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Social media and human need satisfaction: Implications for social media marketing

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Abstract U.S. companies spent $5.1 billion on social media advertising in 2013, but a recent Gallup survey revealed that these advertisements had no influence on the majority of U.S. consumers' buying decisions. For social media marketing to be effective, we argue that social media marketing efforts need to be congruent and aligned with the different needs of social media users. To this end, this article presents a typology of current social media services using the following categories: relationship, self-media, collaboration, and creative outlet. We further elaborate on how each type of social media caters to basic human needs, and provide implications for social media marketing based on the need-congruence lens.
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1. How to better leverage social media

Social media is deeply entrenched in our lives: it reaches 82% of the world's Internet population aged 15+ and represents the largest portion of individuals' Internet usage, accounting for nearly 1 of every 5 minutes spent online globally (comScore, 2011). It has become the new communications paradigm for company-to-consumer message delivery (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). As a result, U.S. companies spent $5.1 billion on advertising in social media in 2013,

hoping to promote their products and services. By 2018, that number is projected to grow to nearly $15 billion (Gallup, 2014). However, a recent survey revealed that these advertisements had no influence on the majority of U.S. consumers' buying decisions. As noted by Gallup: "Social media are not the powerful and persuasive marketing force many companies hoped they would be. . . .Consumers are highly adept at tuning out brand-related Facebook and Twitter content."

What causes the ineffectiveness of social media marketing? One possibility is incongruence between the nature of social media and marketing. Users go on social media to connect with people, whereas marketers go on social media to sell things. These two motives do not connect well. New Zealand

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blogger Pip Ross (2013) described a vivid scene: "Trying to have a quiet conversation with your friends? BAM—Facebook sleazes over, shirt unbuttoned, to tell you that you could be really beautiful if you just lost some weight." The model of free content with advertisements has been accepted, by the public, in the form of traditional media such as television and newspapers; however, this model is poorly received as regards social media. People ignore and disregard social media advertisements by simply turning a blind eye to them.

Is there any way to improve the effectiveness of social media marketing? We believe there is: through congruence of user need satisfaction. Motivation theorists argue that unobserved needs and desires motivate behavior, the purpose of which is to satisfy needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For consumers, the driver and outcome of consumption is need satisfaction. Thus, the meaning of marketing—to serve and satisfy human needs—has long been recognized by marketing scholars (Kotler & Levy, 1969; Levitt, 1960). Congruence of user need satisfaction in social media marketing can be achieved by aligning the marketing content, process, and goal with users' needs of using social media. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) pointed out that a firm must develop strategies that are congruent with, or suited to, different social media functionalities and the goals of the firm. Various research supports the notion that congruence of advertisement and website content will decrease feelings of intrusiveness and increase positive reactions toward ads (Choi & Rifon, 2002; Edwards, Li, & Lee, 2002; Newman, Stem, & Sprott, 2004). Similarly, we argue that in order to be more effective, social media marketing efforts need to be congruent and aligned with the needs of social media users.

To develop their marketing strategy and design appropriate advertising appeals, it is critical that marketers identify and understand the needs and motivations behind social media usage. This enables marketers to communicate with their target audiences on a personal, meaningful level via social media. Unfortunately, we still do not have a clear understanding of users' expectations and needs for social media services. Gallup (2014) research reported that the majority of social media users engage the technology to connect with family and friends, as well as follow trends and find information. Nielsen (2012) painted a more diverse picture, showing that besides family/friends and information seeking, people actually use social media for a variety of purposes including following celebrities, having a creative outlet, and as entertainment, thus reflecting the diverse nature of social media offerings. What exactly are the needs behind these purposes and how should we use this knowledge for social media marketing? This is what we would like to clarify with this article.

Social media outlets are numerous and varied (Mangold & Faulds, 2009), with considerable differences among the nature and mode of interaction of user activities performed on these websites (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). Thus, it is often difficult to discuss social media as a whole without overgeneralizing. To be more precise, the first step toward understanding user needs for social media entails a classification scheme. In this article, we first identify two essential characteristics of social media and then propose a typology based on these characteristics. Further, we elaborate on how each type of social media services caters to basic human needs. Finally, we provide implications for social media marketing based on a need-congruence lens.

2. A social media typology

We develop our typology based on two important characteristics of social media: nature of connection (profile-based versus content-based) and level of customization of messages (broadcast versus customized). Profile-based versus content-based connection is a major distinction among social media services (Childnet International, 2008); it divides social media into two distinct groups with different purposes, natures of information, and natures of connection. Table 1 summarizes the differences

Table 1.   Profile-based vs. content-based social media

	Profile-based	Content-based
Focal point	The individual member	Contents posted
Nature of information	Topics are typically related to the person	Discussions and comments are based around contents posted
Main purpose	Users make connections mainly because they are interested in the user behind the profile	Users make connections because they like the contents a certain profile provides
Examples	Facebook, Twitter, Line, Whatsapp	Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube

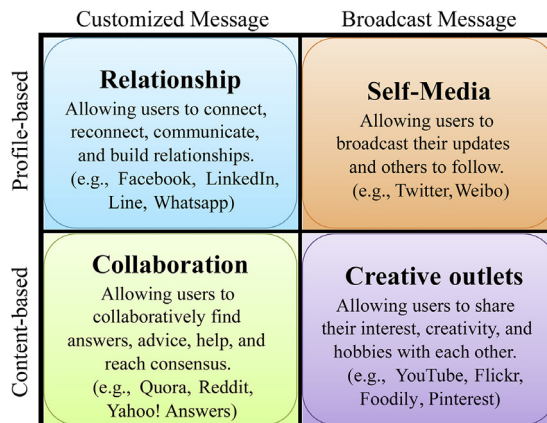between profile-based versus content-based social media.

Level of customization describes the degree to which a service is customized to satisfy an individual's particular preferences (Schmenner, 1986). In the context of social media, customization refers to the intended audience of the messages posted by users. There are two types of postings: one type is customized and intended for a specific person or a small audience (e.g., leaving a comment to a friend or posting updates to a closed circle of friends), and the other contains messages that are broadcast and are intended for everyone who is interested (e.g., Twitter accounts by *The Wall Street Journal*, President Obama, or other celebrities). Table 2 summarizes the differences between customized versus broadcast messages.

Using profile-based versus content-based and customized versus broadcast as the two defining features, we created a two-by-two matrix that categorizes the whole range of diverse social media into four types (Figure 1). Figure 1 shows a social media services matrix and indicates some of the applications or services that fit neatly in one of the four quadrants.

2.1. Relationship

Social media services that are profile-based and consist mostly of customized messages are labeled as 'relationship.' This includes services such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and mobile apps like Line and Whatsapp. These profile-based services usually require two-way confirmation of the establishment of a connection, enable active screening of friends and varying levels of privacy protection, and are mainly used for relationship building/maintenance. In relationship social media, most connections are made by acquaintances, or at least friends of acquaintances. Here, people post messages on each other's pages, leave comments on a friend's photo, or update their status to a closed circle of friends. The messages are customized for one person or a small group of friends, and are functionally equivalent to phone calls, e-mails, and family Christmas letters.

Figure 1. Social media matrix

2.2. Self-media

Another kind of profile-based service is quite different. In the 'self-media' type of social media services, people connect to profile-based accounts that are established by well-known organizations, celebrities, or products. Instead of relying on traditional media channels owned and operated by media companies, this kind of social media offers entities the chance to manage their own social media communication channels. Typical examples of self-media include Twitter and Weibo, the Chinese version of Twitter. The connection here requires only one-way initiation, and there is very limited screening of accounts. For example, people can 'follow' President Obama and receive updates whenever he posts on Twitter, or they can follow Reuters and get the latest breaking news before it appears on websites or television. Similarly, brand managers can also establish fan sites for their products, broadcast any new or exciting product developments, and propagate promotions via self-media on Twitter or Facebook fan pages. Instead of buying television ad time and/or pages in print, self-media allows government agencies to make announcements freely and as frequently as they want, all at minimal cost.

Table 2. Customized vs. broadcast messages

	Customized messages	Broadcast messages
Intended audience	Intended for a specific person or a small group/audience	Intended for the general public
Exclusive	Yes	No
Permission rights	Generally with permission restrictions	No permission restrictions
Examples	Facebook comments and private messages	Twitter postings

For example, the White House Twitter account has over 4 million followers, trumping *The Wall Street Journal*'s print subscriber base of 2.1 million readers.

2.3. Creative outlets

Content-based social media services offering broadcast messages to the whole audience are labeled 'creative outlets.' These include services that facilitate individuals' sharing of interests, creativity, and hobbies. Consider, for example, the video sharing website YouTube; picture sharing services Instagram, Flickr, and Pinterest; and the recipe sharing app Foodily. People use creative outlets to post their photos, self-made funny videos, or recipes online to share with others of similar interests. Users can go through the website and follow whoever has the most interesting contents for updates, and exchange tips and thoughts with each other. This type of social media connects people based on their creative output and provides a meaningful outlet for their creativity while at the same time providing entertainment and aesthetic content to followers.

2.4. Collaboration

The last type of social media consists of sites that are content-based, yet customizable to user demands. These sites include the social question-answering entity Quora, which allows users to ask and answer questions via collaboration, and Reddit, where users read and rate news and discuss hot topics. On these sites, messages are customized for a specific question or topic—usually what the previous user has commented on or asked about; however, people here are connected primarily due to the content or what they're interested in, rather than because they know each other. Collaboration channels allow users to find solutions to questions, get advice for life's difficult situations, try to reach agreement among certain topics, and find the most interesting news and content of the day.

2.5. Social media typology summary

To summarize, different types of social media services cater to different audiences and meet different needs. In each quadrant of the social media matrix, users can be roughly divided into two groups: posters and followers. Posters are those who update statuses, share contents, and actively participate in the content generation of social media. Followers, on the other hand, are those who track the updates, view the contents, and typically take a passive role in social media participation. Followers may occasionally make a few comments or click 'Like,' but overall, they constitute the silent majority of social media. Number of followers is one of the most widely used performance indices of social media effectiveness. Posters and followers each have different reasons to engage in social media; in Table 3 we summarize these based on our review of the literature.

3. Human needs and social media

Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, and Kasser (2001) drew extensively on prior literature to summarize 10 candidate needs that are satisfying to human nature: autonomy, competence, relatedness, physical thriving, security, self-esteem, self-actualization, pleasure-stimulation, money-luxury, and popularity-influence. The definitions of these needs are provided in Table 4.

How are these needs fulfilled through different types of social media services? The common denominator among these services is 'social,' so all four services rely—to varying degrees—on social media to prosper and address relatedness. Four common activities on these social media contribute to a general sense of relatedness (Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000):

1. Communicating about personally relevant matters;

2. Participating in shared activities;

3. Feeling understood and appreciated; and

Table 3.   Reasons users engage in social media

	Relationship	Self-media	Creative outlet	Collaboration
Poster	Self-presentation, Develop relationship	Have an impact, Promote one's self	Hobby sharing, Showcase of creativity	Help others establish reputation/fame
Follower	Develop relationship	Fans of celebrities, Update news and information	Aesthetic content, Entertainment	Learn new things, Find answers/help

Table 4. The basic needs for social media services

Autonomy	Feeling like you are the cause of your own actions rather than feeling that external forces or pressures are the cause of your actions.
Competence	Feeling that you are very capable and effective in your actions rather than feeling incompetent or ineffective.
Relatedness	Feeling that you have regular intimate contact with people who care about you rather than feeling lonely and uncared for.
Physical thriving	Feeling that your body is healthy and well taken care of rather than feeling out of shape or unhealthy.
Security	Feeling safe and in control of your life rather than feeling uncertain and threatened by your circumstances.
Self-esteem	Feeling that you are a worthy person who is as good as anyone else rather than feeling like a "loser."
Self-actualization	Feeling that you are developing your best potential and making life meaningful rather than feeling you are stagnant and that life does not have much meaning.
Pleasure-stimulation	Feeling that you get plenty of enjoyment and pleasure rather than feeling bored and under-stimulated by life.
Money-luxury	Feeling that you have plenty of money to buy most of what you want rather than feeling like a poor person who has no nice possessions.
Popularity-influence	Feeling that you are liked, respected, and have influence over others rather than feeling like a person whose advice or options nobody is interested in.

4. Participating in pleasant or otherwise enjoyable activities.

These four common activities are available across four quadrants of our social media typology—with family and friends, with people of similar interest, or with people randomly met online who nourish the need to be related.

However, noticeable differences exist among the core activities users perform on these sites. When mapping the core activities people engage in across the different types of social media services with potential need satisfaction, we find that each type of social media service is able to address a unique set of human needs. Based on an extensive review of the literature, we have summarized the main human needs that each type of social media service satisfies, as shown in Table 5.

It should be noted that in Table 5, the need for security is not listed as one of the needs social media services satisfy. This is because security does not give positive satisfaction, though dissatisfaction results

from its absence (Herzberg, 1964). Nonetheless, security of personal data and privacy concerns are important factors affecting users' intentions of continued social media engagement.

4. Implications for social media marketing

Understanding the different needs that different social media sites satisfy has important implications for managers hoping to engage in social media marketing. One of the challenges of online advertisements is that consumers develop such a negative attitude toward the ads that they avoid them whenever possible (McCoy, Everard, Polak, & Galletta, 2007). Social media marketing is no exception. Forrester Research (2012) revealed that only 15% of consumers trust social media marketing in the U.S., leading to dismal social marketing campaign outcomes. We argue that in order for social media marketing to be effective, these efforts must be

Table 5. Types of social media and human need satisfaction

	Relationship	Self-media	Creative outlet	Collaboration
Poster	Relatedness, Self-esteem	Popularity-influence, Money-luxury[*]	Self-actualization, Competence	Competence, Self-actualization
Follower	Relatedness	Self-esteem, Relatedness	Pleasure-stimulation	Autonomy

[*] Although not mentioned in academic literature, influential posters get handsome rewards for sponsored content. Thus, we add Money-luxury as one of the needs for posters.

congruent and aligned with the different motivations and needs of social media users. Next, we explore the four types of social media and how to effectively align social media marketing efforts for each.

4.1. Relationship: Helping to build relationships

The main needs that relationship-based sites satisfy are relatedness and self-esteem. Facebook, LinkedIn, and other relationship-oriented sites help people connect with their friends and acquaintances, find long-lost classmates, and keep each other updated regarding news and developments in life. A recent study by Forrester Research—based on a survey of 395 marketers in the U.S., UK, and Canada—found that Facebook ads are not effective (Elliott, VanBoskirk, Bernoff, McQuivey, & Takvorian, 2013). Forrester Research concluded that Facebook's emphasis on static rather than social ads is the reason why advertisements on Facebook are not effective. In relationship-based social media, people are focused on building and maintaining relationships with others, not companies (Piskorski, 2011); thus, it is no surprise that advertisements are usually ignored or disregarded. In order for social media marketing efforts to succeed, the relationship aspect must be taken into consideration. Piskorski (2011) urged companies to think about how to address customers' unmet social needs and align social marketing with those needs. Applying this to social media marketing, we suggest that social media marketing efforts on relationship-based social media should be geared toward helping people improve existing relationships or build new ones. Specifically, two key elements enhance relationship building without inflicting the feeling of intrusion:

- The first key entails helping users with self-presentation through your products or services. Self-presentation is an important aspect of relational development (Taylor & Altman, 1987). Through self-presentation, a user conveys his/her interests, likes and dislikes, and personal opinions in the hope that others will gain a better understanding of him/her, and in turn will develop a deeper relationship with him/her. Products or services that are conducive to self-presentation— for example, music, books, magazines, movies, TV shows, or newspapers that are known to embody the interests, attitudes, and opinions of a group or a culture—are ideally suited for relationship-based social media marketing. Via the Facebook 'Like' mechanism, people express themselves in terms of the products and services with which they identify, and marketers receive exposure and electronic word-of-mouth. Individuals who like Apple on Facebook express their identification with the cool, artistic image of the brand, while those who like Abercrombie & Fitch on Facebook convey the sense of a preppy lifestyle. Besides attitude, values, and opinions embodied in products or services, support for charity is also a great means of self-presentation. Consider the cleverly designed Ice Bucket Challenge, which achieved the goal of raising awareness and money for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) by offering self-presentation opportunities to the challenge takers to show the world their care and compassion for people with ALS. Kohl's department stores' charity campaign on Facebook is also a good case in point. Kohl's announced that it would give away $500,000 to each of the 20 schools that solicited the most votes on the company's Facebook page. Voters were encouraged to contribute ideas for what the schools could do with the money (Sargeant & Jay, 2014). More than 2 million people submitted over 12 million votes. The campaign garnered 1.6 million new Facebook fans in 6 weeks for Kohl's, as it facilitated people's self-expression of being kind and caring.

- The second key to a successful relationship-based social media campaign entails building a relationship through mutually beneficial interactions. Activities that encourage people to connect and interact with one another in a campaign can achieve this purpose. For example, encouraging users to share coupons with their friends will give people a chance to show they care about each other and at the same time achieve your advertisement purposes. Or, as with the hugely successful social game Candy Crush, you can also create situations where people need to enlist help from friends to get certain gifts/coupons. As Facebook friends are more likely to be within a certain geographic proximity, local businesses can take this opportunity to launch campaigns such as "Check in to get 10% off, as well as 10% for your friends." This kind of friend-to-friend advertisement helps people to connect or reconnect with one another and at the same time spread the name of your business in a viral fashion. Consider vehicle rental company Hertz, which in 2012 launched a promotion on its Facebook page to encourage fans to share a coupon with their friends. The more the coupon was shared the greater the value became, and after five shares, the maximum value of $50 was unlocked. Based on several metrics including shares and booked reservations, the campaign turned out to be a

huge success. Lemore Hecht, Hertz's communication manager, concluded (Odell, 2012):

We know that customers who use this coupon are dedicated to Hertz as a brand so when they post and share the coupon they're giving that referral that Hertz is a great brand. . . . We all benefit from it, Hertz as a brand and the fan with the coupon.

What kinds of products or services are suitable for relationship-based social media marketing? We argue that it depends on two things. First, it depends on the nature of your product or service. Does it convey a value, attitude, culture, or belief that people want to share with others? If yes, then it is ideal for relationship-based social media marketing. Second, it depends on the nature of your campaign: Does your campaign embody a value, attitude, culture, or belief that people want to share with others? Does your campaign help people to connect? If yes, then you can also consider relationship-based social media marketing.

4.2. Self-media: Leveraging the power of celebrities

The self-media type of social media is centered around celebrities. Twitter statistics show that 9 out of the top 10 most followed accounts on Twitter belong to celebrities, each with more than 20 million followers, a number unimaginable for any newspaper or magazine. Celebrities use Twitter as a channel of influence, while followers use Twitter to get the latest information about celebrities and news and to satisfy their need for relatedness and self-esteem. Followers not only want to know more about the celebrities, but also want to be more like them: how they dress, what they eat, and how they live. Followers of these celebrity accounts develop a parasocial relationship (Marwick & Boyd, 2011) to their favorite public figures; that is, a relationship in which only one party knows a great deal about the other. Following can actually make these individuals feel better about themselves. Thus, social media marketing efforts on self-media should leverage the power of celebrities to generate the maximum effect. There are two ways of achieving this.

The first way of leveraging the power of celebrities entails integrating the product or service into celebrities' lives. In this way, the product or service becomes part of the experience the celebrity shares with his/her followers. Ellen Degeneres' record-breaking Oscar multi-celebrity selfie is a prime example. Retweeted more than 3 million times within 2 days, the picture also raised interest among Oscar viewers regarding Samsung's commercials during the television broadcast. Statistics show that Samsung got 40,000 brand mentions during the Oscars for the selfie, which caused a sharp spike in attention toward the brand's spots; this illustrates the power of an effective Twitter advertisement (Bulik, 2014). Similarly, a picture of Chinese First Lady Liyuan Peng snapping images with a white smartphone went viral when ZTE, the manufacturer of the smartphone, tweeted the picture with the comment: "The Chinese dream starts from Made In China." Peng had previously been criticized for using an iPhone instead of a Chinese brand. Subsequent to ZTE's tweet, many users commented on social platforms that they were thrilled to share the same taste in phones as the First Lady. Two days later, ZTE announced a 50% growth in shipment.

A second way of leveraging the power of celebrities entails sponsored tweets, via which celebrities are paid to broadcast their support of products or services in a 140-character tweet. After being financially compensated by the firm, Charlie Sheen tweeted that he was looking for a social media intern and provided a link to Internships.com. Within 1 hour, this tweet generated 95,333 clicks. It ultimately reached 181 different countries, with Internships.com receiving 74,000 applications. That was $50,000 well spent by Internships.com. Celebrity endorsements on Twitter have become a big business for stars and advertising companies, with more than 5,000 celebrities signed up and commanding thousands of dollars on average per tweet. There are, however, three caveats regarding sponsored tweets. First, research has suggested that celebrity-sponsored tweets have minimal influence on the opinions of young people when it comes to familiar brands. Conversely, celebrity tweets are an effective tool for lesser-known brands looking to quickly capture the attention of a large audience (St. Joseph's University, 2012). Second, when a product chooses a celebrity as its endorser on Twitter—even for just a few tweets—that celebrity becomes an extension of the product; this means his/her beliefs, comments, and actions are tied to the product, too. Thus, choosing an appropriate celebrity is vital not only for building the product image, but also for protecting it. Third, the celebrity needs to actually use the product in order for the endorsement to be credible. Authenticity is the key to consumers' hearts, even in the case of paid endorsements. Consider Oprah's 'Favorite Things' list of 2012, which included the Microsoft Surface tablet. Oprah tweeted her glowing endorsement of the product, but it was reportedly found that she sent this tweet from an iPad rather than a Surface.

This significantly undermined the effects of the endorsement.

The ultimate means of leveraging the power of celebrities entails turning your brand into the celebrity itself. Entification of a brand (Sashittal, Hodis, & Sriramachandramurthy, in press) transcends the brand's status from physical object to exalted celebrity in the Twitterverse. In this scenario, followers express their unabashed love for the brand, often in terms normally reserved for describing a celebrity of high social status. Entified brands enjoy unique benefits: followers not only censor negative comments, focusing instead on spreading positive tweets, but also defend the brand if it is attacked (Sashittal et al., in press). To be entified, a brand needs to:

1. Possess the capability of helping its followers feed their narcissism by affording them bragging rights for associating with the brand;

2. Authentically and unapologetically live its values; and

3. Constantly monitor the Twitterverse and send carefully calibrated tweets.[1]

Is your product or service ready to reap the benefit of self-media marketing? It depends on whether you can find the right celebrity for the endorsement. For best results, you must employ a celebrity that people can believe is an actual user of the product, and design a use scenario that is authentic and credible as well as buzz-generating.

4.3. Collaboration: Targeting relevancy

Collaboration social media sites let users decide what content is important; connect people to things they want to know about; and organize individuals and their interests such that it is easy for users to find, collect, and share the information most valuable to them. Users ask questions, share news, discuss recent events, and exchange thoughts about various topics. Collaboration sites address three human needs: autonomy, competence, and self-actualization.

Collaboration social media attracts huge traffic over the Internet. For example, Reddit has more than 6,100 targeted communities organized around topics, generating 5 billion page views from nearly 86 million unique monthly visitors; in a sense, this has made Reddit mainstream media. Thus, if your

product or service can be part of the answer or solution, it could receive a positive reaction on collaboration social media.

Three keys lead to the success of advertising on collaboration social media. The first entails making your product or service a solution to a problem. For example, the owners of BidKat—a Web service that helps people sell their stuff—advertised on Reddit and experienced great results. BidKat ran two versions of an advertisement: one saying ''Sell your stuff for more money with less hassle,'' and the other saying ''Need to sell some things, but terrible at negotiating or find it to be a hassle? Let BidKat negotiate for you automatically.'' Interestingly, the second version of the ad was more than twice as effective at generating clicks. Why? The owners of BidKat posited (Bunkat, 2012):

> Redditors generally click on things that look more like content than an ad and stands out enough to catch their eye. If you try to just sell them something, they tune it out. But solve a problem for them in a relatable way and they will click.

The second collaboration media key for success entails relevancy of subject matter: the content of your advertisement should directly align with the topic of discussion. Thus, marketers must carefully choose the topic, sub-topic, and keywords to match the scope and theme of the issue on collaboration social media. For instance, the acne forum on Reddit is an ideal spot for skin care products to advertise. One member posted that every time he went to the pool his skin became clear, so he wondered whether chlorine helped. For acne care products with chlorine in them (yes, chlorine is effective in the treatment of acne), this thread would represent excellent ad placement. Since people visit collaboration social media in order to look for information, answers, and solutions, advertisements are less likely to be perceived as intrusive and more likely to be viewed as helpful, since they provide information capable of potentially solving problems.

Finally, the third key to successful advertising on collaboration media entails benevolence; here, it pays. People seek all kinds of advice on collaboration social media (e.g., legal, tax, finance, daycare). Professional service providers who establish a presence on collaboration media show not only that they care, but also attract clients to their business. Consider Shannon Moore, General Manager of Trademark Express, who is a seasoned and active user of Yahoo! Answers. Shannon began answering questions on Yahoo! Answers in the hope that it would aid in raising clientele for the business; however, she discovered additional benefits such as

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[1] For more details, see Sashittal et al. (in press).

building business reputation and gaining a better understanding of customers (Isidro, 2014). Thus, on collaboration social media, benevolence and goodwill represent feasible social marketing efforts that are worth trying, especially for professional service firms.

Is your product or service suitable for collaboration social media marketing? If your product or service is a solution to a problem that people discuss on online forums, or if you can frame your product or service as a solution to a problem, collaboration social media is a good place to drive highly engaged, targeted segments to your offering—especially when the average cost of advertising on collaboration social media is significantly lower than other platforms.

4.4. Creative outlet: Extending aesthetics to life

Creative outlet social media caters to people's need for competence and self-actualization, as it provides individuals with an outlet to showcase their creativity and receive recognition from fellow users. More importantly, creative outlet social media sites provide pleasure and stimulation for viewers of those social media with multimedia content, especially pictures. There is an old saying: "A picture is worth a thousand words." Between 65% and 85% of people describe themselves as visual learners, forming meaning and organizing thoughts based on what they see (Vong, 2012). Wouldn't it be a pity if aesthetics were confined only to the computer screen, and wouldn't it be wonderful if we could extend our aesthetics to life? Thus, the key to effective advertising on creative outlet social media is building linkages that extend our aesthetics online to purchases.

There are two ways of extending our aesthetics online to purchases. The first entails collaborating with other brands to create a mixture of offerings. For example, Vogue announced in May 2014 that it would make its Instagram images shoppable. Now, when Vogue's Instagram followers 'Like' an image, they receive an email with links to the featured products the model is wearing: shoes, handbag, dress, sun glasses, etc. This creates a win-win-win situation for the three parties involved: customers get what they desire with a click of the mouse, saving valuable time in searching; brands receive sales and exposure; and Vogue earns revenue from commission.

The benefit of being mixed and matched with other brands, like how Vogue presents fashion, is that it creates a more authentic look and feel. Some brands, however, may prefer to build their own

dedicated channel. Fashion chain Topshop did just that. Topshop collaborated with Pinterest to encourage shoppers to pin their favorite Topshop products to their own Pinterest pages and create personalized Pinterest gift guides. The Share-Shop-Celebrate concept was created to encourage customers to share content and shop for products online and in-store. Topshop wanted to leverage the excitement and engagement online to drive foot traffic into its stores. The campaign excited and inspired consumers to share the products they coveted and stimulated them to purchase in-store and online, resulting in 35% of Pinterest users under 35 buying an item after pinning.

YouTube's Shoppable Video is another perfect example of extending aesthetics to life. Shoppable Video allows the audience to click on desired products featured and subsequently make a purchase. In 2001, fashion brand ASOS embraced this new capability to create its Urban Tour video, which resembles a moving catalog. The results were phenomenal: of the viewers attracted, 46% were new to ASOS' site and 14% made a purchase within 7 minutes. Urban Tour became the third most-watched brand video on YouTube in the UK. The project drew 40,000 new shoppers to ASOS' site, generating around £2 million of revenue.

The second way of extending aesthetics online to purchases entails exploration of undiscovered potential for advertising in creative outlet social media. With ever-improving image recognition technology, tags, and keywords, vast possibilities exist in this area. For example, with a beautiful landscape of the south of France on Flickr, an advertisement for a local bed and breakfast poses an irresistible temptation to viewers. This would also apply to airlines or travel agencies that operate tours in the geographic vicinity. When admiring a delicious-looking dish on Foodily, the recipe-sharing social media, wouldn't it be nice if you could click to buy all the ingredients online? Beauty creates desire: the desire to experience, the desire to own, and the desire to be part of things. Smart social media marketing channels people's heart's desire into revenue.

A word of caution about advertising on creative outlet social media: choose your audience carefully. People do not like being forced to see unsolicited contents that do not fit their interest, even if the contents are visually appealing. Consider the case of Michael Kors' first-ever Instagram advertisement, which garnered mixed results. Upon placing in users' streams an image of a gold watch resting beside a plate of macaroons, the designer received hundreds of enraged comments, such as: "If you're going to do sponsored ads, you should at least make them

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cheaper. I can't afford this." Had Michael Kors filtered the audience of the advertisement to include only those interested in expensive bags and watches, results would have been much more positive.

Any products or services that encompass beauty and pleasure are suitable for creative outlet social media marketing. This includes clothes, accessories, home and garden, vacation, music, food, art, decoration. . .the list goes on and on. Products that are visually appealing can be integrated into aesthetic experiences in creative outlet social media, while social media marketing seamlessly bridges the experience to consumption.

To summarize: In order to be maximally effective, social media marketing campaigns must help people satisfy their needs, whether this takes the form of building relationships, enhancing self-presentation, feeding self-esteem, finding solutions, or simply admiring beauty. In most of the cases we discussed, we talked about targeting followers: people who track updates, view contents, and mostly passively participate in social media with an occasional 'Like' and comment. While adding followers is an important index of the success of a campaign, it is increased interaction with those followers that signals the most effective means of social media marketing. By engaging followers to not only passively 'Like' but also actively 'Love' posting about the brand, sharing their experiences with your brand, the ultimate dream of social marketers is achieved: expanding the widest possible electronic word-of-mouth.

5. Conclusion

Social media is now an integral part of everyday life. However, the results of social marketing campaigns are often less than satisfactory. This article addressed this issue from a need-satisfaction standpoint by exploring the different types of social media, elaborating on the needs each type of service addresses, and providing implications for social marketing efforts.

Unlike traditional advertising media, social media affords new opportunities as well as challenges for marketers. Academia and practitioners alike are fumbling their way toward more effective social media marketing. In *The Art of War*, Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu said: "Precise knowledge of self and precise knowledge of the threat leads to victory." This ancient wisdom still applies in today's world. To be successful in social media campaigns, you must possess precise insight regarding your product, your campaign, the social media platform you are using,

and the social media users you are targeting. Gaining precise insight is not easy, as there are many nuances involved. For example, certain types of social media may work better with certain types of products (e.g., the music industry probably benefits more from platforms such as YouTube, while home decoration/arts/fashion may enjoy better results from Pinterest). Social marketing campaign managers should carefully examine and understand the differences between platforms, and choose those that better fit the nature of the product and the theme of the campaign. Although the fumbling journey may be difficult, the glory of victory will be worth the effort.

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