klanten en	Analyseren van ontwikkelingen in	Ideeën en feedback filteren en	Verbinden met relevante personen	Participeren in relevante groepen	Reageren (op misvattingen en
Expert #1														
Expert #2														
Expert #3														
Expert #4														
Expert #5														
Expert #6														
Expert #7														
Expert #8														
Expert #9														

Table 18. Delphi round 5 results overview.

This round got positive responses to all proposed changes to the model. However, one expert suggested the idea for the activity of facilitating a community wherein users can help each other. For some organizations this could be an activity. For others it is a fundamental part of the organization. Giffgaff has an online user community in place to handle all customer questions and help with promoting the company (Lithium, 2010). In exchange for these services, the organization uses a system based on gamification to encourage user activity. Because this activity suggestion fulfilled all requirements, it was decided it would be proposed to the entire panel.

#### **4.7 Delphi finalization**

In order to finalize round 5, the late suggestion for a customer service activity had to be validated. A form was sent to all panel members with the question if they agreed to the inclusion of the activity of facilitating customers to provide service to other customers. All but one panelists responded with 'yes' to this proposal. The panelist answering 'no' argued that it was not customer service but peer to peer service. However, it still is a customer service in this particular case. This led to the final assessment being finished and the final model to be concluded.

## 5. The Social Business Model

This chapter introduces the final Social Business Model. First the abstraction level of the model is discussed. Then the Social Business Model is presented. Additionally a matrix is presented that provides an alternative view on the alignment between the business goals and social media activities. Finally, an overview is given of all the business goals and the social media activities that are assigned to them with elaborate description.

### 5.1 Social Business Model

Figure 5 in chapter 3.1 presented a model on the abstraction level of the business goals. In figure 15 the business goals, as decided upon through this research, are added to this model. The focus of this model is on its abstraction level. It is not implied that the selected business goals are the best goals for every organization in the general sense. The thought here is that any business strives for business continuity or growth, which requires financial targets to be met. The business goals given below serve as the foundation for these targets.



Figure 15. The final selection of business goal shown by their relative abstraction level

The Social Business Model is shown in figure 16. The business goals are vertically listed on the left, with the aligned social media activities being listed to the right of each business goal. Following the depiction of the model, chapter 6.1 will continue explaining its components. Each business goal receives a description and with a focus on why it is being pursued by organizations, and a description for each separate social media activity per business goal.

<b>Business goals</b>	<b>Social media activities</b>
Increase brand awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread content that prompts to sharing or liking.</li> <li>• Spread content that prompts to reacting.</li> <li>• Social advertising on the target group to increase the reach and effect of content.</li> <li>• Social advertising to increase the amount of likes or followers.</li> <li>• Analysis of reach and effect to optimize the content and advertisements.</li> <li>• Mobilize the existing network (for example by asking to share).</li> </ul>
Improve reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread relevant content (such as research, client cases, testimonials, recommendations, knowledge or experience).</li> <li>• Social advertising to increase the reach and effect of content.</li> <li>• Listen and react to people who talk about you (positively or negatively).</li> </ul>
Generate leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread converting content (that prompts people to take action, such as (exclusive) offers or sales).</li> <li>• Social advertising with converting content.</li> <li>• Spread relevant content (such as client cases or product information).</li> <li>• Searching for and following potential leads (with search terms, filters or feeds).</li> <li>• Hold converting conversations.</li> <li>• Analysis of conversion to optimize the content and advertisements.</li> </ul>
Involve influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread relevant content (such as cases, research, opinions or experiences).</li> <li>• Social advertising on influencers to increase the reach and effect of content.</li> <li>• Listen and react to influencers.</li> <li>• Hold conversations with influencers.</li> <li>• Stimulate and facilitate influencers (by helping them and simplifying the shareability).</li> </ul>
Recruit employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread relevant content (such as vacancies or content for profiling).</li> <li>• Social advertising on the target group to increase the reach and effect of content.</li> <li>• Follow potential employees.</li> <li>• Hold conversations with potential employees.</li> <li>• Utilize the network of employees to approach potential employees.</li> </ul>
Retain customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread relevant content (such as testimonials, recommendations or client cases).</li> <li>• Spread converting content (that prompts people to take action, such as (exclusive) offers or sales).</li> <li>• Social advertising on clients to increase the reach and effect of content.</li> <li>• Show involvement with customers (such as liking or sharing their content).</li> <li>• Listen and react to customers (webcare).</li> <li>• Involve customers (through co-branding or co-creation).</li> </ul>
Improve customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create relevant content (such as pro-active messages or do-it-yourself solutions for problems).</li> <li>• Listen and respond to customer questions and problems (webcare).</li> <li>• Facilitate that customers can help each other (for example through a forum or community).</li> </ul>
Gain market insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to what (potential) customers are saying.</li> <li>• Analysis of developments in the industry (like competitors, suppliers, influencers).</li> <li>• Spread research (such as a survey).</li> <li>• Social advertising to increase the reach of research.</li> <li>• Converse with (potential) customers.</li> </ul>
Advance innovation / development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for ideas and feedback of (potential) users for (prototype) products or services.</li> <li>• Converse with customers.</li> <li>• Converse with people in the industry.</li> <li>• Connect with relevant people (such as opinion leaders, trendsetters, developers).</li> <li>• Filter and appreciate ideas and feedback (for example in webcare).</li> <li>• Participate in relevant groups.</li> </ul>
Involve employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage employees to share or like content.</li> <li>• Spread content by employees.</li> <li>• Spread content about employees (such as projects).</li> </ul>
Increase employee productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let employees use social media, such as in sales or webcare.</li> <li>• Facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration inbetween employees with an (internal) social network).</li> </ul>
Manage risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor what is being said about the organization, brand, product or service.</li> <li>• Monitor what happens in the surroundings of the organization.</li> <li>• Spread content and converse about it (for example with a product recall).</li> <li>• React to misconceptions or potential problems.</li> </ul>

Figure 16. The Social Business Model

## 5.2 Matrix of the Social Business Model

A matrix form of the Social Business Model is given in figure 17. The matrix shows a categorized form of its social media activities on the left, with its business goals shown on the top.

	Increase brand awareness	Improve reputation	Generate leads	Involve influencers	Recruit employees	Retain customers	Improve customer service	Gain market insight	Advance innovation / development	Increase employee productivity	Manage risks
Spread engaging content	■										
Social advertising	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
Analysis of content and advertisements	■		■								
Utilize the existing network	■			■							
Spread relevant content		■	■	■	■	■		■		■	
Listen and respond		■	■		■	■					■
Spread converting content			■		■						
Searching for and following potential leads			■								
Hold conversations			■	■			■	■			
Stimulate and facilitate influencers				■							
Follow potential employees				■							
Show involvement with customers					■						
Involve customers in business processes					■	■					
Monitor and listen							■				■
Analysis of developments in the industry							■				
Ask for ideas and feedback							■	■			
Connect with relevant people							■				
Filter and appreciate ideas and feedback							■				
Encourage employees to share or like content								■			
Internal use of social media software									■		

Figure 17. A matrix of the Social Business Model

The reason for constructing the matrix is that it gives an efficient overview of what types of social media activities align to which business goals. However, the categorization of the activities also requires a generalization of their applicability. This means that due to the activities being grouped together, they lose a certain level of detail that makes them applicable to the aligned business goal. To give an example: spreading relevant content for the business goal of improving reputation or for the business goal of improving customer service require two different activities with different types of content. Therefore in practice the matrix likely cannot be used as a substitute for the complete Social Business Model from figure 16.

## 5.3 Business goals and social media activities

To accompany the Social Business Model from figure 16, each business goal receives a more elaborate description, based on the research performed on the concepts in the literature review. The descriptions are supported by references when applicable. Furthermore, the social media activities of each business goal are described more elaborately in a designated table. These descriptions attempt to give a more detailed insight in what the activities stand for and why they can support the particular business goal.

### Increase brand awareness

Pursuing a larger brand awareness means increasing the mass reach of the recognition of a brand (Hoyer & Brown, 1990; Oh, 2000; Macdonald & Sharp, 2000). It further helps pursue a larger audience for the content placed on social media, and increases the possibilities for followers to interact with the organization through social channels.

Activities	Description
Spread content that prompts to sharing or liking.	Content refers to texts, pictures, videos, etc. The key factor here is to create and spread the right content, which appeals to the public it is targeting in a way that it is being shared and liked.
Spread content that prompts to reacting.	Content refers to texts, pictures, videos, etc. The key factor here is to create and spread content that generates reactions. Think of the simplest engaging questions, or questions related to a contest.
Social advertising on the target group to increase the reach and effect of content.	Content placed on social media platforms reaches a particular percentage of direct followers of the account. To increase the visibility among the target group, social advertising can be applied to content to reach people who fit particular demographics or characteristics, such as being a member of a particular group.
Social advertising to increase the amount of likes or followers.	Direct advertisement for your social page or profile in order to attract a larger amount of people.
Analysis of reach and effect to optimize the content and advertisements.	Previously placed content amasses a certain response, through people reading, sharing, liking or commenting upon the content. Analyzing these results helps to improve future content.
Mobile the existing network (for example by asking to share).	Asking the existing network to actively attempt to spread the existence of your social activity can be used to extend the reach.

Table 19. Social media activities for increasing brand awareness

### Improve reputation

Oh (2000) distinguishes brand awareness and brand class, with the latter referring to “*the level of product quality ...*”. The reputation in the context of this research is the *perceived* level of quality. It further stands for the appeal and trust something has compared to possible alternatives. For an organization this is a relative value compared to its competitors. A strong reputation is beneficial for an organization during the decision making process of the purchasing party. (Turban & Cable, 2003; Kietzmann et al., 2012).

Activities	Description
Spread relevant content (such as research, client cases, testimonials, recommendations, knowledge or experience).	Content refers to texts, pictures, videos, etc. The important aspect of spreading relevant content is the usefulness for readers. People should still want to share this with their network, but the focus should be on what the organization does, how it is done and what the organization is involved or interested in. This type of content is about sharing your expertise or skill, involving clients and partnerships where possible.
Social advertising to increase the reach and	Content placed on social media platforms reaches a part of the direct followers of the account. Advertising the content increases the reach



effect of content.	and therefore the effect of the placed content.
Listen and respond to people who talk about you (positively or negatively).	A lot of information can be derived from the opinions of people. Listening and respond to these messages can enhance the image people have of your organization.

Table 20. Social media activities for improving reputation

### Generate leads

A substantial part of an organization attempts to draw in leads: new prospective consumers for products or services (Morey & McCann (1983).

Activities	Description
Spread converting content (that prompts people to take action, such as (exclusive) offers or sales).	This refers to content that stimulates people to take action through interaction. For example by exclusive offers to followers or through
Social adverting with converting content.	Content placed on social media platforms reaches a particular percentage of direct followers of the account. Advertising on placed content increases the reach and therefore the effect of the placed content.
Spread relevant content (such as client cases or product information).	Giving potential customers information about your product or service that could persuade them to take interest, for example by showing content of finished client cases or work in progress.
Searching for and following potential leads (with search terms, filters or feeds).	Search terms can be used on social media platforms to find activity around the subject. Social media tools exist that let users create personal feeds that are able to filter specific terms that interest the organization.
Hold converting conversations.	Converting conversations refers to a conversation that persuades people to become interested in your products and services. This personalizes and humanizes the company for a prospective consumer.
Analysis of conversion to optimize the content and advertisements.	Conversion refers to the success of content, which can be measured by analysis on particular variables. These variables can depend on what is set out to be achieved with the content, but in case of generating leads the analysis refers to measuring conversion rates.

Table 21. Social media activities for generating leads

### Involve influencers

Influencers can be seen as regular consumers, except for that they are much more likely to be involved with the technology or experience behind the product or service compared to the average consumer (Keller, Fay & Berry, 2007). With this involvement comes activity on social media to share their interests with substantially more followers than average. In order to cooperate with influencers, contact has to be made and a relationship has to be built.

Activities	Description
Spread relevant content (such as cases, research, opinions or experiences).	Spreading relevant content refers to client cases; interesting news or research results connected to your field of work; or opinions or experiences with relevant topics. These types of content can get to the attention of influencers, helping the spreading of the content.

Social advertising on influencers to increase the reach and effect of content.	Advertising content specifically towards individuals which match particular criteria increases the probability that your content will reach influencers. Through social media, advertisements can be placed on people who for example like particular pages while having a minimum amount of followers or show a particular amount of activity.
Listen and respond to influencers.	Influencers spend a lot of their time with topics that interest them and therefore they are most probable interesting for the organization in question. Listening to what they are saying and responding when appropriate strengthens the relationship.
Hold conversations with influencers.	Conversing with influencers about a subject in common makes them aware of what your organization is involved in and also strengthens the relationship between the parties.
Stimulate and facilitate influencers (by helping them and simplifying the shareability).	Reducing the effort for people to share your content to a minimum increases the chances that they will. Simplifying the shareability can be done for example by adding social media sharing buttons on website articles or by reserving space in microblog content for influencers to share the content while adding their opinion.

**Table 22. Social media activities for involving influencers**

### Recruit employees

The use of social software for recruiting employees entails a lower communication barrier. It increases the insight in information about potential employees and also makes it possible for organizations to better identify themselves.

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Description</b>
Spread relevant content (such as vacancies or content for profiling).	Recruitment can be as much about the organization finding the right individual as it is the other way around. Spreading transparent content depicting your organization and the people in it improves the portrayed image of your organization. Using social media channels specifically to increase the reach of vacancy content can improve the recruitment process.
Social advertising on the target group to increase the reach and effect of content.	Content placed on social media platforms reaches a particular percentage of direct followers of the account. To increase the visibility among the target group, social advertising can be applied to content to reach people who fit particular demographics or characteristics, such as being a member of a particular group.
Follow potential employees.	Following potential employees on social media helps by generating knowledge about the characteristics of people and what drives them, while being connected lowers the communication barrier.
Hold conversations with potential employees.	Conversing with potential employees humanizes your organization and increases the knowledge about the candidates.
Utilize the network of employees to approach potential employees.	Current employees have their own network of (ex-) colleagues, friends and family. Through your own employees, these networks have a lower communication barrier and provide pre-knowledge about possible, available candidates.

**Table 23. Social media activities for recruiting employees**

## Retain customers

The art of retaining customers as opposed to losing customers and gaining other customers is of financial benefit (Rust & Zahorik, 1993; Kaske, Kügler, & Smolnik, 2012; CIM, 2010).

Activities	Description
Spread relevant content (such as testimonials, recommendations or client cases).	Relevant content refers to spreading content that shows the satisfaction of clients, such as testimonials, recommendations or client cases. The mutual agreement over the success increases engagement.
Spread converting content (that prompts people to take action, such as (exclusive) offers or sales).	This refers to content that stimulates people to take action. For example with exclusive offers for followers, or with a contest that stimulates interaction.
Social advertising on clients to increase the reach and effect of content.	Advertising through social channels on current clients or customers is an efficient reminder of that you are still active and available. Additionally, this increases the likelihood of retaining customers.
Show involvement with customers (such as liking or sharing their content).	Customers that are active on social media will share their perspective or opinion on your product or service. Clients or partners can share their experience about collaborating with your organization. Getting involved and interacting with these messages boosts engagement, as well as serving as advertisements.
Listen and respond to customers (webcare).	Listening and responding to customers that require assistance.
Involve customers (through co-branding or co-creation).	Collaborating with customers through co-creation gives customers an unique opportunity to get involved with your product or service and can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 24. Social media activities for retaining customers

## Improve customer service

The use of social media platforms to provide service to customers, improving the provision of service before, during, and after a purchase (Culnan, McHugh & Zubillaga, 2010)

Activities	Description
Create relevant content (such as pro-active messages or do-it-yourself solutions for problems).	Relevant content refers to spreading content that pro-actively helps customers, such as guides, warnings, or DIY-solutions. Admitting a problem and trying to solve it is better service than ignoring or denying the problem.
Listen and respond to customer questions and problems (webcare).	Customers that approach the organization over social media for questions or problems expect to be helped relatively urgently. In order to fulfill this monitoring of the incoming messages is needed.
Facilitate that customers can help each other (for example through a forum or community).	This means outsourcing the customer service to the customers themselves through an online community. In this community, the customers are stimulated for their loyalty and contributing their experience, knowledge and time. The online community additionally raises engagement and creates a network effect.

Table 25. Social media activities for improving customer service

### Gain market insight

Keep up to date on market innovations, competitor activities and customer requirements. (Kiron et al. (2012).

Activities	Description
Listen to what (potential) customers are saying.	People by nature like sharing their thoughts and opinions. This includes wishes of what is currently lacking.
Analysis of developments in the industry (like competitors, suppliers, influencers).	Social media simplifies the process of keeping up with developments or activities of competitor organizations, partners, and relevant influencers for the industry. This
Spread research (such as a survey).	Research in this activity refers to the research the organization can deploy themselves to gain market insight. For example by gathering information from your customers or people in your industry through a survey.
Social advertising to increase the reach of research.	Social advertising can be applied to extend the reach of applied research.
Converse with (potential) customers.	Through conversing with customers or potential customers, particular wishes can be gathered that are not easily visible. For example a potential customer who decided to go with an alternative product or service.

Table 26. Social media activities for gaining market insight

### Advance innovation/development

Advancing innovation and/or development with the input of customers or followers. As a social approach to development (Piller, Vossen, & Ihl, 2012).

Activities	Description
Ask for ideas and feedback of (potential) users for (prototype) products or services.	Gather valuable ideas for products or services by specifically asking users who are invested in your brand to share their feedback. These are the people that have experience with what you deliver and are additionally likely to remain users if you follow up on their feedback.
Converse with customers.	Talking with customers can bring forward specific needs or ideas. Social media is a low threshold platform for these conversations.
Converse with people in the industry.	It is difficult to keep track of all the ..... There is a lot going on around the organization,
Connect with relevant people (such as opinion leaders, trendsetters, developers).	The focus of the organization cannot always be on external innovations. This does not need to happen with other people specializing their time in keeping track of the environmental changes.
Filter and appreciate ideas and feedback (for example in webcare).	People can give ideas and feedback without being asked for it. People who want to be involved or want to be
Participate in relevant groups.	Social media networks have groups suited to a particular topic. The right groups discuss relevant matters for an organization and are open to questions to gain knowledge and learn about the innovations that are going on in the field or industry.

Table 27. Social media activities for advancing innovation/development.

## Involve employees

Engage employees to expand a firm's external network and improve internal collaboration.

Activities	Description
Encourage employees to share or like content.	The employees of the company have their own networks with potentially interested people. Letting them help with the spreading of online presence involves them in the
Spread content by employees.	If employees actively create their own content on subjects relevant to the organization, helping to spread this content by using the organizational network
Spread content about employees (such as projects).	Mentioning employees in the content placed about running projects involves them in the message and increases the reach of the content.

Table 28. Social media activities for involving employees.

## Increase employee productivity

Increasing employee productivity through the input of tools for collaboration and communication.

Activities	Description
Let employees use social media, such as in sales or webcare.	The use of social media in this activity refers to the channel of social network platforms where a large proportion of the customers are located.
Facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration inbetween employees with an (internal) social network).	Facilitating an internal social network allows employees to share their knowledge and learn from each other. Internal networks can also improve communication and collaboration. Different types of internal social networks exist for different purposes, such as a wiki-like network or an enterprise social network.

Table 29. Social media activities for increasing employee productivity.

## Manage risks

Resolve issues which potentially threaten a firm's reputation.

Activities	Description
Monitor what is being said about the organization, brand, product or service.	Potential risks can be initiated at any time. It is in the organization their best interest to become aware of the risk as soon as possible. Mainly to become aware themselves before they are contacted about possible consequences. Like this, a large part of managing risks becomes preventing to let the problem become bigger than it is.
Monitor what happens in the surroundings of the organization.	Monitoring on social platforms to stay up to date about what happens around the organization. For example updates from partners, suppliers, and competitors.
Spread content and converse about it (for example with a product recall).	In case a product requires recalling, social media can be used to inform the customers. This places some of the control back in the hands of the organization.
Respond to misconceptions or potential problems.	Misconceptions about your brand or product can spiral a slight issue into serious brand reputation damage. These misconceptions can quickly spread on social media channels, but they also give organizations the opportunity to respond to these misconceptions and explain the truth.

Table 30. Social media activities for managing risks.

## 6. The Social Business Method

This chapter discusses the method development of the Social Business Method. It further presents a way of depicting the method, through the creation of a Process-Deliverable Diagram.

### 6.1 Method development

The method development process involved an assessment of which steps would be best suited to applying the Social Business Model. These steps are triggered by a process used by Budeco., who gained a vast amount of experience through years of guiding customers with (social) business development. Experiencing this process created the basic outline with a series of steps for the method. First of all it was established that the use of the model would facilitate, and therefore ease, the process of deciding on how to deploy social media. This meant that certain steps around using the model were needed to ease the effort, and that it needed to be determined which information was required prior to usage of the Social Business Model. It was determined that a social business strategy is the final deliverable of the method. This social business strategy is a document that describes which activities are planned to be deployed and what business goal they are deployed for.

### 6.2 Process-Deliverable Diagram

In figure 18 the Process-Deliverable Diagram (PDD) is shown of the developed Social Business Model from chapter 5. A PDD is created with the goal of visualizing the method that guides the use of the model. It creates context for the model and is an attempt to let any user be able to use it. The PDD consists of activities on the left and concepts on the right. The activities are divided by three steps. These are depicted by open activities in the PDD, each of which contains several sub activities. The three open activities are:

- Assess situation
- Apply Social Business Model
- Formalize social business strategy

#### Assess situation

In this step an analysis takes place of the current situation of the business. This includes the overall well-being; its current activities involving social media; where potential opportunities lie; and what current weaknesses are that need to be addressed. This step should involve more than one person: favorably at least one of which is either the business owner or someone who has a complete overview of the business; and at least one understanding the possibilities with social media. This step is in place to get to an understanding of the background of the organization, what its weak points are and what possible opportunities are. It also sets up the correct view to think of where the organization is heading to and what it wants and needs in the future. Overall it creates an overview of what is depicted in the PDD as the concept situation. In this case the concept is likely a set of notes of the discussion of the previous points. It is a necessary assessment to ensure the right decisions are made in the following steps.

#### Apply Social Business Model

Having acquired a sufficient assessment of the organization, the business goals and social media activities need to be determined. The Social Business Model aids this step in several ways. First, it

presents an overview of twelve common business goals, correctly leveled and applicable to any organization. The business goals are determined by each participant of the session making a ranking of the number, for example five, of most applicable goals for the organization, given the situation assessment of the previous step. The combined result of this list determines the most important business goals for the organization. Depending on the desired size of the social business strategy plan, the highest few business goals are picked, for example three. For these three business goals the Social Business Model then determines which social media activities should be applied, which is the basis for the social business plan.

### Formalize social business plan

The indicated social media activities start the brainstorm of possible practical activities with social media that can be undertaken. Here the activities have to be taken critically. This includes proven practical activities as well as thinking out of the box to come up with innovative ideas.

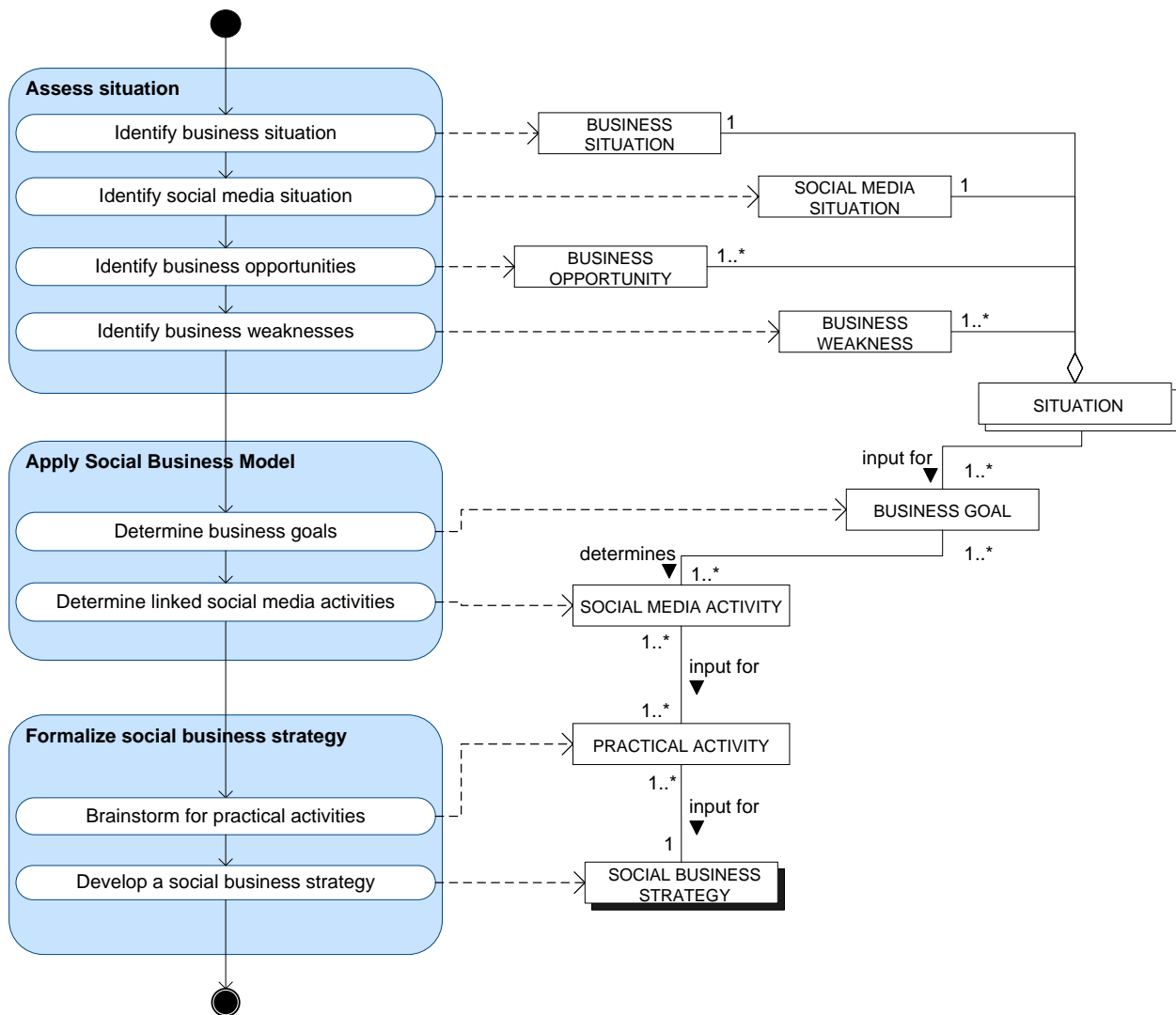


Figure 18. Process-Deliverable Diagram of the Social Business Method deployment

### 6.3 Activity table

This activity table represents the activities from the PDD in figure 18.

Activity	Sub activity	Description
Assess situation	Identify business situation	Identify important aspects of the current BUSINESS SITUATION.
	Identify social media situation	Identify the current situation of social media activity as the SOCIAL MEDIA SITUATION.
	Identify business opportunities	Potential business opportunities that can be advantageous for the organization are noted as a BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY.
	Identify business weaknesses	Parts of the organization or products and services that do not function sufficiently, or are performed better by main competitors, are noted as a BUSINESS WEAKNESS.
Apply Social Business Model	Determine business goals	After the SITUATION is determined, an overview exists of where the organization stands and where it wants to go. This gives the participants the first idea of the business goals that need to be pursued. These are subsequently matched to the most appropriate business goals in the Social Business Model, determining the BUSINESS GOALS.
	Determine linked social media activities	For each BUSINESS GOAL the corresponding SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITYs can be determined with the help of the Social Business Model.
Formalize social business strategy	Brainstorm for practical activities	For each SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY a PRACTICAL ACTIVITY needs to be conceived. This describes the activity in question and further applicable information needed to deploy the activity.
	Develop a social business strategy	After the PRACTICAL ACTIVITYs have been conceived, they together form the base of the SOCIAL BUSINESS STRATEGY.

Table 31. Activity table describing the activities from figure 18.



## 6.4 Concept table

This concept table represents the concepts from the PDD in figure 18.

Concept	Description
BUSINESS SITUATION	The current situation of an organization, including current products or services; the customer or client situation
SOCIAL MEDIA SITUATION	The current online situation of an organization, describing the integration of social media in the business strategy and, if applicable, the activities that have been deployed recently or are planned in the near future.
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY	Cost-efficient improvements to business operations, products or services that are considered wise to focus on in the near future.
BUSINESS WEAKNESS	Parts of the organization or products and services that do not function sufficiently, or are performed better by main competitors.
SITUATION	The combination of the BUSINESS SITUATION; SOCIAL MEDIA SITUATION; BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY; and BUSINESS WEAKNESS forms the SITUATION to be taken into consideration in the remainder of the method.
BUSINESS GOAL	A BUSINESS GOAL is a target that reflects organizational values (Ward & Peppard, 2007).
SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY	A SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY is described by Kiron et al. (2012) as: <i>“activities that use social media, social software and social networks, to enable more efficient, effective and mutually useful connections between people, information and assets”</i> .
PRACTICAL ACTIVITY	A practical appliance of a particular SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY, forming a more detailed activity description including applicable information such as the description; channels; platforms; timeline; or time of deployment.
SOCIAL BUSINESS STRATEGY	A collection of PRACTICAL ACTIVITYs form a SOCIAL BUSINESS STRATEGY, which is utilized coherently to help achieve the determined BUSINESS GOALS.

Table 32. Concept table describing the concepts from figure 18.

## 7. Method evaluation

This chapter discussed the method evaluation as described in the research approach in chapter 2.7.

### 7.1 Workshops

Two workshops were planned and performed for evaluation of the method.

Organization	Date	Participants
Het Klooster	3-12-2013	9: 6 (Het Klooster) +3 (Budeco)
INoffice	20-2-2014	4: 1 (INoffice) +3 (Budeco)

Table 33. Workshops

#### Het Klooster

The method was still in an early stage for the workshop of Het Klooster in December. However, the method was applied in its then current form with 6 participants from the organization.

The organization of Het Klooster was split up in three clusters: art education; theater; and commercial rental. This means that in the workshop the method was deployed for each cluster. First an introduction was given to the participants about social media. To regain focus on the needs of the organization, the participants were then encouraged to come up with objectives for each cluster. The Social Business Model and its parts were then explained to them. Each participant was then given a form with the business goals of the Social Business Model and asked to rank the business goals in such a way that the goal with highest priority receives five points; the goal with the second highest priority receiving four points; and so on. The scores were accumulated to form the final standings. The result was a list of the three most important goals for each of the three clusters of Het Klooster:

- Art education: Retain customers; Involve employees; Advance innovation/development
- Theater: Increase brand awareness; Retain customers; Gain market insight
- Commercial rental: Increase brand awareness; Generate leads; Improve reputation

While some clusters contained the same business goals, the reasons for them were still different. Increasing brand awareness for the theater requires different content aimed at a different target group. The Social Business Model provided the link to the social media activities. These were discussed in separated groups of two, with two participants from Het Klooster and one from Budeco. The provided list of social media activities was used to brainstorm about concrete activities that fit within the possibilities of the organization. A few examples:

Cluster	Business goal	Social media activity	Concrete activity
Art education	Increase brand awareness	Social advertising to increase the amount of likes or followers.	Social advertising on Facebook to reach people who live nearby Woerden and who like associated pages.
Commercial rental	Generate leads	Searching for and following potential leads.	Monitoring for people who are searching for a location to host an event, and actively replying on those people.
Theater	Retain customers	Spread relevant content.	Spread content with a monthly theme, showing impressions of theater shows.

Table 34. Results workshop

## **INoffice**

The method was applied in the final form, after being further developed since the previous workshop. The organization of INoffice was presented by its business executive. The method was more structured around forming an assessment of the situation. Opportunities and weaknesses were identified, along with the current use of social media. It was determined that a lot of opportunities with social media were possible, but that this partially depended on available resources.

The workshop raised concern about the rating process. In this process, decisions are made for particular business goals in a particular order. The idea is that every participant gives a score to the business goals in order to reach a conclusion on the most important ones. When using a score of 12 to 1, not filling in a score for all goals might still highlight the most important business goals for an organization, yet it is still prone to flaws.

This workshop also created awareness about the amount of participants during a workshop.. Due to there not being a standard minimum amount of people involved, it is difficult to set up a rule for this. The idea is that if an individual has a sufficient amount of knowledge about the organization, the method, and the possibilities with social media, it should in theory be possible to reach a conclusion with 1 participant. However, the careful assumption should be made that in most scenarios the organization has little awareness of what can be achieved through social media. This means that while a participant from the organization has solid knowledge of which goals need to be targeted, little is known about the specifics when applying social media. The method is able to bridge the gap between business goals and social media activities, but in order to extend that to a suitable, detailed plan of activities for an organization is a different matter. These arguments point in the direction of the necessity of multiple participants.

## **7.2 Survey**

To evaluate the quality of the method for end users, two attributes are especially important according to Davis (1989). The first attribute is perceived usefulness, defined as: *“the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance”* (Davis, 1989, p.3). In the case of this research, ‘system’ is understood as the method in question, and ‘his or her job performance’ would be changed into the organization as whole, or a particular task that needs completion. The second attribute is perceived ease of use: *“the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort”* (Davis, 1989, p.3). Intention to use is about how likely it is that the person will use the method. This was omitted from the survey because the current situation could not accurately reflect this attribute, as the participants would not further apply the method independently.

A survey was sent for evaluation of the model. The survey was filled in by two participants. Due to the low amount of participants, the survey results merely give a hint of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. On a Likert scale of 5, perceived usefulness scored a 4.42 while perceived ease of use scored a 4.08. Negatively asked questions were answered more strongly (4.40) than positive asked questions (4.14), which is most likely because the negative questions were perceived more strongly. It also makes sense that the way that the method was explained to the participants

in the workshops aided their understanding and belief in the method as opposed to a person gaining knowledge about the method themselves without external explanation. Due to limited time, not enough participation could be gathered to reach conclusion through validity significance according to Moody (2003). While for these reasons this survey is in no state to come to conclusions, this section is still included to keep the completeness in check of the performed research, and is valuable for improving this process in future research.

## 8. Conclusions

This chapter discusses the research questions proposed in chapter 1.3. It further discussed some general conclusions and the practical implications of this research.

### Sub research questions

The main research question was supported by four sub research questions:

1. *What are typical business goals?*

If one were to ask all organizations in a single city to come forth and state their business goals, it would result in a seemingly endless collection of goals written according to a variety of mindsets. Organizations of different sizes and in different sectors have their own ways of expressing what they are working towards. The literature study resulted in solid set of business goals. The selected business goals deemed most appropriate in the given circumstances of this research are given in table 4. However, due to the proposals made by the Delphi participants two business goals were added to the list of typical business goals. The final list is visible in the Social Business Model in figure 16.

2. *What are typical social media activities?*

Social media activities were elicited from the literature study. In the Delphi study, the activities were proposed to the experts, where it became obvious that in order to fully integrate social media activities in a model aligned with business goals, the social media activities had to be purposely written for each specific business goal. This was the only way for the model to be effective in use, because otherwise the activities would be too generic. The final list of social media activities is given in the Social Business Model in figure 16.

3. *Which social media activities need to be utilized to pursue which business goal?*

The resulting business goals and social media activities from the first two sub questions are aligned and placed in a concept model. This concept model was proposed to the Delphi participants, in which they were given the task to assess each combination of goal and activity. The final version of the model is presented in the Social Business Model in figure 16.

4. *How can social business knowledge be transformed into a method and what steps does it require for it to facilitate organizations?*

It was determined that sufficient knowledge was required of the state of the organization and its current business and social media situation, creating the first step for the method. The use of the Social Business Model was formed into the second step. The knowledge of social business that was placed in the model was therefor included in the method. In the third and last step the gained insight is used to produce a social business strategy. This formed the method, which was further developed using the process-deliverable diagram annotations from the method engineering discipline. This resulted in the Social Business Method as presented in figure 18, which further presents its eight sub activities and the concepts that are created by them.

## **Main research question**

This research revolved around the following main research question:

- How can organizations be facilitated in deploying social media activities in alignment with their business goals?

It was established that a considerable amount of organizations are unsuccessful at aligning their social media activities with their business goals, and that no method existed to facilitate with this. The elicitation of business goals and social media activities from currently available scientific literature formed a concept model. This concept model was put to through a validation using a Delphi study of five rounds with a group of nine experts in the field of social business. The resulting model was designed as a PDD in a method containing three main steps. This Social Business Method is presented in figure 18, along with its explanation of the activities and concepts in table 31 and 32.

## **General conclusions**

Based on the performed research, some general conclusions can be formulated relating to the deployment of social business by organizations. One of the most important ones is that social media requires a serious investment. Some scholars argue that without the required investment it is not worth the effort (Booth & Matic, 2011) and further findings throughout the research seem to support this notion. The key is that deploying social business should not be underestimated.

Next to the resources investment, the success is also affected by organizational culture. Social media can be seen as one of several ways an organization can express itself. This inevitably results in a certain mindset and logic. For some organizations, becoming a social business means that a shift in the organizational culture is required. This is the case because while any organization can deploy certain activities, the quality of this activity still depends on the people who perform them. Some cultural necessities according to Kiron et al. (2012) are among others: openness to new ideas; transparency; and having incentive to share. Based on this research the recommendation can be made for organizations that are looking into deploying social media to first ask themselves whether their organization is ready for it internally.

## **Practical implications**

This research contributes in several ways to the scientific discussions on social business, organizations, and practically any practitioners of social media. The combination of the two main deliverables of this research, the Social Business Model and the Social Business Method, provides a facilitating tool for any organization that faces difficulties of utilizing social media activities. As noted at the beginning of this research project, no method existed that is able to align social media activities to the business goals of an organization. The common observation was that everybody was consulting the importance of this alignment, few had an answer to how this should be undertaken, and nobody could provide a facilitating framework or tool that addressed the problem.

A large proportion of organizations struggle to adapt to the changes in corporate culture and innovation that social media has brought to the table. Organizations from all sizes are required to adapt and incorporate social business into their daily business. The Social Business Method is a helpful stepping stone for facilitating this issue.

## 9. Discussion and Future research

This first section of this chapter discusses several limitations that affected the quality of this research project. The second section discusses suggestions for future research.

### Discussion

Some limitations of this research and the method need to be pointed out. A scarce amount of scientific literature is aimed towards the actual use of social media activities, or an overview of possible activities. Most scientific literature on the topic of social media sporadically mentions a particular activity. The same is applicable to business goals, to some extent. Nevertheless, due to the relatively large amount of literature compared to the specific information searched for, it is always possible that a particular social media activity or business goal is overlooked. This is why during the elicitation step for the model development, often multiple sources were required in order to make a decision on a particular component.

The Delphi study faced several limitations. One was that it was performed with nine participating experts. It is plausible to assume that a higher response rate would lead to more unique insights about particular social media activities that now disappeared under the radar. Another limitation of the Delphi study was that it contained five rounds. While other available Delphi studies in the IS/IT field might not indicate that more rounds were undertaken, further analysis pointed out that in some studies contact with the participants was extended as long as it was deemed necessary or a final agreement was reached. In comparison, the Delphi study in this research tried to minimize the amount of rounds and contact moments with the participants in an attempt to control the time required to finish the Delphi study.

Another limitation regards the longevity of the Social Business Model. As Yomego (2013, p.3) warns in their white paper introducing social media framework: *“(The framework is) not finished, and probably never will be”*. This might also hold some truth for the developed Social Business Model. Despite the effort put into the scope of the artifact (abstraction level; timelessness; and applicability), it is likely that the model does require alterations in given time. The simple reason for this is that the landscape of social business has changed in dramatic fashion in the past decade. It would be naïve to assume history will not repeat itself in the following decade. If anything, there are reasons to believe that this process of technological innovations keeps accelerating. The world of IT and social media keeps evolving.

It is arguable that the discussion created by different insights and ideas during a workshop add value to the analysis. It often seemed the case that there was too little time to discuss and analyze everything in detail. It can be said that is not recommended to sprint through the method as it can give a false idea of the business goals of an organization. Furthermore, the workshops suggested that a relatively big group of people are largely unaware of what social media can mean for organizations.

The small survey deployed with some of the workshop participants further gave a positive impression, but the results are not generalizable. Another limitation of the survey was that while it attempted to test usefulness and ease of use, it did not involve questions about the correctness or completeness of the method. They are too limited in size, but moreover are likely subjectively

affected by the nature of the workshop, the survey, and the people involved in the process. More workshops would be required to fully evaluate the developed method. A limitation for the method is that the impression exists that for a large percentage of people the method and model would be too complex to deploy individually.

### **Future research**

Additionally, while the Social Business Model is validated through the Delphi study in this research, the Social Business Method is not. More workshops should be organized in order to correctly evaluate the findings from the Delphi study and further research is needed to validate the method. These workshops would further provide a chance to discuss and evaluate the method with a larger group of survey participants on a wider variation on criteria, such as correctness and completeness.

Also questions arose whether the method is usable for the average business owner. Ironically, the trigger of the research is that a lot of people are unaware, inexperienced or have a lack of knowledge in the area of social media. To then expect organizations to think in-depth about possible and practical social media activities seems like a tough process, even with the guidance of the Social Business Method. Hence further research should be conducted on the difficulty of the method and whether it could and should be improved.

In depth case studies following the results of different types of organizations through the deployment of the Social Business Method should tell us more of the effect it has. It should also assess whether this method is truly applicable to all types of organizations. Obviously a case for a multinational firm could not be more different than a self-employed individual or freelancer. But there should be a use of social media for all types of business. Thanks to social media, small organizations can appear larger than they really are and large organizations can appear more personal than they really are. The question is whether the developed method is still applicable to the rarest of cases and whether it is worth extending or altering it for those cases.

The same holds for the changing world of social media. While social media channels might be quite stable, social media platforms evolve or perish, while new popular platforms arrive in the landscape on a yearly basis. Even in the near future, these platforms can contain new possible activities that are unknown today and unknown to the Social Business Model. Future research is needed on this topic to assess the timelessness of the model.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Business goals

<b>Title</b>	Increase brand awareness
<b>Description</b>	Creating a basic level of brand knowledge involving at least recognition of the brand name.
<b>Reference</b>	Hoyer & Brown (1990)

<b>Title</b>	Generate leads
<b>Description</b>	Generating prospective consumers of a product or service.
<b>Reference</b>	Investopedia (2013)

<b>Title</b>	Involve influencers
<b>Description</b>	Involving individuals who have the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others.
<b>Reference</b>	BusinessDictionary (2013)

<b>Title</b>	Improve reputation
<b>Description</b>	Improving the perceptual representation of a firm's overall appeal
<b>Reference</b>	Turban & Cable (2003)

<b>Title</b>	Recruit employees
<b>Description</b>	Activities carried on by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees.
<b>Reference</b>	Breaugh & Starke (2000)

<b>Title</b>	Retain customers
<b>Description</b>	Retain customers to ensure they repeat purchasing and make references to new potential customers.

<b>Reference</b>	Henning-Thurau & Klee (1997)
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<b>Title</b>	Improve customer service
<b>Description</b>	Improve the provision of service before, during, and after a purchase.
<b>Reference</b>	Wikipedia (2013)

<b>Title</b>	Gain market insight
<b>Description</b>	Keep up to date on market innovations, competitor activities and customer requirements.
<b>Reference</b>	IBM (2012)

<b>Title</b>	Involve employees
<b>Description</b>	Engage employees to expand a firm's network and improve internal collaboration
<b>Reference</b>	IBM (2012); Arnold (2011)

<b>Title</b>	Manage risks
<b>Description</b>	Resolve issues which potentially threaten a firm's reputation.
<b>Reference</b>	Arnold (2011)

## Appendix B: Social media activities

<b>Title</b>	Spread shareable / likeable content
<b>Description</b>	Spread interesting content shared and liked by followers and their circles.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<p><i>"Where's the content that audiences will want to share with their audiences? Is the content you're creating actually worth sharing?"</i> Social Media Today (2013)</p> <p><i>"People just aren't reading text like they use to and multimedia content tends to be shared more"</i> Talent Evolution (2013)</p> <p><i>"It's not enough for Facebook users to "like" your business once. Engage</i></p>



	<i>with them. It's what you wanted when you set up the page, and overall market trends and it's what your "likers" wanted when they liked it." "Give them' ..., 'updates, photos, news, or whatever else you said you'd deliver." Duffy (2012)</i>
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<b>Title</b>	Advertise
<b>Description</b>	Targeted advertisement on specific demographics.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<i>"Social network ad products targeting a specific demographics, social connections, interests, and habits." Business Insider (2013)</i>  <i>"Creatively advertising within social media via the creation of brand-related applications and podcasts." Qualman (2012)</i>

<b>Title</b>	Encourage customer appreciation.
<b>Description</b>	Encourage customers to share their appreciation about your product or service (by facilitating this for the customer)
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<i>"Encouraging the user to share feedback, provide comments, rate products, provide reviews '...' for sharing with friends." Thackeray et al. (2008)</i>  <i>"Encourage satisfied customers to share their experiences on social media sites" Social Media Examiner (2013)</i>

<b>Title</b>	Spread relevant content
<b>Description</b>	Spread content that is relevant for followers and/ or the industry.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<i>"In addition to posting content about your business, also discuss other relevant issues, businesses, brands, or ideas — anything that makes you excited. People who are passionate about a wide range of subjects are interesting, and interesting people attract followers." Duffy (2012)</i>

<b>Title</b>	Converse
<b>Description</b>	Participate in conversations.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<i>"Participate in the conversations by posting comments on blogs and</i>

	<p><i>forums, answering questions on Yahoo! and LinkedIn, joining groups related to your industry and taking part in Twitter chats.” Marketwire (2012)</i></p> <p><i>“As you begin to create your social media presence, check out the social media profiles of major movers and shakers in your industry, making friends, commenting and sharing relevant content should be a top priority. You see, It’s all about networking.” Talent Evolution (2013)</i></p>
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<b>Title</b>	React
<b>Description</b>	React on comments or questions.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<p><i>“Provide self-service and agent-based support via social platforms when and how customers want to be connected” IBM (2012)</i></p> <p><i>“Address customer complaints, resolve the problem and blog about how you took care of it” Social Media Examiner (2012)</i></p>

<b>Title</b>	Monitor
<b>Description</b>	Monitor customer activity regarding your brand.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<p><i>“Find mentions of your business on Twitter ‘..Find out if Pinterest users are pinning your content” Duffy (2012)</i></p> <p><i>“Capture and analyze conversations to determine customer sentiment, purchasing preferences and overall market trends” IBM (2012)</i></p> <p><i>“Social media allows dissatisfied customers to post their complaints right away, in the height of their frustration. This gives companies a unique opportunity to gain authentic insight into the problems that customers are facing when using their product or service.” Qualman (2012)</i></p>

<b>Title</b>	Provide exclusiveness to followers
<b>Description</b>	Provide exclusive content and offers to followers
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<i>“Consider releasing content only on a specific channel. This can be anything from video blogs to sneak previews to coupons to presale codes, but make sure fans can’t get it anywhere else.” Social Media Today (2013)</i>

	<i>"Give them the exclusive offers, coupons, updates, photos, news, or whatever else you said you'd deliver."</i> Duffy (2012)
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<b>Title</b>	Integrate the product in a social application or game
<b>Description</b>	Integrate the product in a social application or game
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<p><i>"Companies that find success within social media ... realize that to engage people they have to make their product interesting and incorporate it into something that grabs the attention of consumers, like integrating their product into online applications."</i> Qualman (2012)</p> <p><i>"The right smartphone application or app can help businesses increase brand awareness and customer loyalty."</i> Social Media Examiner (2012)</p>

<b>Title</b>	Encourage customer to contribute creatively
<b>Description</b>	Encourage customer to contribute with creative ideas, content and customized products and services.
<b>Reference(s)</b>	<p><i>"Work with individuals with significant followers to obtain unique insights and gain mindshare"</i> (IBM, 2012)</p> <p><i>"Encouraging the customer to be part of the creative process"</i> (Thackeray et al., 2008)</p> <p><i>"Giving your fans a way to participate (especially if prizes are involved) is a great means of activating them, and in turn they'll be on the lookout for your content."</i> Social Media Today (2013)</p>

## Appendix C: Delphi email invite

Geachte heer .....,

Mijn collega Wilco Verdoold is al zo vriendelijk geweest mij kort te introduceren, maar alsnog even zelf: ik ben Machiel Schönbeck, student Master Business Informatics aan de Universiteit Utrecht, en stagiair bij Budeco in het teken van mijn afstudeerscriptie.

Namens deze partijen ben ik een wetenschappelijke methode aan het ontwikkelen, gebaseerd op een door Budeco ontwikkeld en getoetst model. De methode dient als richtlijn voor het bepalen van de social media activiteiten, met de focus op de doelen die een organisatie wil bereiken. Tevens zal het gebruikt worden bij een survey om te ondervinden hoe social media wordt ingezet bij Nederlandse ondernemingen.

Als onderdeel van de methode ontwikkeling is een expert validatie benodigd. De validatie bestaat uit minimaal 2 en maximaal 3 fasen waarin u wordt gevraagd uw mening over (een deel van) de methode te geven.

Om deel te nemen aan de eerste fase vult u het volgende formulier in: <http://budeco.nl/social-business>

Alvast bedankt voor uw bijdrage!

Met vriendelijke groet,

## Appendix D: Delphi survey round 1

### Social business doelen

In de eerste fase van deze validatie wordt een set social business doelen getoond. Met een social business doel wordt bedoeld: een doel van een onderneming waar social media activiteiten aan kunnen bijdragen. De gegeven doelen hebben tevens gemeen dat ze allen bijdragen aan de doelen die elke onderneming nastreeft: continuïteit; kostenverlaging; en meer winst. Wij willen u vragen om kritisch te analyseren of de doelen kloppen en in uw mening passen in een model van social business doelen.

**Kunnen onderstaande business doelen beter, sneller en/of goedkoper worden gerealiseerd met de juiste inzet van social media? \***

	Ja	Nee
Naamsbekendheid vergroten	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads genereren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beïnvloeders betrekken	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reputatie verbeteren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medewerkers werven	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Klanten behouden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Klantenservice verbeteren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marktinzicht vergroten	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medewerkers betrekken	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Risico's beheersen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Naamsbekendheid vergroten - Een basisniveau van naamsbekendheid creëren waarin tenminste herkenning is van de merknaam.

Leads genereren - Genereren van potentiële klanten van een product of service.

Beïnvloeders betrekken - Betrekken van personen die de macht hebben om de aankoopbeslissingen van anderen te beïnvloeden.

Reputatie verbeteren - Verbetering van de perceptuele representatie van de algemene aantrekkingskracht van een onderneming.

Medewerkers werven - Activiteiten met het primaire doel om potentiële werknemers te identificeren en aantrekken.

Klanten behouden - Behouden van klanten om ervoor te zorgen dat ze herhaalaankopen blijven doen en refereren naar potentiële nieuwe klanten.

Klantenservice verbeteren - Verbetering van de dienstverlening voor, tijdens, en na een aankoop.

Marktinzicht vergroten - Blijf op de hoogte van innovaties op de markt, activiteiten van concurrenten en de wensen van de klant.

Medewerkers betrekken - Betrek werknemers om het netwerk van een onderneming te vergroten en interne samenwerking te verbeteren.

Risico's beheersen - Het oplossen van problemen die mogelijk de reputatie van een onderneming bedreigen.

**Heeft u in bovenstaande tabel één of meer keer "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dat hieronder toe waarom de inzet van social media bij deze doelstelling(en) geen toegevoegde waarde kan hebben.**

**Bestaan er andere business doelen die naar uw mening beter in de lijst passen?**

**Heeft u nog verdere suggesties of opmerkingen?**

**Naam \***

Voornaam

Achternaam

Verzenden

## Appendix E: Delphi survey round 2

### Terugkoppeling op ontvangen surveys

In de eerste fase van de validatie werd de volgende lijst met social business doelen getoond:

Naamsbekendheid vergroten - Een basisniveau van naamsbekendheid creëren waarin tenminste herkenning is van de merknaam.  
Leads genereren - Genereren van potentiële klanten van een product of service.  
Beïnvloeders betrekken - Betrekken van personen die de macht hebben om de aankoopbeslissingen van anderen te beïnvloeden.  
Reputatie verbeteren - Verbetering van de perceptuele representatie van de algemene aantrekkingskracht van een onderneming.  
Medewerkers werven - Activiteiten met het primaire doel om potentiële werknemers te identificeren en aantrekken.  
Klanten behouden - Behouden van klanten om ervoor te zorgen dat ze herhaalaankopen blijven doen en refereren naar potentiële nieuwe klanten.  
Klantenservice verbeteren - Verbetering van de dienstverlening voor, tijdens, en na een aankoop.  
Marktinzicht vergroten - Blijf op de hoogte van innovaties op de markt, activiteiten van concurrenten en de wensen van de klant.  
Medewerkers betrekken - Betrek werknemers om het netwerk van een onderneming te vergroten en interne samenwerking te verbeteren.  
Risico's beheersen - Het oplossen van problemen die mogelijk de reputatie van een onderneming bedreigen.

Hierop zijn suggesties gemaakt voor doelen die niet (geheel) kloppen of in de lijst thuishoren. Tevens waren er suggesties voor doelen die toegevoegd zouden moeten worden. Sommige van deze suggesties zijn echter goed in verband te brengen met al bestaande doelen in de lijst. Hierover bent u mogelijk persoonlijk benaderd. Andere suggesties zijn niet in verband te brengen met een bestaand doel. Wat volgt zijn enkele vragen die horen bij de terugkoppeling op de ontvangen feedback.

Aan de hand van de feedback bleek dat er twijfel bestond over de definitie van het doel "Risico's beheersen". Het voorstel is om dit te reviseren naar "Reputatieschade beperken". Vindt u dit doel toepasselijker in de lijst van business doelen? \*

	Ja	Nee
Reputatieschade beperken	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reputatieschade beperken- Het beperken van potentiële reputatieschade van een onderneming.

Heeft u in hierboven "Nee" ingevuld, of bestaat er twijfel? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

Interessante suggesties voor ontbrekende doelen hebben geleid tot de volgende voorstellen. Kunnen onderstaande business doelen beter, sneller en/of goedkoper worden gerealiseerd met de juiste inzet van social media? \*

	Ja	Nee
Ontwikkeling/innovatie bevorderen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Productiviteit medewerkers verhogen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ontwikkeling/innovatie bevorderen - Het bevorderen van ontwikkeling en/of innovatie door middel van de inzet van klanten.  
Productiviteit medewerkers verhogen - Het verhogen van de productiviteit van medewerkers door de inzet van hulpmiddelen voor samenwerking en communicatie.

Heeft u in bovenstaande tabel één of meer keer "Nee" ingevuld, of bestaat er twijfel? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

Heeft u nog verdere suggesties of opmerkingen?

Naam \*

Voornaam

Achternaam

Verzenden

## Appendix F: Delphi survey round 3

### Vragenlijst social media activiteiten

Stap 1 van 4

25%

De eerste categorie is 'Presence', waarbij het gaat om de content die een organisatie op social media verspreidt. Ik wil u vragen de volgende lijst van social media activiteiten door te nemen. Geef per activiteit aan of dit een toepasselijke activiteit is. \*

	Ja	Nee
Shareable/likeable content verspreiden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevante content verspreiden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social adverteren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Shareable/likeable content verspreiden - Het verspreiden van content die of makkelijk leuk te vinden is of interessant is om te delen.

Relevante content verspreiden - Het verspreiden van content die uw producten, diensten, of expertise weergeeft.

Social adverteren - Adverteren op sociale platformen.

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

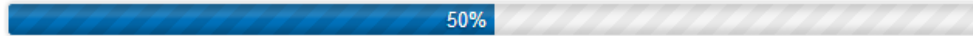
Adverteren is als breed begrip op vele manieren toe te passen. Lijkt het u praktisch om binnen een social business model de activiteit van adverteren op te splitsen? En zo ja, hoe?

Bestaan er andere social media activiteiten die naar uw mening ontbreken in de lijst? Let er hierbij op dat het om activiteiten gaat die te maken hebben met Presence, ofwel aanwezigheid en content.

Volgende

## Vragenlijst social media activiteiten

Stap 2 van 4



De tweede categorie is 'Engagement', waarbij het gaat om verhoging van de binding/betrokkenheid. Ik wil u vragen de volgende lijst van social media activiteiten door te nemen. Geef per activiteit aan of dit een toepasselijke activiteit is. \*

	Ja	Nee
Reageren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Converseren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Betrokkenheid stimuleren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exclusiviteit aanbieden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deelbaarheid faciliteren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reageren - Het reageren op of leuk vinden van berichten.

Converseren - De interactie aangaan door te luisteren en conversaties te voeren.

Betrokkenheid stimuleren - Klanten stimuleren bij te dragen met ideeën, feedback, of content.

Exclusiviteit aanbieden - Het aanbieden van exclusieve content, aanbiedingen, of acties.

Deelbaarheid faciliteren - Het gemakkelijk maken van het delen van content door social media buttons.

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

Bestaan er andere social media activiteiten die naar uw mening ontbreken in de lijst? Let er hierbij op dat het om activiteiten gaat die te maken hebben met Engagement, ofwel de verhoging van de binding/betrokkenheid.

Vorige

Volgende



## Vragenlijst social media activiteiten

Stap 3 van 4

75%

De derde categorie is 'Analysis', waarbij het gaat om het monitoren van gebeurtenissen op sociale platformen. Ik wil u vragen de volgende lijst van social media activiteiten door te nemen. Geef per activiteit aan of dit een toepasselijke activiteit is. \*

	Ja	Nee
Monitoren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Monitoren - Monitoren wat er gezegd wordt op sociale platformen.

Heeft u hierboven "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

Monitoren is als breed begrip op vele manieren toe te passen. Lijkt het u praktisch om binnen een social business model de activiteit van monitoren op te splitsen? En zo ja, hoe?

Bestaan er andere social media activiteiten die naar uw mening ontbreken in de lijst? Let er hierbij op dat het om activiteiten gaat die te maken hebben met Analysis, ofwel het monitoren van gebeurtenissen.

Vorige

Volgende

## Vragenlijst social media activiteiten

Stap 4 van 4

100%

Heeft u nog andere ideeën voor social media activiteiten die niet onder de al genoemde categorieën passen?

Naam \*

Voornaam

Achternaam

Vorige

Verzenden

## Appendix G: Delphi survey round 4

### Koppeling van doelen en activiteiten

Stap 1 van 2

50%

#### Doel: Naamsbekendheid vergroten

Activiteiten:

- Content verspreiden die aanzet om te delen (retweet, share, etc.) of positief te waarderen (like, +1, etc.).
- Content verspreiden die aanzet tot reageren.
- Social adverteren op de doelgroep om het bereik en effect van content te vergroten.
- Analyse van bereik en effect om de content en advertenties te optimaliseren.

Deel hier uw mening indien u mogelijkheden voor verbetering ziet.

#### Doel: Reputatie verbeteren

Activiteiten:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals cases, testimonials, aanbevelingen of onderzoeken).
- Social adverteren om het bereik en effect van content te vergroten.
- Luisteren naar wie wat over je zegt.
- Reageren op mensen die iets over je zeggen.

#### Doel: Leads genereren

Activiteiten:

- Converterende content verspreiden (content die mensen aanzet om actie te ondernemen, zoals(exclusieve) aanbiedingen of acties).
- Social adverteren met converterende content.
- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals klantcases of productinformatie).
- Converterende conversaties voeren met de doelgroep.
- Het zoeken naar kansen met behulp van zoektermen.
- Analyse van conversie om de content en advertenties te optimaliseren.

#### Doel: Beïnvloeders betrekken

Activiteiten:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals cases, onderzoeken, meningen of ervaringen).
- Social adverteren op beïnvloeders om het bereik en effect van content te vergroten.
- Luisteren naar en reageren op beïnvloeders.
- Converseren met beïnvloeders.

**Doel: Medewerkers werven**

Activiteiten:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals vacatures of content voor profilering).
- Social adverteren op de doelgroep om het bereik van content te vergroten.
- Potentiële medewerkers volgen.
- Converseren met potentiële medewerkers.

**Doel: Klanten behouden**

Activiteiten:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals testimonials, aanbevelingen of klantcases).
- Converterende content verspreiden (content die klanten aanzet om actie te ondernemen, zoals (exclusieve) aanbiedingen of acties).
- Social adverteren op bestaande klanten om het bereik van content te vergroten.
- Betrokkenheid met klanten tonen, zoals het leuk vinden of delen van hun content.
- Luisteren naar en reageren op klanten.

**Koppeling van doelen en activiteiten**

Stap 2 van 2



**Doel: Klantenservice verbeteren**

Activiteiten:

- Relevante content creëren (content zoals pro-actieve meldingen of doe-het-zelf-oplossingen bij problemen).
- Luisteren naar en reageren op klantproblemen (webcare).

**Doel: Marktinzicht vergroten**

Activiteiten:

- Luisteren naar de ontwikkelingen in de markt, wat er speelt in de omgeving en wat concurrenten zeggen.
- Het verspreiden van onderzoek (zoals een survey).
- Social adverteren om het bereik van onderzoek te vergroten.
- Converseren met (potentiële) klanten.

**Doel: Innovatie/ontwikkeling bevorderen**

Activiteiten:

- Vragen om ideeën en feedback van (potentiële) gebruikers.
- Converseren met klanten.
- Converseren met mensen in je bedrijfstak.
- Ideeën en feedback waarderen.

**Doel: Medewerkers betrekken**

Activiteiten:

- Medewerkers stimuleren content te delen en/of positief te waarderen.
- Content door medewerkers laten creëren en verspreiden.
- Content over medewerkers verspreiden (content zoals projecten).

## Appendix H: Delphi survey round 5

### Validatie social business model vragenlijst

#### Bedrijfsdoel: Naamsbekendheid vergroten \*

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Content verspreiden die aanzet om te delen (share, retweet, etc.) of positief te waarderen (like, +1, etc.).
- Content verspreiden die aanzet tot reageren.
- Social adverteren op de doelgroep om het bereik en effect van content te vergroten.
- Analyse van bereik en effect om de content en advertenties te optimaliseren.

De feedback suggereerde dat een optie ontbrak voor organisaties met een klein netwerk om naamsbekendheid te vergroten.

Tevens dat voor naamsbekendheid het bestaande netwerk niet werd ingezet.

Bent u het eens met de toevoeging van de volgende activiteiten?

	Ja	Nee
Social adverteren om het aantal likes of volgers te vergroten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Het bestaande netwerk mobiliseren (bijvoorbeeld door te vragen om te delen).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

#### Bedrijfsdoel: Reputatie verbeteren \*

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals cases, testimonials, aanbevelingen of onderzoeken).
- Social adverteren om het bereik en effect van content te vergroten.
- Luisteren naar wie wat over je zegt.
- Reageren op mensen die iets over je zeggen.

De feedback suggereerde dat er activiteiten ontbraken waarmee als organisatie kennis en ervaring te etaleren is.

Tevens is het luisteren en reageren als 1 activiteit samengevat.

Bent u het eens met de gemaakte wijzigingen bij de volgende activiteiten?

	Ja	Nee
Relevante content verspreiden (zoals onderzoek, klantcases, testimonials, aanbevelingen, kennis, of ervaring).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Luisteren naar en reageren op mensen die iets over je zeggen (zowel positief als negatief)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Leads genereren \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Converterende content verspreiden (content die mensen aanzet om actie te ondernemen, zoals(exclusieve) aanbiedingen of acties).
- Social adverteren met converterende content.
- Relevante content verspreiden (zoals klantcases of productinformatie).
- Converterende conversaties voeren met de doelgroep.
- **Het zoeken naar kansen met behulp van zoektermen.**
- Analyse van conversie om de content en advertenties te optimaliseren.

De feedback gaf aan dat enkel het zoeken naar kansen met zoektermen te beperkt was.

Bent u het eens met de gemaakte wijziging bij de volgende activiteit?

	Ja	Nee
Het zoeken naar en volgen van potentiële leads (met zoektermen, filters of feeds).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Beïnvloeders betrekken \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Content verspreiden die aanzet om te delen (share, retweet, etc.) of positief te waarderen (like, +1, etc.).
- Content verspreiden die aanzet tot reageren.
- Social adverteren op de doelgroep om het bereik en effect van content te vergroten.
- Analyse van bereik en effect om de content en advertenties te optimaliseren.

De feedback suggereerde dat een activiteit ontbrak die gericht was op het faciliteren/enablen van beïnvloeders bij het delen van je content.

Bent u het eens met de toevoeging van de volgende activiteit?

	Ja	Nee
Beïnvloeders stimuleren en faciliteren (door ze te helpen en deelbaarheid van je content te vereenvoudigen).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Medewerkers werven \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals vacatures of content voor profilering).
- Social adverteren op de doelgroep om het bereik van content te vergroten.
- Potentiële medewerkers volgen.
- Converseren met potentiële medewerkers.

De feedback suggereerde dat een activiteit ontbrak die het netwerk van bestaande medewerkers benut.

Bent u het eens met de toevoeging van de volgende activiteit?

	Ja	Nee
Netwerk van medewerkers gebruiken om potentiële medewerkers te benaderen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Klanten behouden \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Relevante content verspreiden (content zoals testimonials, aanbevelingen of klantcases).
- Converterende content verspreiden (content die klanten aanzet om actie te ondernemen, zoals (exclusieve) aanbiedingen of acties).
- Social adverteren op bestaande klanten om het bereik van content te vergroten.
- Betrokkenheid met klanten tonen (zoals het leuk vinden of delen van hun content).
- **Luisteren naar en reageren op klanten.**

Uit de feedback kwam naar voren dat er te weinig aandacht was voor het betrekken van klanten bij wat je doet. (1) Daarnaast is er nadruk gegeven op het belang van webcare voor het versterken van de klantenbinding. (2)

Bent u het eens met de toevoeging (1) / wijziging (2) bij de volgende activiteiten?

	Ja	Nee
(1) Klanten betrekken (door co-branding of co-creation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(2) Luisteren naar en reageren op klanten (webcare)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Klantenservice verbeteren \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Relevante content creëren (content zoals pro-actieve meldingen of doe-het-zelf-oplossingen bij problemen).
- **Luisteren naar en reageren op klantproblemen (webcare).**

In de feedback werd aangegeven dat het niet enkel gaat om klantproblemen, maar ook algemene vragen.

Bent u het eens met de wijziging van de volgende activiteit?

	Ja	Nee
Luisteren naar en reageren op klantvragen en problemen (webcare).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Marktinzicht vergroten \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- **Luisteren naar de ontwikkelingen in de markt, wat er speelt in de omgeving en wat concurrenten zeggen.**
- Het verspreiden van onderzoek (zoals een survey).
- Social adverteren om het bereik van onderzoek te vergroten.
- Converseren met (potentiële) klanten.

De activiteit "Luisteren naar de ontwikkelingen in de markt, wat er speelt in de omgeving en wat concurrenten zeggen" werd dubbelzinnig gevonden.

Bent u het eens met de splitsing in de volgende activiteiten?

	Ja	Nee
Luisteren naar wat klanten en concurrenten zeggen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analyseren van ontwikkelingen in de markt en omgeving.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Innovatie/ontwikkeling bevorderen \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Vragen om ideeën en feedback van (potentiële) gebruikers.
- Converseren met klanten.
- Converseren met mensen in je bedrijfstak.
- **Ideeën en feedback waarderen.**

Uit de feedback kwamen de volgende voorstellen naar boven: het filteren van ongevraagde ideeën van klanten; verbinden met relevante personen; en het participeren in groepen die belangrijk zijn voor je organisatie.

Bent u het eens met de wijziging (1) en toevoegingen (2)(3) van de volgende activiteiten?

	Ja	Nee
(1) Ideeën en feedback filteren en waarderen (bijvoorbeeld vanuit webcare).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(2) Verbinden met relevante personen (zoals opinieleiders, trendsetters of ontwikkelaars).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(3) Participeren in relevante groepen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

**Bedrijfsdoel: Risico's beheersen \***

In de vorige ronde werden de vorige activiteiten voorgesteld:

- Monitoren wat er gezegd wordt over je organisatie, merk, product of dienst.
- Monitoren wat er gebeurt in de omgeving van je organisatie.
- Relevante content verspreiden en daarover converseren (content zoals terugroepacties).

Uit de feedback bleek dat het reageren op potentiële risico's gemist werd in het eerdere voorstel.

Bent u het eens met de wijziging bij de volgende activiteit?

	Ja	Nee
Reageren (op misvattingen en potentiële problemen).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heeft u hierboven ergens "Nee" ingevuld? Licht dan hieronder toe waarom.

Heeft u nog overige vragen of opmerkingen?

**Naam \***

Voornaam

Achternaam

Verzenden

# Appendix I: Business goals database

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Sources: Budeco	Yomago (W) Yomago (2013)	Kaake et al. (2010)	Marketwire (W) Marketwire (2012)	IBM	Kiron	Brown	Evans	Safko	Arnold	Culnan et al. (2010)	Van Grembergen (2005)	Social Media Examiner almediaexaminer (16.com/blog/201 (ck.com/4-social-1/05/Identify-dia/6-500	Spiral 16	Capgemini
2	Business goals	Increase brand awareness	Awareness	Increase brand presence	Promote events/campaigns						Building brand awareness		Raise brand awareness		
3	Increase brand awareness		Reach	Greater reach										Increase in reach	
4				Improved business generation	Generate sales leads and revenue									Increase in qualified leads	Increase in customer satisfaction
5	Generate leads		Website traffic	Increased website traffic	Influencing influencers									Drive website traffic	
6			Market share				Get influencers and advocates to broadcast your message							Increase in profitability	Increase in customer satisfaction
7	Involve influencers						Change perceptions								
8	Improve reputation			Improved customer loyalty/avoidance customer dissatisfaction	Increase positive brand sentiment	Manage customer relationships		Improve reputation	Build trust/credibility						
9	Customer retention		Social engagement /advocacy		Enable customer interaction					Building customer loyalty and satisfaction	Customer loyalty and retention; customer satisfaction				Increase customer satisfaction
10	Costs reduction			Customer Service Cost Reduction		Reducing costs and increasing efficiencies						Reducing operational cost			
11		Save costs		Research & Development Cost Reduction							Cost savings				
12															Reduce cost per transaction
13	Recruit employees				Acquiring and retaining employees										Reduce cost per transaction
					Enable more										Attract new employees
															Being a caring
															Increase



## Appendix J: Social media activities database

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Social media activities	Budeco (2013)	Smith & Zook	Nair (2011)	Thackeray et al. (2008)	Gallaughier & Ransbotham (2010)	Culnan et al. (2008)	Qualman (2012)	Duffy (2012)	Safko (2010)	IBM (2012)
2	Spread shareable/likeable content	Create shareable/likeable content	Spread shareable/likeable content	Networking as another advertising platform	Encourage users to share feedback, ratings.	Encourage customers to spread a message		Creatively advertise	Give updates, photos, news		
3	Advertise	Advertise									
4	Encourage appreciation	Encourage appreciation									
5	Show appreciation	Show appreciation									
6	Spread relevant content	Create relevant content			Share information about a product				Discuss relevant things from industry		
7	Converse	Converse		Converse and connect; listen more and talk less		Interact in firm-customer dialog					
8											
9	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor opinions customers have about your product, company and competition Monitor issues that can have an impact on your brand Monitor influencers in your marketplace	Monitor customer impressions listening to the market		Monitor customer dialog		Find customer comments	Find mentions of your business	Monitor conversations about your company/brand	Mining conversations
10											
11											
12											
13	Provide information	Provide information		Measure content success							
14	React	React									
15	Provide exclusiveness to followers								Give exclusive offers, coupons		
16	Integrate product in service			Co-creating new product designs with customers	Encourage customer to create customer generated content			Make product interesting			
17	Encourage customer to contribute creatively				Solicit innovations						Crowdsourcing insights
	Develop relationship with	Develop relationship									