

Engagement is any action carried out media essay

[Media](#)



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Bounce rate – is a digital marketing term used to show the percentage of visitor who access a website and then leave it, rather than continuing to browse other pages. It is most commonly used in web traffic analysis.

Engagement - is any action carried out by a user on a social media website.

An engagement includes a like, share, comment, retweet or favourite. Feed – is a list of updates on the social media site's home page. Usually

encountered on the Facebook social networking site, it will display updates about the pages or other users that are in the user's friend list or which the

user is a fan of. The feed is intended to show what the other users have been doing on the social site. This is usually the way a user subscribes to updates

from another user or community. Hashtag - A tag that defines or links a

tweet to a certain theme. The tag is preceded by the # character, which is what gives it the name of 'hashtag' in the first place. They are used to make

the tweets easier to find or to attract more users to the discussion. Like - Is an option on the Facebook Web site to express the user's opinion on the

picture, post, link, page or event. It is usually used to in a positive way and can be a substitute for a comment. This action usually subscribes the user

for more information from that person or page. Rank (or ranking): Refers to where a Web site or Web page is ranked within search engine results. For

example, if your Web site is about microphones, when a person queries "microphones" in a search engine, your ranking indicates where in the search

results your Web page is listed (e. g. within the top 5 results, on the first page, the 300th page and so on). Retweet - is when you re-publish

something another Twitter user has written, to spread the word among your own Twitter followers. A user can retweet articles, tweets, links and so on.

This can often be used so that the tweet reaches more people.

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Share – is the action to repost an item on Facebook. The item can range from a link to a picture or even a comment. It is used to show one's interest towards a specific topic and it will appear in the user's friends' feed.

Tweet -is an update published by a Twitter user. This has a limit of 140 characters and is meant to provide others with an update from the user.

When published, it will appear on the user's followers' homepage. Page view

- is the action of viewing a web page by one visitor. Page views, also written "pageviews," are monitored to evaluate a website's traffic. They are used to

determine a website's popularity. Subscriber(sub) - is the term used to

indicate a user who has signed up to receive updates from a YouTube

channel. The user will be alerted every time the channel posts a new video,

comment or likes a video. Talkability -Represents the difference in the

intervals of people talking about the brandTraffic -Web traffic is the amount

of data sent and received by visitors to a web site. Twitter DM - Stands for

Direct Message. This is a private message sent to a particular Twitter user.

Twitter Follower - is a term that describes someone who subscribes to/

follows the tweets of another Twitter user. Twittersphere - stands for the

network of Twitter users and their tweets. Sometimes called the

Twitterverse. Twitterstream - is used to describe a collection of updates from

the Twitter users that one follows. Either through the website, a widget or an

app, the updates comprise the twitterstream.

Introduction and Objectives

Being a multimedia organization is a key factor in surviving nowadays in the world of media. " In recent years... as companies search for new ways to

reach consumers and as the costs of productions for traditional advertising

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have risen," (Kardes & co, 2010), Social media has become the perfect platform that consumers can put their trust in and that companies can sustain without a cost. Turning to social media (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) is an easy way for organization in the publication industry to reach out to their audience.

Issue:

A report entitled "The State of the News Media 2011" carried out by the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, showed that in "the digital realm the news industry is no longer in control of its own future." The research underlined the fact that online ad revenue is projected to surpass print media ad revenue. While it may have been projected at the time, it is currently happening. The Guardian reported in March 2012 that print media advertising in the USA fell by 9.2% according to figures gathered by the Newspaper Association of America. In addition to this, Roy Greenslade, a journalist at the Guardian, estimated that Google's revenue exceeded the revenue of the entire print industry. The "The State of the News Media 2011" report emphasized the fact that in the digital space, the publications that generate the content "increasingly rely on independent networks to sell their ads". The organizations depend on aggregators (such as Google) and social networks (such as Facebook) to bring them a considerable part of their readers. The main issue for these publications is that a large part of the online ad revenue goes to aggregators, like Yahoo news or Google. (NBC, 2012) With the way people receive news changing to mobile platforms, publications must adapt, or perish. Each new platform regularly entails a new software program. Delivering their content takes much more than it used to

and it is because of this that social media has such a huge impact on online publications. The social networking sites are a dangerous necessity.

Objectives:

As social media become a very important and useful tool in the 21st century, its impact is huge and most online publications are taking advantage of it. The benefits of having a presence on the social networking sites is being contradicted by the disadvantages of not using them or using them poorly. Thus the effects that social media has on online publications must be analysed in order to provide a correct and successful approach to be used by the online magazines and newspapers when dealing with social media. This project will aim to research various strategies and tools used by online publications in order to increase their site traffic, raise brand awareness and increase revenues. It will use several research methods listed below. The study case will attempt to reveal issues and uses of social media in a local online publication. This will assess its achievements in different stages of their social media campaign and reveal an approach towards a local audience by a local online publication.

Relevance:

This project will result in a guide to online publications in the correct approach when using social media. It will give clear examples of successful strategies and badly managed pages, which have had a negative effect on the company. More than this, it can help smaller companies, other than publications, evaluate their social media campaign and ensure that they are following the right strategies. Since so much of our data is currently online, there exists a pressing matter of personal privacy, which leads to a safe and <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

honest web access. However the online programs are created to that they manipulate the data and allow for personalized advertising. In simpler terms, if you are from North London and you checked out the Esquire website or social media site, you will most likely get targeted ads coming your way, both for products, companies and editorials.

Literature Review

There is no doubt that the importance of social media in any industry in the current digital and technological climate is increasing in significance. This part in this research illustrates the current literature on social media and points out the marketing fundamental theories on social networking sites. Social media is nowadays used in creating and conceptualizing online communities for organisations in the electronic publishing industry. Several studies show how companies build brand trust and consumer relationships. An online community can generate advantages and disadvantages for an online publication. The online interaction with readers can prove to be tricky and there are many cases with happy ending but there are also those for whom a wrong move ended their story. This goes for all organizations with a product, regardless if that is an article or an actual product. Looking at various publications, books, studies and social media campaigns will enable this research to establish the way social media is perceived as well as provide a starting point for the research methods undergone throughout this project. It is important to determine whether or not online publications are aware of the power of social media. Various researchers might have different views on the role it should play, but this will aid the project in finding a

balance which will benefit the publication itself, increasing revenues and popularity as well as raising brand awareness.

The Importance of social media

" Social media, then, can do many things: it can increase traffic to your site, increase brand awareness, improve your search engine rankings, act as a reputation management tool, increase sales in your product and service, and help you establish yourself as an authority." (Weinberg, T, 2009, p. 34)

Weinberg (2009) mentions several possible implementations of social media campaign, like seeking additional page views and traffic, creating brand awareness, negative pages due to negative Facebook comments coming up when using a search engine. It is clear that social media can be used to promote the online magazine or newspaper, but it must be used carefully to ensure a negative image is not created. The audience getting accustomed to use social media to express themselves freely and this, in some cases, means that their opinion with the publication will matter to a certain extent. Revesencio, Jonha (2012) recognized the vital role which social media plays in business and especially in the hospitality sector. " More and more consumers are influenced by what their peers recommend online when compared to other forms of advertising." (Revesencio, 2012)The world phenomenon that Web 2. 0 has become is based at its core on an " implicit ' architecture of participation' a built-in ethic of cooperation, in which the service acts primarily as an intelligent broker connecting the edges to each other and harnessing the power of the users themselves." (Klimkiewicz, 2010, p. 203)Stark (1997, quoted by Klimkiewicz, 2010) points out that the digital revolution leads to the ' ability of users to produce and disseminate

new creations and to take part in the public cultural discourse"; a so-called: semiotic democracy. So that social media functions in a beneficial manner, one needs to utilize internet and web-based tools and services which allows one to publish information—be it data, audio, or video—on the Web (Computer Economics, 2010). Chris Brogan (2010, p. 92) classifies in his book ' Social Media 101' 2 scenarios when building your social media network. The first one refers to already having ' an abundance of community members in the organization'. In this case one has a foundation to build on and the most important part of that is the brand name that will attract lots of readers. The second scenario is the one where an online publication is just starting out, in which case it starts from zero. Dan Zarella wrote ' The Social Media Marketing Book' in 2010. In it he emphasised the social media's character of being an equalizer among companies. " Big brands can be outsmarted without making huge investments and small brands can make big names for themselves." (Zarella, 2010, p. 7) Companies often have experienced success when addressing the customer personally and asking for his personal opinion. Starbucks made headlines in 2008 when they started their programme entitled ' My Starbucks Idea' , which required the customer to create his own favourite drink and share it on their website. Other customers comment and rate these ideas and Starbucks after careful consideration implements them. The community website was created to gather suggestions and feedback from consumers. ([www. starbucks. com](http://www.starbucks.com)) Companies also fear social sites as they believe that it could be harmful to employee productivity or even be damaging towards the company's reputation. And they are not mistaken. While Starbucks did get it right, this was not always the case. In December 2012 Starbucks launched a Twitter <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

campaign which included the hashtag #spreadthecheer aimed to get positive responses. However it quickly backfired when users started posted negative tweet about the chain's products and practices. (BizJournals, 2012) Unfortunately Starbucks isn't the only one making costly mistakes. Embarrassment is quite common on social media sites, just as common as success is. Domino's Pizza employees posted a video to YouTube showing them tarnishing a meal that was going to be delivered to their customers. Only in the first few days, this video gathered 1 million views. Soon after, the enraged customers around the world took to Twitter to express their discontent. Mathew Ingram, an award-winning journalist, commented in 2011 on the Canadian newspaper 'The Star'. The publication had released a new social media policy, which advises its staff not to interact with their readers on social media sites, including their personal accounts. The policy implemented in 2011 urges its staff "to never talk to their readers and to never express an opinion on anything". (Gigaom. com, 2011) This however as this research will demonstrate is not the right approach. Ingram (2011) said: "But the main point being missed is that social media is powerful precisely because it is personal. If you remove the personal aspect, all you have is a glorified news release wire or RSS feed." He suggests that the best tactic is to support journalists into being human and engaging with their readers through Twitter and Facebook and comments and blogs. Many other social media specialists support his view. To put it in a nutshell, "if you can't fight them, join them". While this is the case for companies, the scenario for online publications is not so different. This research project will emphasise that the consumer know he is king and is more than happy to take on the role. People do want their voice heard, their complaints listened to. It

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sometimes takes only a few comments and tweets to tarnish a company's reputation.

The Audience

Readers used to be known as audience, as the people who listened to what articles had to say, this is not the case anymore. In fact it is social media the one that allows readers to have their say. Mandiberg (2012, . 80) talks about ' the people formerly known as the audience'. He mentions the drastic change in the relationship between the journalist and his readers. According to him the digital technologies, social media included, have shifted the ' direction of communication from a one-to-many broadcasting system to a many-to-many conversational system'. This is issue was previously tackled by Jay Rosen, an NYU professor and media theorist. He said that people were " on the receiving end of a media system that ran one way, in a broadcasting pattern, with huge entry fees and a few firms competing to speak very loudly while the rest of the population listened in isolation from one another – and who today are not in a situation like that at all". His theory can be applied especially in the case of social media. People are no just the end receiver anymore, but they are part of the production itself. Mandiberg (2010, p. 80) supports the significant impact on the practice of journalists. Many researchers discuss the development from the assumption that what was of interest to the journalists will be of interest to the public. (Mandiberg, 2010) The audience is king and it knows it. Nevertheless, there are studies that discuss the implication of social media into the journalism profession. It is underlined the fact that journalists have embraced social media and are using as a tool. Many point out the permanent power of journalists to '

decide what's news' (Mandiberg, 2010). Whenever a new article or post is published onto a publication's website, it will be most likely advertised on their social media pages. This has many advantages. Obviously the reader has access to it quickly, but it also gives him a chance to comment his opinion on the post.

2.3 Being part of Social Media

Critically acclaimed British journalist, Raymond Snoddy OBE, believes that even though the social media is on the rise and has mesmerised the users, one cannot ignore the importance and continuing dominance, of print media as the one that establishes the brand, for the time being in any case.

(Snoddy, R, in MediaTel, 2012) In all aspects, the entire print media is having difficulties in this technological era. Both newspapers and magazine have to face an absolute competition, which is in fact with the infinite amount of information online, delivered free and easy straight to the user. The main issue now is not only how to compete, but also how to get enough revenue to cover the losses. In the latest ABC's, it is reported that only about one in three of the 500 consumer magazines audited by the ABC put on print sales year-on-year in the second half of 2011. Just like in every domain there are exception like the rock music sector whose sales rose by 10% - primarily because of the free magazines like Properganda and the Stool Pogeon. But the women's magazine sector suffered a 9.6% decrease and the men's sector fell by 5.2%. Even the globally successful magazine Men's Health is down with more than 10% in their sales. The sales of digital editions of magazines are very small as the user prefers free information and there is one place where this is not sparse: the web. A session of Carat's Press Week

regarding the use of social media by magazines, emphasised certain strategies that need to be put in place in order to handle social media in a proper way. There was optimism toward the importance of engaging enthusiastically with social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest and many other are seen by specialists in the industry like Dan Martin, a social media journalist, as important allies in protecting the long term futures of publications. When James McMahon, editor of rock magazine Kerrang, needed a monkey for a shoot, he tweeted to Kerrangreaders. A tiny monkey was thus located. McMahon argues that the magazine is more about creating a community of music fans and that the social media was perfect for that. He is convinced that the social media presence used to interact with readers every day, helped the magazine change in shape and structure but also enabled it to keep it steady financially. (MediaTel, 2012). The magazine Philosophy Now has a page entitled ' Meetup Everywhere' where it encourages its readers to meet in the UK and the US and discuss magazine-related issues. The publication More! is known for its young editorial team. The editor-in-chief, Alison Perry made some brave steps on the path of social media, when she allowed the publication to publish an issue sourced by the crowd from the magazine's Facebook community. This was followed by a Bloggers Issue, which contacted some of the most important bloggers in the space. This can be considered an innovative move, but according to the website Media Shift (2012) the print circulation of More! decreased by almost 20% in 2011. Similarly the print sales of Heat went down by 12%, despite the changes in the magazine's structure. Its editor emphasised the fact that magazine should use social media sites to interact with users on a daily basis. The issue so far was the apparent lack of revenue from the social

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media activity. According to the website PBS (2012) Ben Ayers, the social media executive at Carat, thinks that "magazines are in a better place to exploit social media than newspapers and that the money will come." It is expected that social media will receive more and more advertising revenue in the future. Considerably more than it does at the moment. Yearly there are £250 billions spent advertising in all its forms, out of which £50 billion are spent online. (PBS, 2012) The ABC figures show that Vogue had a decrease of only 0.2% of its print sales. The magazine executives emphasise the importance of social and digital media for the publications as their multi-media campaigns reach an overall audience of 2.13 million individual per month. According to Quantcast (2012), their website has 1 million unique visitors per month, and this number increases to more than 2 million during fashion weeks (PBS, 2012) Their 100,000 Facebook fans and 400,000 Twitter followers are proof that their social media presence is significant and effective. While social media is expanding at an alarming rate, many still recognise the print media's continuing importance. The Wired magazine proves there is still life in print media. According to Ad Age 50% of its ad sales came from online ads. And out of this only 10% were from tablet advertising, which is considered to be one of the most important sources of revenue. So as Wired magazine is still successful in print, there are many journalists who would like to see their name in print, often as a form of recognition. While specialists argue over the future of print media, it is widely recognized that the great strength of magazines is the fact that many of their readers, especially women, perceive their chosen publication as a treat. They see it as something to be enjoyed in a bubble bath. After all it is pretty unwise to take an iPhone, laptop or tablet into a bubble bath. It is now <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

up to each publication to use all their efforts and innovation in digital and social media in order to see a return of their investment and an increase in their revenue.

The best in social media

As Ad Age Magazine released its yearly ' Magazine A-list' featuring the so called ' best' in print in 2012, the social media comparison website ' SimplyMeasured. com' created a graphic (See Appendix, fig. 1. 2) showing the most successful magazines in social media - in this case in relation to Facebook and Twitter. The Ad Age magazine based its choices on more than one category ranging from circulation, ad sales and tactical actions in the publishing industry. Indeed most print publications are having issues adjusting to the digital age and in particular newspapers. The information out there on the web is so significant it has taken its toll on many publications. For example the American weekly magazine Newsweek, which summarized news for homes around the United States of America, announced in October 2012 that it will cease publication at the end of the year and it will make a permanent move online. (The New York Times, 2012) Newsweek started an all-digital version entitled Newsweek Global in early 2013 and works on a paid subscription model. The magazine was sustaining \$40 million worth of losses per year. So while magazines like Newsweek were struggling to make a digital presence, there were others who survived and flourished. According to Simply Measured magazine's " early grasp of tech-based commercialism and social trends have kept - and in some cases grown - their relevance." (Simply Measured, 2012) Glossy magazines can often have a long-lasting effect on the consumer due to their aesthetically pleasing aspect, which will

enable them to keep their subscriptions. Several of these brands have been able to integrate a prosperous social presence with that the audience prolonged their commitment to the print product. (Simply Measured, 2012) A report from Simply Measured analysing the magazine's social media presence show InStyle as a leader on both Twitter and Facebook, the two main social platforms. The 2.2 million Twitter followers are the proof that the magazine is using social media to its fullest and much to their benefit. Instagram and Pinterest are also quite popular when it comes to the InStyle magazine. In fact, subscribers to the print version usually also check the online version for more information. The second most successful magazine in social media is Forbes which according to the report 'has become a dominant force in the digital space'. (Simply Measured, 2012) With 1.25 million Twitter followers and 375,000 Facebook fans, Forbes is being revolutionized. Their website has been completely redesigned, social media integration and it is up to their digital ad revenue, which has experienced a 28% rise (Ad Age report, 2012), to prove their strategy is working. The Ad Age report also shows that 16% of Cosmopolitan magazine's web traffic in the month of August came from the social media site Facebook. By analysing which sites users accessed immediately preceding viewing the publication's site, it is revealed that the Facebook traffic was larger than the traffic from Google by 4%.

Social media campaigns

Similarly, Food & Wine Magazine hosts periodical Twitter and Facebook conversations in which followers and users can speak to selected editors or chefs about recipes and dining tips. Conde Nast's Traveller Magazine

similarly encourages its followers to ask editors travel questions using Tumblr's Ask feature. Lucky Magazine has created a Foursquare page with tips for shopping destinations that readers can access on-the-go from their smartphones. Spin Magazine created a musical scavenger hunt during last year's SXSW festival, featuring band recommendations within the location-based application, for its most geeky followers. Tumblr, stylized as tumblr., is a microblogging platform and social networking website, owned and operated by Tumblr, Inc. According to its website, "the service allows users to post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog. Users can follow other users' blogs, as well as make their blogs private." The platform is being used to curate content using many methods like reblogging and the 'Tumblr Tuesday' recommendation. Publications like The Huffington Post and Newsweek often reblog content from the web on their Tumblr blog, resulting in an interactive community with relevant information. Cosmopolitan Magazine, for example, promotes community member questions on their site via Facebook. This generates very personal comments and responses to and from Cosmo readers as members relate to each other's experiences and offer advice. The MIT Sloan magazine recognizes the worldwide obsession with online social network as a key factor in influencing consumer preferences. Every marketer's job now includes contributing to social network and building brand awareness through word of mouth. Many organizations have invested in a social channel to propagate their brand through viral content, social media contests and other consumer engagement efforts. (MIT Sloan, 2012) Advertising is no longer a one-way street and it has become a dialogue with the consumers. Marketers are aware that in theory social media is a powerful way to create positive and

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sustainable word of mouth. MIT Sloan state that " if they can only select the right social media platform, design the right message and engage the right users to spread that message, their campaign should be a success." While the theory is good, everything depends on an ' if'.

Methods

This study proposes a qualitative research, including a selective literature review as well as analyses on social media sites. The evaluation of the research findings will be objective and the evidence and results will be revealed without adding a personal opinion. The collected data will be analysed carefully and based on the findings recommendations will be made. The final discussion may include some critique on the results, trying to suggest the most effective courses of action when tackling social media.

Establishing the most popular social media sites

Due to the fact that there are 200 social media sites (according to HowManyAreThere. com, 2012), it was important to establish the main social media sites. Therefore I carried out an analysis assessing the number of active users and as well as the amount of time they spend online. There are various social media sites and platforms, and thus organisations have to have an online presents following a tactical strategy. As part of this research, three social sites have been chosen for analysis. Facebook With almost 1 billion active users, Facebook is seen as the biggest social media giant. (Facebook, 2012). The platform allows users to post, comment, like, share and engage in as many social activities as they can using the apps. (See Appendix. Fig 2) The average person spends 15 hours and 33 minutes on Facebook per month, according to Statistic Brain. (2013) Twitter Twitter has <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

active users and unlike other social sites it includes a 140 character limit per post. The social site has become so popular it has its own terminology (Appendix, fig. 2) Twitter is effective only to the extent that the public reads it and is part of the online conversation. This represents an easy way to create a community. " Twitter creates value because it can be used in many clever and innovative ways to serve many different purposes." (Thomas, H, 2012, p. 17) YouTube With over 800 million unique users visitors each month, YouTube is a video-sharing website, created by three former PayPal employees in February 2005. Individuals have uploaded most of the content on YouTube, although media corporations including the BBC, VEVO, Hulu and other organizations offer some of their material via the site, as part of the YouTube partnership program. (See Appendix. Fig 2) YouTube statistics confirm that over 100 million people take a social action on YouTube (likes, shares, comments, etc.) every week. Lim (2010) points out that " Twitter and Facebook are used as a marketing machine while YouTube functions more as a public relations tool since it is a video sharing website." An infographic created by Huffington Post, states 23% of users check Facebook 5 or more times per day and that 69% of Twitter follows are due to friend recommendations. (See Appendix. Fig 2). In establishing the most used social site, I gathered data from the press section from the social media sites, stating the numbers of users as well as the amount of time spent online.

Analysis of the web traffic of media publications

Web analytics is a powerful online tool to find out where the online readers are coming from, if they are reaching the publication's website through

social media or a search engine or other means. Using this on the three online publications allowed me to put together a chart which reveals the website which generates the most readers. Using the online system web analytics through the data provider website Alexa, I carried out an analysis of several websites to find out where the traffic comes from and to establish whether or not there is a pattern between the user's background and his access of the online publication's website through social media. This analysis is done for traffic over 3 months from the 15th of November 2012 to 15th of January 2013. I analysed three websites, including InStyle. co. uk , The Guardian. co. uk and Sky Sports. co. uk. This analysis aimed to reveal a connection between a website's popularity and its audience and the social media sites. The goal was to find where the users come from and whether social websites are part of the ones directing a user towards an online publication. It was also important to establish whether or not there is a connection between a user's social and economic status and their use of news and social websites. By combining the average daily visitors to a website and the number of page views on that website from users from the past month, one can reveal the website's popularity. This is usually referred to as the rank or ranking of a website. While carrying out the analysis I looked several things: The ranking of the websites, both in the UK and globally The rate of page views per user The Traffic rank and its changes Bounce Rate Time spent by users on the website Which sites did users visit immediately preceding the publications' websites Audience demographics

The analysis of the social media campaigns of three online publications

While researching online publications, it was revealed that most of the online magazines have a print version. Nevertheless, as mentioned before in this report, the latest figures show that the digital revenue often surpasses the print one. As part of this research I decided to analyse 3 publications for a period of a month. In some cases the period of time may vary. Choosing certain publications will enabled me to compare different issues and get an insight into the presence on social media. The scope will be narrowed down to focus on the three top social sites Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. The first publication Brides was chosen as it represents a magazine targeted towards a very specific market: brides. More than this, unlike other publications had a smaller audience and thus a smaller online presence. The Sun was chosen as a second publication to analyse due to its variety in articles and significant print sales. The analysis would show how a newspaper, which is still being read by a lot of people uses social media to expand the reader's experience. The fact that this newspaper was a tabloid was also a contributing factor. With a varied target market and more often than not scandalous articles, this newspaper provides an interesting social media platform. The popular tabloid, 'The Sun' is trying to keep up with the other publications. With almost 8 million daily readers, both online and offline, the popularity of this tabloid is incontestable. (The Sun, 2012) Nonetheless it can be argued that the very low price, 40 pence, of the newspaper is a contributing factor. Allure magazine can give an insight into a social media campaign of a world-renowned women's publication, with lots of experience and multimedia content. This publication has a largest number of followers on Twitter and it

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was interesting to see, how and if the editors interact with the readers. While carrying out the analysis, I looked at: The publications' websites The official social media sites of the publications (Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) The web traffic on the sites The integration of social media widgets on their websites Posts and comments on the social sites While I was analysing the social media sites for the three publications, I evaluated things like: The frequency and content of posts by the publications on Facebook and Twitter The admin interaction rate and the changes in it on Facebook The fan interaction rate Comments by users on all three social sites Responses by publications on Facebook and Twitter Website movement from social sites onto the publication sites The engagement towards multimedia aspect of the posts on social media (include photos, videos and links) Changes and growth rate of the talkability The fan growth rate on Facebook Comparison between the three publications in regards to the total count of Facebook Fans The research will reveal differences between publications influenced by their target market, brand and digital influences. It will also show the interaction between users and users and editors, as well as unveil the changes in audience engagements. The interaction with their readers is perhaps the most sensitive area and it represents one that organisation often fail to acknowledge the importance of it. Thus analysing the comments and their responses and their frequency will provide the research with a clear idea to which is the correct manner of interacting with the readers. This analysis of the social media posts and the website movement will give me a clear idea of strategies that are used and whether they are successful or not. I will be analysing the interaction with the readers to reveal if what type of posts are encouraging readers to get involved and comment. I will be taking into

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consideration the type of posts as well as the frequency of the comments and responses from the admin. The sharing of links in comparison with images accompanied by a link will also be assessed to reveal the importance of it as well as effectiveness. In order to carry out this analysis, besides my own assessments and observations, I also used an online analytic tool to generate statistics. Analytic tools included: Alexa, Simply Measured, How Often Do You Tweet, Social Don, Quant Cast, Topsy, Twitter Counter.

Interview with active social media specialists

I conducted a couple of interviews with successful people in this field, who also have experience and extensive knowledge of dealing with social media. My first interviewee was the Editor and Communication manager, Maite Fernandez for the American website IJNet. The second social media specialist was Helen Standing a lecturer in new and social media at several universities across the UK and the CEO of a consultancy business, which among other things, offers advice and services concerning social media. The interviews offer an insight into the way social media is perceived by journalists and into the way that media publications have to use it. The negative and positive effects are difficult to assess as in many cases 'bad press is good press'. Due to the fact that I wanted to compare any differences in the answers from the two experts, I asked the same questions. These concerned the importance of social media, advice in the right approach to it as well as any mistakes that are to be avoided on social sites. The question I asked included: Why is social media important for online publications (online magazines, news websites, newspapers)? What advice would you give such publications when handling their social media campaign? Why is it important

to engage with their readers on Facebook and Twitter? How can publications get more followers/fans/subs on social sites? What would you say are the absolute don'ts of social media in the case of online publications? What do you predict is the future of online publications?

3.5 Public Questionnaire

I created a questionnaire online using surveymethods.com and used Facebook to get responses to it. This was shared through a link on Facebook and Twitter, and users were able to complete the survey online. There were 60 responses to it. The questionnaire was aimed at the general public, focusing on people who use social media. The questionnaire aimed to find out how the public is adjusting to the change and if there have been any changes in the publications they read due to social media. It was also aimed to show whether or not social media integrations into websites have encouraged and increased the engagement from the readers. The objective of the first three questions was to identify the reader's age, sex and involvement with online publications. The next 7 questions assess the way social media has had an impact on the way the audience perceives and uses online media. They also aim to detect certain negative aspects of social media. Similarly, the questionnaire is supposed to pinpoint any improvements in the reader's literary experience.

Case study on a start-up online magazine

The case study on an online local magazine in 3D, called StandTall Magazine, which is aimed at locals and mostly uses social media as their promotional platform. This will show the effect of social media on smaller and new organization, which more often than not has a smaller target market. I <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

analysed the different stages of creating and starting the magazine that involved social media and the impact of social media in a start-up publication. Canterbury Enterprise Group is an organisation dedicated to encouraging young people to become self employed, supporting those that do. (See Appendix, fig. 6) It recruits people and creates start-ups as well as helps the start-up develop and expand. It was redesigned as Ambition House at the end of 2012. Their aim is to create start-up companies whilst at the same time provide a unique education and employability platform. The organization states that they create start-ups with teams of students and graduates for the purpose of education, social benefit and mutual profit. (LinkedIn Profile, 2013) StandTall Magazine is one of the C. E. G. (Canterbury Enterprise Group) start-ups. The new team started developing in March 2012, recruiting staff and organizing a structure for the company. The aim is to support young successful and talented people as well as encourage and motivate the young generation, using real life examples of fellow successful people in the UK and teaching others how to achieve their goals. The magazine is planned to be the very first magazine in the UK provided completely in 3D anaglyph. (See Appendix, fig. 6) The idea behind it is to provide an online platform aimed to inspire and motivate young people to develop themselves into better individuals. Their mission statement is that, " StandTall Magazine exists to provide a 3D online platform as well as 3D events for the celebration of worldwide youth talent." (StandTall Facebook page, 2012) Unlike the usual online publication, StandTall will maximize the full potential of a visual user experience, giving it a new dimension using 3D anaglyph images and videos to create a one of a kind website. The audience will use 3D anaglyph red-blue glasses to visualize the 3D effect at home. The <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

team will use the same technique to make the events 3D giving the public an experience unique in the UK. The 3D materials will include posters, decorations, invitations, banners and videos. The primary demographic targets consisted of males and females aged 18- 35. The very first event, Fairouge, was planned as the official launching of the online magazine. This event was supposed to be the first of a series. It will be followed by other events, each of these promoting young people from a different sector. (art, technology, science, sport, fashion) The goal is to support young artistic talent and promote them in the local community as well as provide a springboard for the Standtall Magazine. The team consisted of enthusiastic and motivated young people who hope to inspire our generation. It included 15 members, with a wide range of skills applied into their role within the company. According to Lehman Hailey (2010) " in the extremely competitive world of today, social media marketing is the new 'in' thing and definitely here to stay. In a nutshell, it means using social media such as blogs, community sites, video sharing sites etc. to market a product or a business." (Hailey, 2010). The findings of these research methods as well as previous known theories in regards to networking sites and marketing campaigns will help me establish various approaches to social media that will benefit a publication.

7. 1 Social Media Strategies

7. 1. 1 Embracing social media The literature review clearly shows that researchers and journalists recognize the importance of social media and the need of online publications' need to use it to its own advantage. The questionnaire I conducted clearly shows the public's desire to connect on

many platforms with their intended publication. The audience shows that people from all ages access social media on a daily basis and use it often to access new publications or keep up to date with the ones they know. Therefore it is clear that any present or new publications needs to have a strong social media presence. Looking at the analysis of the webtraffic on various sites, it is revealed that often the second most popular source of visitors is Facebook. In the top 10 is Twitter as well. Thus social media can direct a lot of traffic towards an online magazine. The interview with the two social media experts also points towards a presence on as many social platforms as possible. Being where the consumer is, is vital. And as long as the consumer chooses social sites, online publications have no other choice but to embrace social media. Offer Expertise In Real Time Publications are perceived as invaluable source of content due to their qualified editors, knowledge in the field and in many cases their connections. Some of their staff are enabling their readers to have conversations with their experts in real time via social media platforms. Like Brides magazine recently hosted a Facebook conversations between a blogger and a bride Anna Maltby and the Facebook users. Readers were allowed to ask any questions regarding weddings, pre and post preparations and Anna would answer. The conversation lasted about an hour and the post had 55 comments from users. Looking at the analysis of social media campaigns of various publications, it was revealed that users prefer speaking to admins rather than just reading an article, which was often edited by many editors before published. The public needs the contact with the editor, as this feels more personal. By analysing the comments from the admins towards the readers, it was revealed that a quick response from an admin would generate a lot

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more engagement from the public. And engagements make a post more popular and thus attract more readers. By creating an image of themselves as the information providers — with more than static articles — these publications have become a part of their readers' daily routines. Build relationships Knowing that friendships often come from similar interests, some magazines are helping their community members to engage in conversations and interact amongst themselves. Facebook and on-site communities are being optimized for conversation through posts and comments as well as likes and shares. These tactics create relationship and conversations around the brand. So helping users interact among themselves is just as important as admins interacting with users. The public survey showed that users like to exchange articles on similar topics using Facebook. They are keen on commenting and liking articles online. It is often that the brand has to build a relationship with the users by creating a community online. Users can discuss the article and attract more traffic to it. There are many journals mentioned in the literature review that confirm the need to encourage engaging with users. Looking at social media campaigns from different online magazines and newspapers, showed that the brands are trying to create a virtual connection with the publications. Establish yourself as the expert The average Twitter user has less than 350 followers, but the brands and popular publications have a lot more. They spend time and money creating community on Twitter and making an online presence. Therefore, a tweet from a magazine like Cosmopolitan will create far more retweets and replies than that of an average user. Some magazines are using their niche influential status to help users get the responses they need by retweeting influence. This help improve the relationship between the

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magazine itself and the readers. More than this, in such a case the magazine will become the best source for information in their field. The analysis on the Brides magazine's Twitter account showed that most of the users interacting with the brand had the word ' wedding' in their profile. This shows that the publication Brides is certainly the place that people go to for advice or ideas relating to weddings. Publications should implement a similar tactic by establishing themselves as a go-to resource for their own niches. Being considered an expert in the field, means that publication is the main one that a user goes to for content he or she is interested in. It is vital that you build on the brand and not make mistakes that would decrease your reputation in the field. An example would be publishing a story without a verified source, which turns out to be a fake one, could harshly damage the users' opinion on the publication. Expand to a Multimedia Experience Social Media allows magazines to provide their users more than just context, but also entertainment. Text and images are just one side of it. Articles can be enhanced with polls, videos, games, real-time chats as well as in some cases a behind the scenes sneak peak, Cosmopolitan uses Facebook games to entertain bored fans at work. Time allows its Facebook community members to create faux " Person of the Year" images to share with their friends. The newest social media site, Instagram allows magazines to use it for pictures.. National Geographic shares photos with the smartphone application, while Playboy uses it to share backstage moments. The figures showing the amount of interaction from the audience on a post with a photo in comparison with one with a link is of utmost importance in establishing the effect of a multimedia experience. The engagement on visual rather than written is much higher, which shows that the audience prefers a multimedia

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experience. Generate Social Media Revenues The most usual form of digital revenue for online publications comes from banner ads. Indeed there are publications like Forbes and Brides, which have an ad appearing every few clicks, which does not allow the user to advance for a time span of 5 seconds. Other online publication like MIT Sloan only publish a small part of an article and then ask the user to subscribe if they wish to read the entire article. The literature review revealed that there are still magazines with high revenues from print and that the advertising rate depends on more than just online presence. Nevertheless using social media profiles in a creative way has developed more potential for partners and advertisers. For example there are sponsors for Twitter backgrounds and tweets as well as sponsored Facebook messages. All these are ways in which a publication can expand their revenue. The analysis of the top most used social sites, feature YouTube at the very top, even before Twitter. The analysis generated on the three publications on YouTube show that it is not used to its maximum potential. In fact it is often used simply as a way to upload videos easily onto the site. A feeble attempt at subscribers show that user would actually be willing to participate, but only if they are met halfway. The YouTube partner program represents a good source of income for the publications. Paying from 1 to 3 \$ per 1000 views, the program can generate quite a bit of revenue, as well as expand the user's experience. Develop Editorial Content While social networking sites help improve the user's online experience, they can also help the magazine in regards of the subject area of interest to the users. Editors are always trying to understand the readers and fulfil their needs in terms of interests. Publication are currently using social media to find new ideas based on comments and suggestions from their

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social media communities to write future articles. Supervising comments, monitoring response rate on certain subject areas as well as asking questions across social profiles, will enable editors to understand their readers' wants and needs more truthfully than randomly brainstorming in a news meeting. By analysing the keywords in comments and top most commented posts, I am able to point out the fact that users are happy to have their own voice heard. If asked directly a question requesting their input, opinion or experience, the users are happy to step in and do their part. This represents a good way to find out what the readers want. Publications should take this a step even further and use social media as a source of content. For instance, they can attract their fans with the opportunity to be included in one of their favourite print publications while gathering quotes and ideas to include in their new articles. The prospect of being featured in one of their favourite print publications entices followers to contribute online. As discovered Playboy Magazine's #FriskyFriday enables the user to engage to a larger extent than the usual way, by allowing female readers to submit nude or provocative images of themselves. In general magazines urge their reader to submit pictures via contests or ask fans to answer to Facebook polls. Social media can aid content marketers attract the readers' understandings and hunger for information. Not only are they creating an interest in upcoming digital content, which would obviously lead to an increase in their revenue, but the publications are also establishing a lasting relationship with their readers. Implement social widgets While social sites on their own are a great way to attract the users to the website, the publications need to make sure readers can engage on their websites as well. The public questionnaire show that users often don't like to share due

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to the fact that their friends would know what they are reading. But they have no issue with strangers. The survey also shows the audience is more inclined to like an article on its website as well as comment on it using Facebook. This requires the implementation of social widgets like Facebook login, which saves the user the trouble of creating an account or the Facebook comment facility. This can also help attract Facebook friends' from the reader as well as make engaging with others easier. YouTube integration is an easy way to add to an article by posting a related video. And Twitter feeds are quite popular. The analysis on the Sun's website showed the newspaper uses a Twitter feed on the homepage to encourage the readers to join in, as well as a separate Twitter feed from the personal account of the journalist on the article page to encourage the readers to interact directly with the editor. Curate Content Curating content is currently being seen as one of the main ways of using social sites to create a more than just a written story for the readers, but also give them extra info and extra material to help them visualize. There are many journalists who offer readers online the chance to complement their articles with information from other sources. They also recommend publications worth following and share links, which they believe may be of interest to their audience. An analysis of the Twitter feeds of the three publications shows that magazines are not only tweeting their own content. Being recognized as the authority in the field is vital. Thus tweeting or retweeting external links as well as suggesting other accounts to follow are a great way to provide the reader with more information. The analysis of the three publications, Allure, The Sun and Brides, also revealed that adding information should not be from the main competitors. It is obvious that The Sun should not link to another British tabloid. Nevertheless,

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adding information to the story can come from various sites. The content insight into the Allure magazine showed that editors often include other links. The analysis of the websites that users visited immediately preceding the visit the publication's site, showed that the users can access the site not just through social media but also through their own site. Don't ignore complaints. The interviews conducted as part of this research, show that publications often have to deal with several mistakes from their staff. This can vary from a misunderstood post, a technical difficulty to a fake picture. It shows that the worse thing a publication can do is ignore it. It is up to them to fix the issue and avoid having a permanent spot on their record in the eyes of the public. The analysis on the comments on Allure's Facebook page showed that the admin of the page responded to its users whenever they encountered certain issues. More than this, this attracted positive comments from the readers, even if they were suffering an inconvenience. In opposition, the research shows that the Sun newspaper rarely replies to its readers, which can sometimes push them away. All in all, it is important to pay attention to the posts on social media, but just as important to its effects. In case of a negative one, the company must own up to it and find a way to repair it.

Social Media Marketing

Taking into consideration the findings of this research, I can reveal various important factors into a social media campaign. An efficient social media campaign must clearly describe the objectives, assess the prospects and choose a suitable method of social media to communicate. The main issue to be overcome is to develop a company's ROI of its social media campaigns.

Nowadays' social sites are also preparing themselves with analytical abilities to evaluate the reach, spread and impact of a social media message. The literature review showed that there are various methods to increase brand awareness through social media. But one must use these carefully and avoid mishaps that can have the opposite effect. One of the main points that this research reveals is that the company needs to identify the social users who are both influential and particularly interested in the company's product or service category. The next step is to motivate those influencers to talk about the company's product or service. Using metrics, the organization would need to calculate the value of an individual's influence, in order to predict the user's capability to produce viral spread of material regarding the company. The web traffic analysis of the Guardian shows that the website has a large bounce rate, which means the users often surf away from the website. This has two possible reasons: either they are satisfied with the content or the content is not for them. This shows that websites need to use more compelling content on their homepage to keep the viewers interested. This project shows that social media sites like Facebook can be used to display articles and news customized to the user's choices and wants, similarly to the way in which Facebook utilises its social graph to direct ads to its members.

Interacting with users

The main issue is the competition with the huge amount of information and gossip on social media and whether or not the readers would be satisfied with this, since public figures like celebrities can communicate straight with their fan. But according to this research, people need the connection with

the editor for an unbiased view and/or opinion. Converse with the users
The analysis on the three publications showed the admin interaction rate is often close to 0, while other publications that are doing better in revenue and popularity are constantly address their audience. This is proof that users need more than just posts. They need to converse with the admins or editors
Redirect the conversation towards the user
Interviewing the two social media experts showed that journalists know the power of their voice and that they should use it with care. According to the experts interviewed, it is better to talk but also to listen. Readers like to give their own account onto things and journalists should always respect the reader's opinion as he is a representative of the brand and whatever he may say can be seen as the official view of the brand. This does not mean that the admin should keep quiet. On the contrary it point to the fact that the editors should redirect the conversation towards the user's needs and wants. It is common knowledge that people like to talk about themselves, which is one of the reason of the popularity of social sites. The analysis of Brides magazine's Facebook page, shows that users are more likely to respond to a question towards them rather than a post on an article. When their own experience is included in the discussion, they are happy to engage with admins and other users. Avoid shutting down ways of communication
The YouTube report, which shows that the Sun has the comment facility disabled on both channels, shows that the organisation is denying the very meaning of social media. While it is supposed to be a two-way channel, the tabloid does not allow interaction from users on YouTube. This may be one of the main factors responsible for the low number of subscribers. Respond quickly
The literature review points out the speed of information, which thanks to technology is not only great,

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but also vital. Brands recognise the value of the users' time. Just like responding in the proper way is important, the frequency is just as important. The Facebook and Twitter accounts of The Sun newspaper show that the publication doesn't answer questions. It is vital to respond and to do it fast. The readers is only a few clicks away from finding out the answer on a different website. And with such a wide amount of information online, when a publication is not being silent, he is entitled to move away. Use a personal tone in your response. All the comments analysed from various publications use a kind tone. The idea is that the reader will realise that it is not a robot handling their queries, but an actual person. Whenever a user sends a message from the contact page of a website he or she is usually sent an automated message saying their issue is being dealt with. This makes everything impersonal. The whole purpose of social media is to make it personal. Listen to the user. One of the most important elements is to actually take into account what the user is saying, and the interviews conducted support this. This is the case especially if there is a complaint. The analysis of the Allure magazine's social media showed admins are fast to respond to queries. Brides magazine also used what readers said as a way to improve what their website and content. The findings of this research are valid in today's market and assess a very present issue. I strongly believe that the findings can be applied to many publications that do not have the highest popularity and help digital magazine strengthen their social media presence. Due to a general nature, my recommendations can be employed on various publications with a wide target audience and a varied content.

Reflections and Conclusions

With every new trend, companies and individuals try and figure out the best way to use it their advantage. It is often that this is done by trial and error. But according to the latest figure which showed Facebook as the second most visited website in the world, social media is not just a trend. It has become a necessity and for brands, and in this case the brand of online publication, the organizations cannot afford trial and error. This is where this research comes into place. The aim of this research was to provide various strategies and tools used by online publications in order to increase their site traffic, their brand awareness and their revenues. The study used various research methods like web analytics, analyses, literature review and a public survey. The project showed a consistency in various themes like the constant use of Facebook and Twitter to access online content and the underestimation of YouTube by publications. The project manages to show the effect of social media, on online publications. Social sites have changed the way users perceive online media. The audience has various expectations and it is up to the organisations to meet them. The two-way channel involves users' presence as well as a multimedia experience for the reader. This research provide a guide with the right approach towards social media based on the research findings and gives advice on how to best implement social strategies which will benefit any online publication. Interacting with the user is difficult, especially since many publications prefer to avoid rather than do it wrong. The research gives an insight into engaging with the public in terms of the language style, frequency and content. On a reflective note of the project, I believe that the analysis of the way publications use social media and connecting this with their popularity, has been very beneficial towards <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-is-any-action-carried-out-media-essay/>

this study. Nonetheless, since I chose a start-up company as one of the research methods, this was not risk-free, as a new organization does not always have stability. I believe I would not attempt this again in the future. Taking this into account, I would think that for this research doing an internship in the social media department of an online magazine would have helped me experience the environment and observe the way social media campaigns are planned and implemented. In the future this study can be continued by actually applying in an online publications with limited popularity, the tactics and social media strategies uncovered and the theories in relation to engaging with users and observe any changes in popularity, traffic and user engagements over a longer period of time. In addition it would be interesting to add to this research project some information regarding the impact of mobile apps and the way mobile journalism has changed the way online news are consumed. To put it in a nutshell, this research has proven that the impact of social media on online publications is substantial and that digital magazines must tread lightly on social sites. Lightly, but surely. It is up to the publication to extend an invitation to the users and maintain an adequate social environment. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the users will respond.