Social Media and Marketing

Based on a case study for HP Sweden AB

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KTH Information and Communication Technology

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING

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Abstract

During different time era's different methods of communications has developed and changed the everyday life. Social media has become the way of communication in the 21st-century, enabling us to express our thoughts, ideas and feelings in a complete new way. This way of communication have also had a huge impact on corporations, where they have realized that without a proper plan and social media strategy they have no chance to stand out in the rapidly changing digital space.

To ensure a successful presence on social media the companies need to take different marketing theories into consideration so that they can boost their brand in diverse aspects. If this can be combined with innovative ways of consumer-interaction the companies have a good chance to take the lead in social media marketing.

To solve the problem with measuring the return on investment, companies such as HP Sweden, can implement tools like social media monitoring. With these tools they will be able to analyze and measure their brand or products on the social space enabling them to optimize their way of marketing.

The criteria for a company to pick the right measuring-tool are based on different parameters. Where for a company like HP Sweden, that is relatively new to the social space, it is better to take small and wise steps to first learn and then invest in a praiseworthy tool that is able to cover their needs.

Sammanfattning

Under olika tidsskeden har olika metoder för kommunikation utvecklats med kraftig påverkan på vår vardag. Sociala medier har blivit detta sekels sätt att kommunicera på, vilket har möjliggjort att vi har kunnat uttrycka våra tankar, idéer och känslor på ett helt nytt sätt. Detta sätt att kommunicera har också haft en enorm inverkan på företag, där de har insett att utan en ordentlig sociala media strategi har de ingen chans att sticka ut i den snabbt föränderliga digitala sfären.

För att säkerställa en framgångsrik närvaro på sociala medier måste företagen ta olika marknadsföring teorier i beaktande. Detta så att de kan förstärka sitt varumärke i olika aspekter. Om företagen lyckas kombinera detta med innovativa sätt att interagera med konsumenter har de en god chans att ta ledningen i sociala medier.

För att lösa problemet med att mäta avkastningen på investeringar, kan företag som HP Sverige, implementera olika mätningsverktyg. Med dessa verktyg kan de analysera och mäta sitt varumärke eller produkter så att de kan optimera sin marknadsföring utefter detta.

Måttstocken för att välja rätt verktyg är baserat på olika parametrar. För ett företag som HP Sverige, som är relativt nya inom sociala medier, kan det vara lämpligt att ta små men visa steg där de först kan lära sig använda dessa verktyg för att sedan investera i ett mer avancerat verktyg som både täcker deras behov samt är ekonomiskt fördelaktigt.

Acknowledgements

I would start with thanking and praising the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Thereafter I would like thank my examiner Professor Gerald Q. Maguire. Jr, as well as Johnny Kroneld from HP Sweden for making this report possible.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Blog
Blog is a word that was created from two words: "web log". Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order.

Brand Equity
In marketing context, the value that the brand builds up

Brand Identity
In a marketing context, the associations that are made with the brand

Brand Image
In a marketing context, the image that the brand sends out to the customer

Brand Positioning
In a marketing context, where the brand wants to be positioned

Buzz
In marketing context it is the interaction between company and consumer

B2B
An economical term, meaning Business to Business

Chat
Chat can refer to any kind of communication over the Internet, but traditionally refers to one-to-one communication through a text-based chat application commonly referred to as instant messaging applications.

Comment
A comment is a response that is often provided as an answer of reaction to a blog post or message on a social network. Comments are a primary form of two-way communication on the social web.

Facebook
Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around them.

Flickr
Flickr is a social network based around online picture sharing. The service allows users to store photos online and then share them with others through profiles, groups, sets and other methods.

Forums
Also known as a message board, a forum is an online discussion site. It originated as the modern equivalent of a traditional bulletin board.

Influencers
Social media marketing term, meaning influential social media users

Like
A "Like" is an action that can be made by a Facebook user. Instead of writing a comment for a message or a status update, a Facebook user can click the "Like" button as a quick way to show approval and share the message.

LinkedIn
LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site.

ROI
Return on investments

Social Media
Social media is media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques.

Social Media Monitoring (SMM)	Social media monitoring is a process of monitoring and responding to mentions related to a business that occurs in social media.
Twitter	Twitter is a social platform that allows users to share 160-character-long messages publicly.
Widget	A widget is an element of a graphical user interface that displays an information arrangement changeable by the user, such as a window or text box.
Wikipedia	Wikipedia is a free, web-based, collaborative, multilingual encyclopedia project supported by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation.
WordPress	WordPress is a content management system and contains blog publishing tools that allow users to host and publish blogs.
YouTube	YouTube is a video-sharing website on which users can upload, share, and view videos.

1 Introduction

The meteoric growth of social websites, such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, have ushered the world into a new era of social media. The global reach is nothing short of amazing, so much so that if Facebook were a country, it would be third largest (The Economist 2010), next to China and India. Some even say that this is the biggest shift since the industrial revolution, which means that the world has a brand new playing field. At its core, social media is any kind of online media that stimulates participation, openness, conversation, connectedness and sense of community. It takes many forms, as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**, and is expected to grow with incessant innovation. Its success lies in the basic knowledge that human beings like to think, share ideas, "cooperate and collaborate to create art", engage in "commerce, debate and discourse, and find people who might be good friends, allies and lovers" (Mayfield 2008).

Table 1: Social Media Forms (Mayfield, 2008)

Social Media	Purpose	Examples
Social Networks	Sites where people build personal pages and connect with friends	LinkedIn, Facebook
Blogs	A web log where you can post anything you want	Seaofshoes, Bryanboy
Wikis	A communal database where people can add or edit content	Wikipedia
Podcasts	Audio or video files that are available by subscription	Apple iTunes, Yahoo!
Forums	Online discussion around specific topics and interests	Next Gadget
Content Communities	Organize and share particular kinds of content	Flickr, YouTube
Microblogging	Combined social networking and bite-sized blogging	Twitter

The social media phenomenon has a profound impact. "Communities of interest have gained clout never before considered possible." Mothers, for instance, have become more active in the Web, seeking advice, connecting with other mothers or running their business. They are "most likely to visit social networking sites and publish or own a blog than most other online users" according to research (Nielsen 2009).

Social media has transformed research methods. A Nielsen study proposes a new methodology, which combines both asking (survey) and listening (consumer generated media) to tell a complete and accurate story. Listening to consumers through blogs, boards, and networking sites not only provides "timely, penetrating insights on a wide range of issues", but it also "captures the energy associated with consumer beliefs" (Nielsen 2009). This allows brands to communicate better with their consumers, and deepen their relationship with them.

The advertising world has not been spared from social media influence. Companies are now more careful with advertising, especially in anticipating consumer reaction and avoiding unanticipated blunders to prevent a viral consumer backlash in networking sites (Nielsen 2009). As the book goes, "Satisfied Customers Tell Three Friends, Angry Customers Tell 3,000," quickly and with little effort. The deadly combination of Twitter and offended quick-to-blog vocal customers will rock the brand down (Shankman 2008), a scenario that is both difficult to manage and pull through.

Social media plays a hybrid role in the promotion mix. It allows companies to talk to their customers and, at the same time, it allows customers to talk to one another. Shaping customers' discussions to ensure they are aligned to the organization's goals is the firm's best interest. Companies have started providing their consumers with networking platforms, and have engaged them through blogs and other social media tools (Mangold and Faulds 2009). Along with this they have learned that there are risks if the communication is not handled properly. Establishing proper social media strategies have therefore been a hot agenda for many companies, resulting in different strategies having been formed and adopted.

However, one question still remains: How can the company measure their return on investment (ROI)? Is this couple to the number of "Likes" on Facebook or "Followers" on Twitter?

This report examine the subject of social media from a marketing perspective, covering not only the basics of social media and some strategies; but also investigating appropriate ways of measuring ROI, as well as the possibility of benchmarking results.

2 Method

This report intends to initially give the reader a brief overview of the most popular social media. Later the report will examine social media from a marketing perspective. This will be done by first describing social media in practice followed by guidelines for creating a strategy. This will be based on a literature study that was conduced at the start of this project.

A case study conducted for HP Sweden will address the main focus of this report, the problem of measuring the ROI, as described in the introduction. The solution suggested by this case study will be presented chapter 6, starting on page 12.

3 Background

3.1 Related work

Since this way of communication is still very new, there are still lots of areas in this field that have not yet been researched. Existing work focuses either on the social effects due to using social media or different strategies companies can apply to social media. Unfortunately, there is no existing research concerning the different strategies and different types of analyzing tools. This report intends to remedy this gap in research. The lack of knowledge about the role of social media is well captures in the quotation below:

> *"Social media is like a snowball rolling down the hill. It's picking up speed. Five years from now, it's going to be the standard."*

Jeff Antaya, chief marketing officer of Plante Moran

3.2 Top Five Social Media

In this section we will example the top five social media sites: Facebook, Twitter, WordPress, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

3.2.1 Facebook

The leading figure in social media today is **Facebook**. Facebook is a social networking site that allows users to create online profiles and interact with other users. The main reason for the success of Facebook is its ability to address many different aspects of life in a very appealing way - corresponding to the requirements and demands that human beings have on communication. Facebook's multi-purpose service allows you to use it in a work related context, as a political tool, or just to find people that share your interests.

Many companies have understood the potential of Facebook with its 600 million active users, making it an ideal place for marketing.

3.2.2 Twitter

Who would have thought that a short messaging service would become one of the leading ways of online communication? **Twitter** is a service providing exactly this service, short messaging service just as we are used to – but online rather than through cellphones. Twitter allows its users to send messages, or "Tweets", that are composed of 160 characters. In addition, Twitter offers the option to "follow" other users. This opens the possibility for cross communication between multiple users allowing them to receive instant information updates where ever they are.

With its 200 million (and growing) users tweeting 65 millions tweets a day, Twitter has proven to be a very powerful tool in different fields of life.

3.2.3 WordPress

Setting up a personal webpage has for a long time been associated with people with knowledge of some programing language. It was though to be difficult for ordinary users to produce a personal site. However, with services such as WordPress and Google's Blogger the prerequisites have changed. With one of these free easy-to-use platforms with a few clicks anyone can create a personal site. This simplicity has paved the way for people with non-commercial interest to set up websites. This has lead to on-line journals as a new trend – these are popularly known as **Blogs**.

Blogs have adopted a certain norm (i.e., specific characteristic), such as: entries are written with a personal touch, entries are published with the most recent first, and there is a possibility to comment on entries. Today blogs cover a range of different types from personal blogs to business blogs and even political blogs.

3.2.4 YouTube

YouTube has helped people to realize the saying: "a pictures is worth a thousand words" by providing a platform where users can easily upload their own personal videos. However, it does not end with this, but rather the platform allows users to comment on and recommend video clips to other. In addition, there is an advanced search engine that enables users to "connect the dots".

This service has gained a lot of popularity making it the foremost video-upload-service provider on the Internet.

3.2.5 LinkedIn

Some people see social media as an unreliable service which they associate with after work activities, making it less appropriate in business related contexts. However, there have been social networks that have target business users as a group. The most widely known such services is LinkedIn.

LinkedIn offers a social network for business users - packed in a serious layout. Users have the ability to connect with people that they have had any form of relationship with before, categorizing these relationships into a business or educational context. LinkedIn has also opened a new means for job recruiting, allowing users to put their *curriculm vitae* in their profile. Search engines can now match companies with potential employees and vise versa.

3.3 RSS

Since social media have started to play a bigger role both for individuals and corporations there has been a growing need for integrating the different

Figure 1: RSS feed logo[i]

social media with each other. Many companies see it vital to have their company's webpage associated with their presence in social media. Also for those individuals active in different social media and who wish to follow the postings of their friends, there has been a need to collect all

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[i] http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/43/Feed-icon.svg

the latest updates on one page.

The solution to this problem is, Really Simple Syndication (**RSS**). In short RSS is a syndication method used for extracting data from a webpage and propagating it to other services. The data is structured with tags corresponding to each type and then saved as a document, known as RSS-feeds or web feeds. These feeds can then later be read by any RSS-reader even on another page.

In social media context this means that for example: blog entries or tweets can be read on any other page making it possible for multiple instance of integration of content. The RSS logo shown in Figure 1, is used to indicate pages, which offer an RSS field. Clicking on this log enables the user to add this page's RSS field to the set of RSS fields to which they subscribe.

4   Social Media in Practice

A number of cases are useful as examples of how to apply social media to small, medium, and even large companies. Application of social media come in many forms, and can fit many functions. One such function is to reach out and communicate with your customers, and blogging is one such tool for doing so. Blogging has become increasingly important for companies to participate in, and as Dell blogger and corporate communicator Richard Binhammer explained, *"these conversations are going to happen with or without you. At Dell, we have decided that if someone is going to be talking about us, that is a conversation we want to have a say in"* (Farrelly 2009).

The first case is about a company called; Triumvirate Environmental Company, which provides solutions to deal with hazardous waste and other environmental issues. They discovered social media marketing after an unsuccessful experience with Google AdWords and pay-per-click advertising. Now they have applied a variety of social media marketing tools, including blogging, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook. The main cornerstone has been blogging, which was applied with a creative approach: a network of several blogs was created in order to match their diverse service offerings instead of a traditional corporate blog. These blogs vary from niche topics to broader ones in order to generate more search traffic by attracting many different dedicated audience groups. Other tools as Twitter and Facebook are used as platforms to share news, drive blog and webpage traffic, and improve relatiotns with customers. By dedicating time and effort to social media marketing, Triumvirate succeeded in generating $1.2 million in revenues (Bodnar 2010).

Echo Partners is a business to business (B2B) financial company, which provides community banks with many sophisticated tools and resources for their own businesses. The company employed online marketing from the beginning, but the focus was *outbound* using a static webpage and online ads, neither of which significantly paid off. After analyzing social media as an *inbound* marketing tool and deciding upon how to use it for business growth, the owner started *targeted blogging* to increase search engine traffic and to drive eventual B2B lead generation. This new marketing strategy paid off in only a few months and the company generated new customer contacts and revenues by exploiting blog posts, which increased attention to and traffic to the corporate webpage. The company also used the observations gathered from social media for developing business strategies for further growth (Bodnar 2010).

Similar to Echo Partners, River Pools and Spas' initial online marketing was a static webpage and Google ads until 2008. Afterwards, the company discovered that this marketing was costly in comparison to the leads that were generated, thus they searched for ways for organic search marketing, including corporate blogs as well as social platforms. A few months after starting their social media marketing efforts, the company could drive search traffic both with high quality and high volume. Moreover, the company utilized business blogging to answer common questions and address doubts of customers about swimming pools and other topics. Unlike previous small business cases, River Pools and Spas created a YouTube account in order to publish videos that would visualize their business and put information about the company in the heads of its (potential) customers. As a result, the return from shifting from traditional outbound marketing to social media-based inbound marketing was not only a reduction of cost, but also the huge increase in new sales (Bodnar 2010).

5   Developing a Social Media Strategy

Marketing strategy is defined as "a process that can allow an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage" (BusinessLink). Social media is seen by marketers today as a great opportunity to boost market share figures. In a recent survey, 91 % of marketers indicated that they were using social media for marketing purposes, and small businesses are the most likely to employ it (Stelzner 2009).

Are businesses successfully aligning social media with their marketing strategy? Marketers are only too happy to view the social web as a new set of channels through which to market their goods or services. Thus promotion might be expanding, but it is not yet clear if companies are rethinking the rest of their marketing mix or their strategy in response to probably the most disruptive resource since the introduction of the Internet – social media.

The current state of social media within many businesses is described in one of the blogs of Harvard Business Review as "duct tape and bubble gum hold together fragile tactics such as Twitter accounts run by the summer college intern or agency-generated Facebook fan pages that have few actual fans" (Armano 2009). This is not the correct path to a high ROI. Strategic thinking is the only way to achieve the sustainability required to build a real competitive advantage.

A social media strategy, for public relations or marketing, should be an essential part of the business' communications strategy and explicitly addressing the social media strategy should help to keep this strategy in line with the business strategy. Social technologies could help strengthen business strategy by building collaborative and open relationships across all the company's stakeholders, hence generating increased trust among them. "This increased trust will result in greater knowledge creation, which the same social technologies have the ability to capture, organize and distribute at a yet to be seen level of efficiency. By building collaborative relationships with all company stakeholders using social technologies, businesses will be able to quickly create and capitalize more innovation" (Anderson 2010).

Unfortunately, building a social media strategy is not an easy task. However, there are many available resources on the web for today's marketers, such as recipes and tips, to ease their jobs in this new world of social media.

5.1 Brand equity

The common mistake many companies end up doing is that to only focus on marketing that is associated with direct sales. Therefor social media, which is often related to customer support, service, and relations, tends to get low priority. This is based on ignorance of the importance of **Brand Equity**.

Brand Equity is the value of the brand, where high Brand Equity means high brand awareness and a high brand image (Keller 2003). What this actually means is that if your brand has high Brand Equity, then customers associate their needs to your product.

While discussing Brand equity Faircloth et al. present two types of strategies that can be taken into consideration to develop and boost Brand Equity (Faircloth et al. 2001): Financial and Customer based.

The first type of strategy is related to the actual value of the brand and how to measure it. The second type of strategy describes what relationship customers have with the brand with regard to loyalty, willingness to buy, and the belief that the brand gives greater satisfaction (Kapferer 2004).

If social media is used correctly it can be an effective tool for increasing Brand Equity. This can be exemplified with Dell's participation in social media in 2006.

Dell realized that participating in such media was important, and this realization paid off shortly after its implementation of "Direct2Dell", their official corporate blog. The entire computer industry, but initially Dell, was hit with the "big battery recall." Dell was able to avoid a major public relations issue and huge corporate crisis by effectively communicating with their customer in a very open and transparent fashion through their blog. In fact, Dell was recognized by the Consumer Product Safety Commission for its efforts as a best practice for how to manage a product recall. (Dell 2006)

The road to Dell's realization was, however, very rocky; evidence of this is in the so called 'Dell Hell' incident, an incident where a dissatisfied Dell customer and popular blogger wrote about his not poor customer service experience. This incident was widely publicized and even made it into the mainstream media. Dell learnt a valuable lesson from this incident, and the major effects the blogging community can have on a company, even on a company as large as Dell. In fact, Dell implemented a few of the suggestions mentioned by the blogger, as he suggested in one of his blog entries.

> *"You know what: If Dell were really smart, they'd hire me (yes, me) to come to them and teach them about blogs, about how their customers now have a voice; about how their customers are a community -- a community often in revolt; about how they could find out what their customers really think; about how they could fix their customers' problems before they become revolts; about how they could become a better company with the help of their customers. If they'd only listen."* (Farrelly 2009)

The Dell case is an excellent example of the role and impact social media has on the company's Brand Equity. Today companies can no longer ignore this media, hence they should learn effective ways of adopting and adapting to the changing social media environment and how to use it to their advantage.

5.2 Brand Identity

All companies struggles to make their product special in some way so that they can attract the customers. This can be done either by actually making the product physically different or by just presenting it in a different and more attractive way. Therefore, it is vital to make sure that your brand is associated not only with a positive image, but also with unique associations so that customers develop a special feeling about your brand. This is where Brand Identity comes in to the picture.

Brand Identity can be seen from three different perspectives: (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2002): core identity, extended identity, and brand essence.

In the core identity you should be able to find the company's values and strategies. There should be at least one association in the core that is unique for the brand and which makes it stand out. The extended identity is a complement to the core identity which covers areas that are not covered by the core identity, but which gives the brand

a more holistic image. The extended identity is also flexible for changes in trend and market. The last aspect, which is the brand essence, should be seen as the soul of the brand, which is defined as that which is most important for the brand and where the focus should be. The essence does not necessarily have to be communicated outwards, although it can be used as an internal guideline.

AJ Bombers, a small burger restaurant in Milwaukee, is another good example for how Brand Identity can be boosted. The owner, Joe Sorge, got the idea to combine social media with his restaurant business. He first started with a Twitter account to engage with his customers and to respond to their comments. Combined with his creativity in organizing different events related with social media, he succeeded to make record sales not only during the event days, but also days after the event. The use of social media to organize and promote these events created a word-of-mouth effect, which increased the sales in the longer term, as opposed to traditional single day marketing events. The overall return of investing a lot of time in social media marketing was 60-80% revenue growth, compared to the period before meeting his online community (Bodnar 2010).

This clearly shows how social media can be used as an effective tool to form an identity with the right type of associations for your brand, enabling even a small burger restaurant to be successful in standing out and competing against its biggest competitors (e.g., Burger King and McDonalds).

5.3 Brand positioning

To strengthen its Brand Identity a company has to choose where they want to position their brand in order to get the best result. Ideally companies are in search for an unrealized customer segment and market segment, but this can be difficult to find in practice.

Brand Positioning can be divided into two central parts (Keller et al. 2002):

- Establishing a frame of reference
- Establishing differentiating and identifying characteristics

The first part is supposed to set out guidelines for identifying the main target group, the potential rivals, and how similar the brand's characteristics are to the competitors. The second part is interconnected with Brand Identity, that is to say that how can the brand stand out amongst it competitors so that it will be an attractive choice for the customer.

With these two parts mapped and established the company can define a position for their brand.

5.4 Seven Steps to Strategy

Social media networks are tools and since tools change constantly, a plan is needed to guide the way. It is a common mistake to "fall in love" with specific tools leading to continuously changing direction. That is why marketers should not focus on the tools themselves, but on how to use these tools to develop a successful social media strategy. According to Jay Baer (Baer 2009) seven steps must be followed to develop a social media strategy:

Be clear on *what the company does*. This should be explained in less than 120 words.

Clarify *what type of program the company is aiming at*: awareness, sales, or loyalty. It can be only one of them at any point in time in order to deliver a clear message to the customer

Assess what the audience knows about the company or brand today and choose at most two segments among the audience: those who know nothing, aware but never acted, acted once, enthusiasts, or advocates. Choose similar audiences rather than extremes to assure more efficient results.

Assess the use that the audience makes of social media. Using the Forrester Social Technographics Ladder might be of great help in this step. "If the audience skews older, the company may not want to engage in a lot of "make a video" contests, since that segment indexes low on the "Creator" scale" (Baer 2009).

Indentify the soul of the brand. Your brand equals what? Some examples would be: Volvo=safety, Disney=Magic, and Apple=Innovation. If necessary, engage in some brand anthropology.

How will you be human? "Social media is about people, not logos. How will you let down your guard"? (Baer 2009) In the case of big companies, they must learn how to act small.

Measure the success. "If they read it and like it, do they click through to your web site, or engage with your organization in new and different ways? Action occus when people are drawn into a profitable and sustainable relationship with your company. That is where the money is" (Zwilling 2010).

Martin Zwilling adds some steps to Baer's framework in the development of a social media strategy: (1) "Measure respect and find influencers", reaching people who are key influencers and understanding their impact to gain resonance with the target audience; (2) "Get buy-ins from colleagues" because some executives are slow to understand communication methods and results must be used to convince them about the importance of social media as part of the marketing mix; and (3) "Project the future", forecast the future of social media rather than allowing changes to get the company by surprise.

5.5 Social Media & Innovation

Besides this structured methodology for creating a wise Social Media Strategy, new and more informal ways of using Social Media are emerging for companies with limited budget. The following subsection give some creative examples.

5.5.1 Suggestion Box

The suggestion box is a simple tool that uses the social media's state of mind by interacting and sharing ideas with customers. It consists of inviting the company's customers or supporters, to make suggestions in order to improve the company's products, services, or image. The community members are encouraged to vote for the best ideas, which are then implemented by the company.

The key success factor behind the success of the suggestion box is the ability of the company to quickly implement some of the best submitted ideas. "Once people know their ideas will turn into action, it will be easy to motivate participation" (Samuel 2009). If people feel they are listened to by the company, they will become increasingly involved in the company's success. One key point is to initially reach out

to potential early adopters and then to make sure that the organisation is responsive to their suggestions.

Several companies have already successfully implemented a suggestion box. On Starbucks' website for instance, people are invited to click on a link to "share their ideas on My Starbucks Idea" (Starbucks 2008).

Clicking on the logo takes the user to a page that presents all the ideas related to Starbucks, which have been submitted until now, classifying them into various categories such as: product ideas, experience ideas, or involvement ideas. This page emphasizes the ideas, which have been already implemented and gives a short description of two Starbucks Idea Partners who are available to interact with users.

5.5.2 Widget

A widget is an interactive badge, which displays the company's latest news or deals that people can place on their own blogs, web site, or Facebook profile. This tool is appropriate for "popular brands with young, web-savvy customers" (Samuel 2009).

The two key success factors are first to design an original widget, which differentiates itself from the others, and then to find appropriate incentives to encourage people to endorse (i.e. utilize) the widget.

Widgets can be used to solicit donations. For example, Innocent drinks suggest its supporters buy a virtual badge that "automatically updates to show how many trees you have personally donated" (Innocentdrinks 2011). This widget is shown in 2.

Figure 2: Innocent drinks' widget†

5.5.3 Deal-of-the-day

For companies with new products that they want to promote or those with excess stock, the deal-of-the-day provides a good way to attract customers' attention. It consists in using a specific area of web space to make "special and time-limited offers" (Samuel 2009). It is essential to offer interesting deals, but in limited number, and to update them regularly in order to encourage people to frequently check the page. One example is United Airlines, which offers special fares to Twitter users. (Ostrow 2009).

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† http://grow.innocentdrinks.co.uk/img/virtualbadge/img_facebook_badge.gif

6 Case study: HP Sweden

Social media is in the scope of interest for many companies; this applies also to HP Sweden. Since mid-2009 HP Sweden has been present on different social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Since then they have received very positive feedback and are working continuously to improve their position. Due to their relative short presence in social space, they had not yet implemented a method for measuring their ROI.

This case study analyzes the potential of implementing a monitoring platform for HP Sweden, as well as investigating the risks, costs, and benefits that come with this implementation.

6.1 Current position in the social web

HP Sweden's most active social media channel is their main Facebook page called HP Store Sverige (see Figure). It is mainly used to promote new products and special deals, but also events and competitions. They have had an active presence on Facebook since August 2010 and have approximately 1,100 likes since then. Seen from a technical aspect they have embedded two different applications on their page: one is for promoting their products and the other one allows users to create a digital disco ball with their friends' pictures. The photos uploaded on their Facebook page are related to their new products and events that they have had. (HP Store Sverige 2011)

Figure 3: HP Store Sverige on Facebook‡

Since June 2010, HP Sweden in a joint cooperation with Inferno Online, one of the world's largest gaming centers, released a web radio. The web radio mainly targets one of HP important customer groups: gamers. To promote their web radio they have established a dedicated Facebook fan page (see Figure), and has more than 429 likes. This web radio offers apart from music, interviews with gaming celebrities, and competitions organized by HP. One unique feature is that they allow the radio listeners to become radio anchors for the channel creating a word-of-mouth effect, which has been very successful. (HP Inferno Webradio 2011)

Figure 4: HP Inferno Webradio§

To gain more female customers, HP Sweden has focused to change the associations with their notebook series of computers. The goal has been to make the

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‡http://profile.ak.fbcdn.net/hprofile-ak- snc4/50510_134008139966782_1452654_n.jpg
§ http://profile.ak.fbcdn.net/hprofile-ak-snc4/23282_130738726936598_4615_n.jpg

computer seen to be more of an accessory, rather than a traditional laptop. To fulfill this goal they have not only redesigned their notebook, but also launched a campaign called the Design Challenge (in Swedish "Designutmaningen" – see Figure), where four young designers were given the task to design the ultimate laptop bag. The profit made from this campaign was donated to a charity organization in India which helps women to establish their own business. To promote this campaigned they have established a webpage as well as Facebook, YouTube, and Flickr pages. Since its start in March 2010 their Facebook page reached approximate 500 likes and 1400 channel views on YouTube. (Designutmaningen 2011)

Figure 5: "Designutmaningen"[**]

HP Sweden's first presence on the social web was on Twitter (see Figure). It was established in June 2009 a has multiple purposes, including: promoting new products, offering rebates, covering events, etc. Today they have four different persons managing their Twitter account covering different HP related topics.   With 600+ tweets they have managed to reach almost 400 followers. (HP Store Sverige Twitter 2011)

Figure 6: HP Store Sverige on Twitter[††]

6.2 General Problem of Measuring ROI

Managing a company's presence on the social web with a proper strategy can be a complex task. On one hand, it is undeniable that there are millions of users using social media and there is a broad agreement about its potential. On the other hand, it is not easy to assess the real effect of a social presence on what managers are most concerned with: their ROI. Currently there is no clear agreement among experts about the ROI of social media campaigns. Nor is there an agreement about the real cost or the real benefit of using social media. However, it is expected that "when people spend a lot of time and energy on something, they must be interested in it and want to get it" (Wang 2010).

The benefits obtained are difficult to estimate. There are some direct quantitative benefits, for example, sales done through a link on Facebook. However, there are other qualitative benefits that are difficult to measure in terms of money, but are considered as key factors for the company, such as loyalty, trust, passion, interaction, and brand awareness (Yongfook 2009). Looking at the benefits from this point of

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[**] http://www.designutmaningen.se/thousandwords/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/huvud1.gif
[††] http://a0.twimg.com/profile_background_images/91410104/T_N.jpg

view, instead of considering ROI as money accounted for in the ledger, the ROI is the community created around the brand.

It is important to highlight that the difficulty measuring ROI is not a problem exclusive to social marketing, but it is present in most kinds of marketing investments. Actually, social marketing provides indicators that can be measured and that are not present in every marketing channel. Measuring how many times a widget was clicked, or how many people "likes" (is subscribed to) the Facebook page could be interpreted as a signal indicating how successful the investment is.

6.2.1 *What to measure*

According to Yongfook, measuring the number of followers in Twitter or "likes" in Facebook is not enough. It is important to know if the kind of people the company is interacting with belong to the business context of the company. For example, if a fashion clothes store identifies that it has 500 followers on Twitter, who are female and living in Stockholm, it can engage those potential customers by reminding them of promotions and new collections. Therefore, what exactly is necessary to measure will depend on the objectives of the marketing campaign.

For example, Starbucks launched a campaign to collect suggestions from its customers through social media. Its goal was to collect a certain number of suggestions per month that could be implemented. The success metrics used were (1) the number of suggestions classified as good and (2) the number of suggestions actually implemented (Yongfook 2009).

Is there a solution to this problem? A step in the right direction is to start listening about what is said about your brand. If your brand is talked in a negative context, you can intervene and add positive input, this can help your company increase its brand equity. This can be realized with so called social media monitoring tools. These tools gather information about your brand, present it in a very convenient way with charts & diagrams, and giving the user the possibility to engage in conversation on the different social platforms directly within the program. The potential of these tools is that you can measure how people react to your campaigns, events, support, or even your presence on the social web. This is one way of measuring ROI. The goal is to make sure that your brand is talked in a way that is positive towards the company, and if not to ensure that you can do something about the problem before damage occurs to the company's brand equity and brand identity.

6.3 Monitoring tools

The drastically increase in usage of social media has lead to a huge demand for social media monitoring (SMM) tools (Aronica 2011). What company does not want to know what is said about their brand? This has resulted in a range of different tools, specializing in different fields of social media - as well as targeting different price levels. For many companies, such as HP Sweden, a tool that can cover as many social platforms as possible is the most interesting.

This report will cover three different SMM all-around tools in three different price segments: a SMM tool that is free, less than $500/month, and above $500/month. The most popular SMM tool in each segment will be chosen.

6.3.1 First tool – Alterian SM2 Freemium

Alterian SM2 Freemium is a budget version of the complete Alterian SM2 tool, which is a result of the remake of Techrigy SM2 that took place after Alterian acquired Techrigy Inc. in 2009. (Alterian 2011)

The freemium version is very similar to the full version of SM2. Both use a dashboard interface (see Figure), which is currently very common for SMM programs. The user has the possibility to enter one or more search term combined with filters. The built-in search engine will search through both historical and live social information, through various lines of social media audit trails, and a large number of social media and data aggregators. The freemium version limits the user to 5 or fewer search terms, restricting the usages of filters and even limiting the results to maximum of 1,000 hits. This can be compared with the full version of SM2 which offers unlimited search terms, unlocks the complete filter functionality, and can provide the user with more than 10,000 hits in search results. (Alterian 2011)
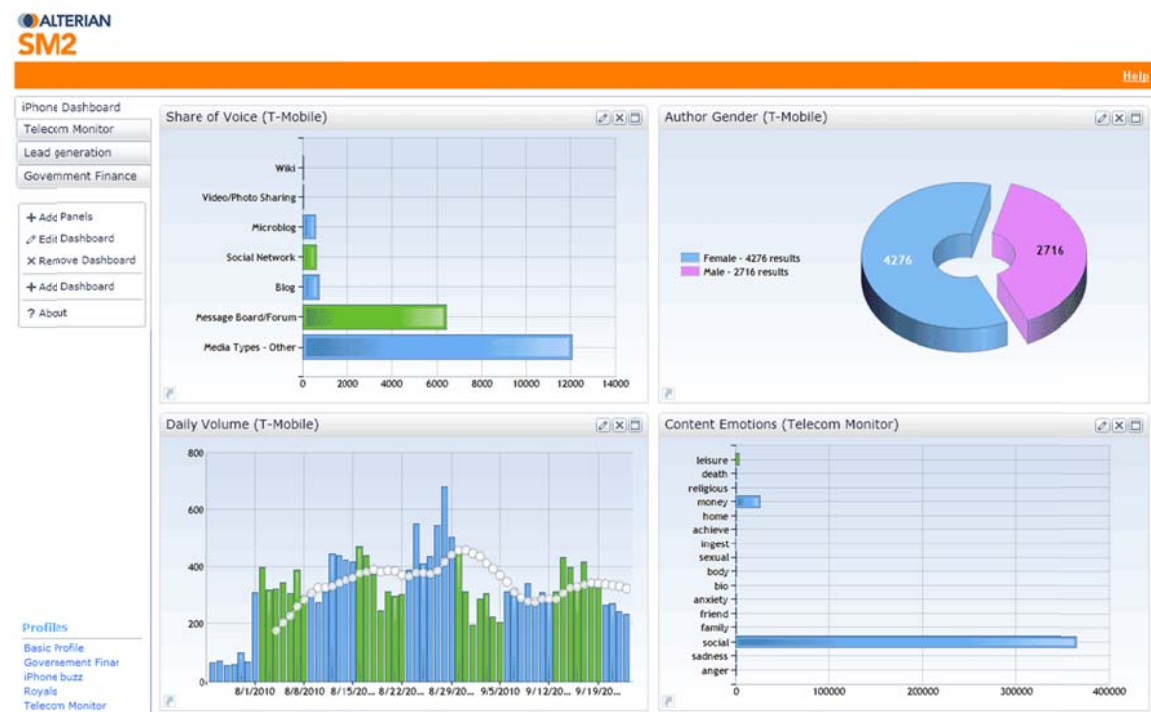

Figure 7: View of the Alterian SM2 Freemium Dashboard‡‡

The search results are sorted by popularity rank, where the influencers who are most related to your search terms are categorized using a scale of 0-10. The popularity rank calculator takes into consideration different parameters. Each social media has its own parameters, for example: for the tweets, followers and followed are measured in Twitter. One of Alterian SM2's unique features is that it can segment the data into different layers. Therefore, if you wish to find out what the "Top Authors" are saying about your brand it gives you the information on which domain the discussion takes places - as well as what they are talking about. (FreshNetworks 2010) The results that are generated can be saved and exported to Excel for further analysis. (Webbiquity 2010)

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‡‡ http://webcontent.alterian.com/images/screenshots/ACM7-SM2-dashboard-L.gif

With its detailed filtering and search results, Alterian SM2 Freemium gives a good overview of where the influencers of your brand can be found, so that a social media manager can engage and add positive value, if needed.

Although it has limitations, Alterian SM2 Freemium is a good start, giving you a quick overview of who is talking about your brand and where this discussion is happening. Because this program is free, it makes it at an ideal choice for small companies or companies that are new to SMM tools. The freemium version is upgradable to the full version, which makes it a good "transition-state" program for companies who are willing to invest in this field, but want to take a safe first step.

6.3.2 Second Tool – UberVU

In the midrange price class we have UberVU, a small company founded in 2008 by recent graduates of the University of Bucharest. It offers everything that the big companies offer, such as searching through real-time and historical social data and digging deep through different social media networks. (Foremski 2010)

One of UberVU's characteristics is that it not only provides the user with relevant data, but it is also presented in a very appealing way through different graphs and charts. This makes it more user-friendly than Alterian SM2 Freemium (Webbiquity 2010). The resulting functionality is a clear example on this. After you have entered the search string it crawls through all the different social media and return two main charts (see Figure). The first one is a timeline showing when your brand was discussed about most. The second is a pie chart showing the distribution of on which social media your brand was discussed. Below these charts a list is given with the most popular posts related to your search term. (Berry 2009).
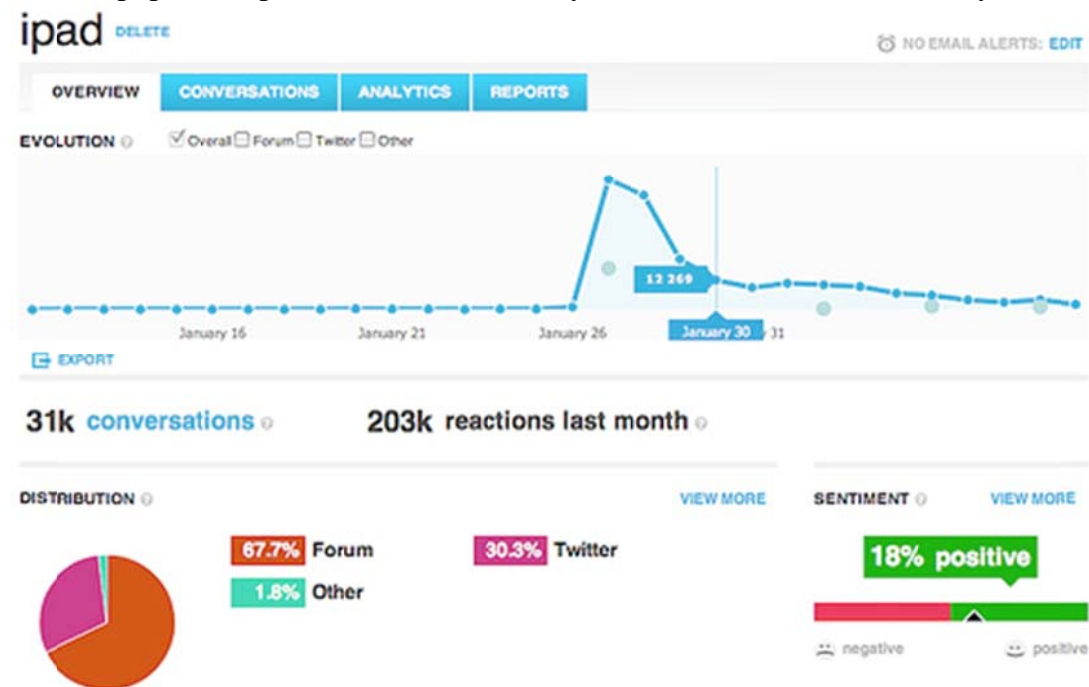

Figure 8: View of the UberVU Dashboard[§§]

UberVU comes in three different price models, starting from $49.99/month to $400+/month. The most popular plan costs $179.99/month, which allows three different users at a time, with 30 search terms and unlimited mentions/hits results. (UberVU 2011) The results can be saved as raw data files, which can be, exported and analyzed in Excel. Another neat feature of UberVU is that it can generate an analytics report with text and graphical charts. (UberVU 2011)

There are lots of different SMM tools in the midrange level, but there are very few of them that have been successful in combining user-friendliness and performance. With an attractive price tag UberVU is one of the hottest competitors in its own segments as well as a clear threat to the more expensive SMM tools. With customers such as Sharp and TeliaSonera, UberVU has proved itself to be suitable even for enterprise sized companies. (UberVU 2011)

6.3.3 Third tool – Radian6

Radian6 has for a long time dominated the market of SMM-tools and is still a clear heavyweight in its class. Following its release in 2006 it has continued to improve and enhance itself, and now offers a solid and reliable monitoring tool with lots of features. Today it has position itself as the best-in-all aspects monitoring tool. However, it comes with high price tag, ranging from $600/month to more than $1,000/month. (Radian6 2011)

What makes Radian6 one of the most comprehensive tools is the fact that it covers many aspects of social media monitoring. Radian6 includes many innovative and useful tools that help the user to monitor their brand. Comparing only the Radian6 Dashboard with the other SMM tools, the Radian6 Dashboard has a lot more features, including brand clouds, trend spotting, and influencers' interactions online. In addition to the Dashboard, they offer a product called Radian6 Insight and the Radian6 Engagement console. (MartinButlerResearch 2011)

Radian6 Insight is a built-in utility in the main program to combine the extracted data from the search with information from third party partners providing the user with demographical-, geographical-, influential- and entity extraction information. This combination makes it possible for users to quickly get the correct "insights" from the data that have been extracted. This means is that you can get a very good and precise overview of who the influencers are and who the influenced are, so that you can pin-point your marketing. (Radian6 2011)

The Engagement Console provides the user with the option to interact with the influencers in the program. Additionally, it routes the conversation from these influencers to another influencer or to the influenced while mapping the conversations where each conversation is tagged. (MartinButlerResearch 2011)

Another outstanding feature is their Benchmarking facility. This offers the user to monitor and analyze their own brand along with a competitor's brands. With this feature you are able to compare and benchmark your brand with your competitor's brand in the different social media. This open up the possibility for finding the weak points in your own brand and understanding what the influencers are demanding from your brand. (Radian6 2011)
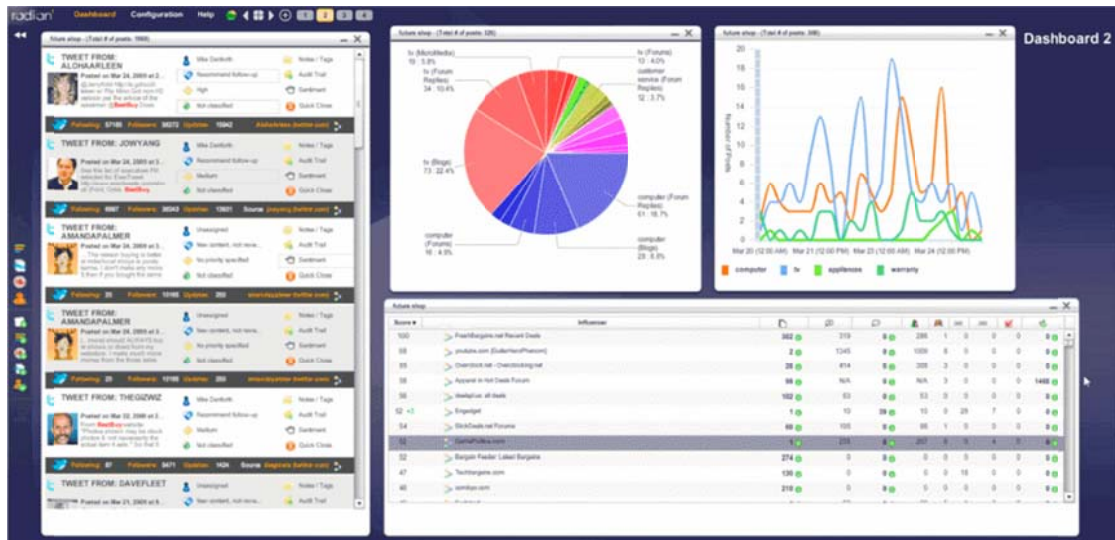
Figure 9: View of the Radian6 Dashboard*

Radian6 is undoubtedly the most popular SMM tool, with large customers from different branches, such as Air Canada, 3M, DELL, Microsoft, GEICO, American Red Cross, and more. It is a perfect tool for those companies that are already acquainted with social media, and are prepared to invest large amounts of money to ensure their future presence on the Internet. Paying this much means that the companies have very high expectations on what the tool can deliver and therefore Radian6 has to respond to this demand. This is why they have to add the features necessary to satisfy the companies' requirements of a comprehensive tool.

From a small- or a midrange company's point of view, all of these extra features may not be necessary. Instead the core functionality that can be found in other SMM tools with a much lower price tag may be more appropriate, hence Radian6 is not the best solution for all companies. Were Radian6 to offer a "budget" version it could definitely be an attractive choice, especially for small and medium sized companies.

*** http://www.wikinomics.com/blog/uploads/radian-6-best-image-1024x495.gif

6.4 Comparison chart

Alterian SM2 Freemium, UberVU $180 model, and Radian6 $600 model are compared in Table 2. As seen in this comparison chart, Alterian SM2 Freemium lacks many of the features that UberVU and Radian6 offer. The greatest limitation would be the limitation to maximum of 1000 mentions/hits. Comparing UberVU versus Radian6, they both offer many standard features, but Radian6 has some extra functionalities. UberVU on the other hand offer better core functionality, such as the number of search term, number of mentions, and numbers of simultaneous users.

Table 2: Comparison between three SMM tools

	Alterian SM2 Freem.	UberVU	Radian6
Search terms	5	30	20
Mentions/hits	1,000	Unlimited	10,000
Users	1	3	1
Real-time search	Yes	Yes	Yes
Historical search	Yes	Yes	Yes
Filtering	No	Yes	Yes
Language translation	No	Yes	Yes
Graphs and data	Moderate	Good	Good
Benchmarking	No	No	Yes
Insights functionality	No	No	Yes
360 Social profile	No	No	Yes
Price	Free	$180/month	$600/month

7 Discussion and Conclusions

Social media marketing is a hot topic for companies. It allows companies to establish a communication channel with its customers, market their products, build brand equity, and increase customers' loyalty. However, as it is a two-way channel, it requires effort and care to manage this communication. Dissatisfied customers can complain out loud, reaching many other customers easily and damaging the brand's image.

In order to avoid the risk of damaging the brand's image rather than improving it, the company should align their social media marketing with the global marketing strategy of the company. In order to do this, the company must select the profile of people that matches its target segment and communicate with them accordingly. The company should also select the best communication tool, such as suggestion boxes, widgets, and deal-of-the-day, according to what the marketing objectives are and to whom they wish to communicate.

As presented in the report, if the social media marketing is managed effectively, it can be an efficient marketing tool, allowing the company to better understand its customers and strengthen the positioning of its brand, as well as generating new sales.

To have a successful presence on the social web, as well as making sure that the brand identity is positive, one has to closely monitor and analyze this brand. When it comes to marketing on social media, SMM tools are definitely the best way to measure ROI. To give a general answer of which tool is the most appropriate for *all* corporations is a very difficult task. This is because different companies have different requirements. Some companies may need a specific feature that is only available in specific tools, while other companies need the most functions and are willing to pay the price associated with a tool that meets their requirements.

Therefore there is no general answer on which SMM tool to use. However, I would recommend taking the following parameters into consideration when making a decision about which tool to use. These parameters can act as a guideline for acquiring a suitable SMM tool:

Parameters:	
Level	How much do you know about social media in general? Is your company new to this space or do you have previous experience?
Need	What are the needs of you company? Are you after just a monitoring tool or do you want to be able to analyze the data?
Functionalities	How important are extra function, such as demographical information etc., for you?
Budget	How much are you willing to invest in a SMM tool?
Coverage	What types of social media networks do you want to cover? Are you looking for a tool that only covers a specific social media or you in search of a all-in-one tool?
Support	How important is support for you? Are you ready to pay extra for good support?
Competitors	What SMM tool are the competitors using?

Keeping these guidelines in mind will allow you to determine what kind of SMM tool you are looking for. This will give you the power to state your requirements to potential providers, increasing the chance to get what you get what you want at the price you can afford.

In the case of HP Sweden there are certain aspects that has to be taken into consideration. The main aspect is that they are relative new to this space, making it possible to adjust some of the fundaments of their way of marketing on social media. The importance of a proper social media strategy has already been emphasized in the beginning of the report, where some analysts predict that social media will become the future means of communications. Therefore it's essential that they prepare themselves for that.

The presented theories, methods and some practical advices given in this report, although it was targeted to a general audience, can be beneficially for HP Sweden as well. Some brief specific advice for HP Sweden is that they need to initially engage themselves more in the different social media. If they want to increase their brand awareness they have to update their social channels daily. Moreover, this will not be sufficient; their presence has to be combined with a clear social media strategy. A good start is to look at what other, similar companies, have done already. However, the intention should not be to simply follow what other have done, but rather that they themselves come up with new innovative ideas to position themselves as a leading company in social media marketing.

Coming to the conclusion regarding the case study, HP Sweden need to closely monitor and analyze their own presence in the social space. In this way they can measure their results of online campaigns or to turn disappointed customers into happy customers, dampen the spread of negative buzz, and develop potential marketing advocates who will boost brand equity. In order for this value to be realized as monitory value there is no doubt that a SMM tool is needed.

Knowing that HP Sweden will continue to improve its presence in the social space, a SMM tool is undoubtedly a good investment. The question that arises is which tool that is most suitable for HP Sweden?

Given the current situation of HP Sweden, such as their current market position, and scale of presence and numbers of followers on the social web, it is wisely to following these two steps:

Steps:	Actions:
Learning	In the first stage it is important to get started with SMM. Therefore choosing a free monitoring tool, preferably Alterian SM2 Freemium, would be a good way of achieving this goal.
Acting	After learning the basics of SMM it is time to start acting and using it as a real tool. The best choice would be a SMM tool that is in the midrange class, preferable a tool like UberVU. The cost of these tools is not that high and they provide an opportunity to develop and enhance the company's social presence, which would not be possible with the limitations of a free tool.

If HP Sweden takes this advice and actualize the above two steps they will have a great opportunity to take the lead in social media marketing in Sweden, compared to other companies in the same field.

8 Future Work

Since this field is relatively new, there are lots of things remaining to be done. One approach that could extend this report would be to gather different social media strategies, implement each one of them separately and then measuring their results and impact with a SMM tool. The results could then be analyzed and compared. This might make it possible to draw some kind of conclusion about which strategy is best. The result of this testing would be very interesting for many companies in search of the most effective strategy. Of course this raises the question of if everyone does the same thing in social space, will it continue to be effective?

As we have seen there are lots of different SMM tools at different prices, some specializing in certain social media while others are all-around tools. Another approach to extend this work would be to set up a website to guide a company in choosing the right SMM tool. The company could enter what it requires from a SMM tool, as well as how much they are ready to pay for it. The website should match these requirements with the appropriate SMM tools, and then present the matches in such a way that the user can easily compare them.

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10 Appendix: Case Description

Possibility of implementing

Social Media Monitoring Platforms for HP Sweden

Background:

Social media is in the scope for many companies, this applies even for HP Sweden. Since mid of last year (2010) HP Sweden has been present on different social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Since then they have received very positive feedback and are working continuously to improve their position. Due to their relative short presence on the social space, they have not implemented any proper monitoring platform.

Purpose:

This case study intends to analyze the possibility to implement a monitoring platform for HP Sweden, as well as investigating the risks, costs and benefits that come with this implementation.

Approach:

- **Step 1**: Necessary information about social media platforms will be gathered, analyzed and compared. Implementation costs will be approximated and presented.
- **Step 2**: HP Sweden will provide with partner contacts that are using social media monitoring platforms today, such as *Microsoft, Intel,* whom will provide with information that is needed. HP will also assist and provide with necessary data that may be needed for the study.
- **Step 3:** All gathered information will be taken into consideration and the study will be finalized with a report. The study will be a part of a Bachelor project.

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