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Brittany Pasterkiewicz Dr. Mei-Fen Chen DES520 January 8, 2013 Interactive Media: Social Media Social media has revolutionized the way we communicate with each other primarily through Internet and mobile-based tools used for sharing and discussing information. It has enabled users to create, exchange, share and comment amongst themselves in virtual communities and networks. This interaction, and the manner in which information is presented, depends on the varied perspectives and "building" of shared meaning among communities, as people share their stories and experiences. There are many different types of social media out on the market today such as Blogger (blogs), Facebook (social networking), Twitter (micro blogging), YouTube (content communities), and the list goes on. With all these social media mediums available, it offers advertisement and marketing opportunities. Advertising is changing with technology and social media is the next step in the advertising world. Advertising and marketing share the same goals: to enhance consumer awareness of a product or service and to form loyal target markets and to aid in increasing sales. The main objective advertising holds is to promote brand awareness, whereas marketing is the formulation of ideas and planning. Social media allows advertisers to reach a huge number of patrons and their target audience with this new method of technology. Without one you can't have the other. Social media marketing, SMM, is a popular way to connect with patrons whether online or offline. Most SMM hold contests to attract their target audience while others choose to join partners to combine marketing efforts. SMM programs focus on different promotional aspects of business that is accomplished through one or more techniques such as direct advertising,

public relations, or personal promotions. Using SMM helps promote services and products the company is offering on social media websites in hopes to connect with their target audiences. Trends Social media advertising is an aspect within SMM, which allows businesses or individuals to explore their marketing efforts via social media websites using tools such as Facebook ads that locally and globally reaches their target audience. Since social media is growing, many companies are spending millions of dollars on advertising through social media and networking sites. Some top social media sites include Facebook, Twitter and YouTube; these are just to name a few. Some steps to consider when advertising through social media would consist of, but not limited to, objective, budget and ROI (return on investment). For example, a business or individual can use Facebook fan pages to locally advertise their products and services. Target audiences will tend to favorably interact with fan pages that are geared towards their needs and wants and a powerful branding message will do just that. Blogging is also a successful medium to reach target audiences. These advertising techniques are examples of virtual word of mouth that is becoming very effective in reaching target audiences. Facebook has over 500 million active users and roughly 50% log on daily. More than 30 billion pieces of content, ranging from links, blog posts to photo albums are shared monthly. Facebook has both direct and indirect ads. Direct ads serve through banners and third party networks whereas indirect ads are company created fan pages where users can "like" the fan page to proceed. Twitter reached 175 million users with over 95 million tweets per day and roughly 19 billion searches per month. This medium of social media offers three advertising options such as

promoted tweets, promoted trends and promoted accounts. Some basic practices Twitter showcases include ask, listen, share, retweet, respond and establish the right voice. With millions of Twitter users it is easy to target a specific audience and gain visibility. YouTube is the second most popular search engine and presents a remarkable opportunity for exposure in a social context. Online video advertising is expected to rise above five billion by 2014. Ads can appear within videos or alongside them. Key practices YouTube follows are short message, entertaining, inspiring and call to action. Social media advertising follows a few main principles for reaching their target audiences and providing effective brand awareness to its viewers. 1. The Message. Think about what people are interested in instead of what you want to show them. 2. Be Aggressive. Determine the media's preference, odd, crazy, funny, serious, etc, to effectively convey the message. 3. Priorities. Social media loves records and lists from forecasts, trends, favorite picks and so forth. Users have strong opinions about such topics that can generate a lot of discussion amongst that social community. 4. Gossip. Everyone likes a controversy and/or scandal so why not give users something to share, post or retweet? 5. Simplicity. Express your message as simple as possible, viewers will comprehend it easier and it is easier to remember and repeat. 6. Be Brief. The main ingredient of the message should be short enough for an email subject line or headline of a magazine article. Advantages and Disadvantages Over the past five years, the popularity of social media sites has skyrocketed. Social media advertising is a great way to reach potential patrons in a medium where a majority of users are active daily and some for multiple times per day. This allows

businesses and organizations to reach potential patrons in such a way where they were unsuccessful in other mediums. For example, a user may be unsuccessful at finding a company's blog or website but have a higher chance at being exposed to the brand and services through a social media site. Granted there are a great deal of advantages that come from advertising on social media mediums but there are a few disadvantages that can make a brand undesirable. PROS | CONS | Brand awareness | Negative feedback | Geo-targeting | Unknowledgeable | Loyalty and long term relationships | Time investment | Cost efficient | Measuring results | Boosts traffic | | Quick consumer feedback | | Challenges Most companies and individuals have come to two agreements in regards to the challenges social media has; ROI (return on investment) and time management. The number one challenge for marketers is measuring the ROI. The problem is easy to identify yet it is unclear how fans, followers and likes correlate to the fundamentals of brand loyalty, promotion and adaptation. There is a variety of social media mediums (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) which marketers are able to monitor. Along with a variety of mediums come multiple channels such as mobile, website and apps which make it a little more complex to monitor activity. If there is no measurement strategy prepared it is nearly impossible to determine the ROI. A few solutions to elevate this common struggle are to keep a few key questions in mind: 1. Key goals? (Generate leads, increase sales or build brand loyalty) 2. Target audience? (Effective social media targeted to audience) 3. Key performance indicators (KPIs)? (Effective metrics of each social media) Time management plays a significant role in challenges that companies stumble upon as well. Some

companies do not have a designated employee to keep track and update the sites content therefore forcing others to step in and push aside other work or stay after hours to “ pick up the pieces. ” A site that shows abandonment says that the company doesn’t care and will thus slowly start to loose potential followers. An ideal amount of time spent managing and updating the sites content should be between four to fourteen hours a week, which calculates to roughly 32 hours a month, monitoring. It is crucial that a company doesn’t “ abandon ship. ” This will result in a wrong impression in the eyes of the sites patrons. It is vital that a company maintains and is consistent with updating the sites content to keep clientele loyalty.

Conclusion Social media advertising is offering more convenient and easy ways to evolve company and organization marketing strategies. These social mediums are booming due to the increase of computers, tablets, smart phones and the Internet. Social media is providing great opportunities for companies and organizations to grab the attention of potential patrons. It is still early in the game and there is still a lot to be learned from these wide varieties of social media mediums.