THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING IN SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Social media are increasingly emerging as a source of competitive advantage, as a means of reaching and engaging consumers, and as a source of consumer insight. This paper identifies challenges associated with the implementation of social media as perceived by senior marketers. Using a qualitative thematic analysis methodology, we identify differences between entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial organisations in social media implementation. It is proposed that entrepreneurial marketing may provide theoretical guidelines for implementation of social media. The paper concludes with research propositions that will test the effectiveness of entrepreneurial marketing in overcoming the implementation challenges of social media.

INTRODUCTION

Social media (known colloquially as Web 2.0) are having a pervasive effect on the marketing strategy of organisations (Barnes and Mattson 2008; Smith 2008; Mangold and Faulds 2009; Barnes 2010) and marketing communications budgets (Moorman 2010). Social media refer to such technology and communities as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Wikipedia, YouTube, Flickr and so forth and are rapidly taking over many of the traditional marketing communications and traditional market research roles (Barnes 2010). Why are businesses adopting social media? The reasons are broad and diverse and include enhanced competitive advantage, better engagement with consumers, collaboration with stakeholders, co-production with consumers.

Previous research into digital media, of which social media are a subset, has highlighted implementation challenges faced by organisations (Bushley 2010). These include: the risk of losing control of marketing (Pauker Kreitzberg 2009); integrating digital media to create value (Manyika, Roberts et al. 2008; Nath, Singh et al. 2010); measuring return on investment (ROI) (Fisher 2009); internal structure and culture (Chui, Miller et al. 2009); managing risk (Chui, Miller et al. 2009); understanding the role of social media (Saperstein and Hastings 2010); and winning stakeholder support (Chakravorti 2010). The challenges that marketers face include: complexity of managing a greater number of media channels (Wilson and Daniel 2007); and misunderstanding the roles that social and digital media can play vis-à-vis traditional marketing media tools (van Dijk, Minocha et al. 2007).

In this study, we examine how the theory of entrepreneurial marketing (EM) may provide guidelines in social media use in businesses and organisations. We start with the definition that “entrepreneurial marketing is the pro-active identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining appropriate stakeholders through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation” (Maritz 2008). In other words, just like all entrepreneurial organisations, entrepreneurial marketing organisations are those demonstrate pro-active opportunity evaluation (Shane and Venkataraman 2000), risk management and taking, resource leveraging, and value creation (Maritz and Nieman 2008).

This study uses qualitative insights drawn from a thematic analysis (Aromson 1994) of senior marketing executives and from the theory of entrepreneurial marketing in order to identify testable research propositions. Drawing upon Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), we seek to extract factors and
constructs that might lead to meso-level theory from survey evidence. Our goal was to compile and organise these constructs in a way that could advanced future theory-building using an inductive approach. Following van Maanen (1983), we sought “to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world”.

The paper does this by examining how social media are implemented by entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial organisations and what impact entrepreneurial marketing might have on decision-making to opt for social media. Theory-building is just beginning in this field and these data can help create testable propositions to establish if entrepreneurial marketers are more likely to successfully overcome the implementation challenges of social media.

The contribution of the paper is to aid in the development of guidelines for social media opportunity analysis and social media implementation. We seek to guide organisations in a) assessing if they have characteristics required to implement social media, and b) identifying which characteristics these organisations may need to change or acquire successful implementation of social media.

The next sections of the paper present an overview of the entrepreneurial marketing and social media literatures. Next, the methodology used to obtain insights from senior marketers into the challenges of implementing social media is presented. Discussions of the findings in terms of comparing entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial organisations and the efficacy of entrepreneurial marketing characteristics are then presented. The final section of the paper provides conclusions and research propositions arising from the results that can be empirically tested in future research.

LITERATURE

In this section, we would like to begin to tie together the disparate strands that we maintain constitute the emerging field of entrepreneurial social media marketing.

Entrepreneurial marketing

The continued development and evolution of entrepreneurial marketing as a concept suggests it can provide guidance to organisations implementing social media and Web 2.0. This is because entrepreneurial marketing focuses on the opportunistic mindset, which is more likely to be present in a) organisations implementing social media and b) organisations with creative solutions to implementation problems.

The development of entrepreneurial marketing has evolved over three decades (Collinson and Shaw 2001). Early work in this domain focused on issues associated with the overlap between conventional marketing theories and marketing theories more consonant with the entrepreneurship literature (Hills, Hultman et al. 2008). Traditional marketing is seen to operate in a consistent environment, where market conditions are continuous and where the organisation satisfies clearly perceived customer needs. Entrepreneurial marketing, in contrast, operates in an uncertain environment, where market conditions are discontinuous and where the needs of the market and stakeholders are as yet unclear. The early 1990s saw scholars working on the areas of the interface between these two approaches, which has now been developed within mainstream marketing research. Further enhancement has seen the identification and conceptualisation of a unique academic theory of entrepreneurial marketing (Morris, Schindehutte et al. 2002), complemented by entrepreneurial marketing practice theory (Maritz 2008). One can see the further integration of EM in the American Marketing Association (AMA) definition of Marketing, placing emphasis on managing customer relationships to benefit the organisation and stakeholders. An implication from this for EM is social networking and relationships with customers and other stakeholders as the foundation. It is often the capability that allows EM firms to gain advantage entrepreneurship (Hills, Hultman et al. 2008).

Social media require organisations to have a pro-active and opportunistic mindset. Morris et al (2002:13) define this as “the pro-active identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation.” This runs hand in hand with an entrepreneurial orientation and the managing of opportunities as opposed to the managing of resources (Maritz 2008). This train of thought encapsulates the interface between entrepreneurship and marketing, and serves as an umbrella for a myriad of emerging prospective marketing initiatives and innovations. Schindehutte, Morris and Pitt (2009) deepen this insight by contrasting conventional marketing with entrepreneurial marketing through the fundamentals of their basic premise, orientation, context, marketer’s role, market approach, customer needs, risk perspective, resource management, new product/service development and the
customer’s role. To this end, Morris et al (2002) emphasize this integration through the dimensions of pro-active orientation, opportunity-driven, customer-intensity, innovation-focused, risk management, resource leveraging and value creation. One can see that these dimensions are similar to the elements of entrepreneurship itself, such as opportunity evaluation (Shane and Venkataraman 2000). Notwithstanding, Morris et al (2002) provide a substantial addition to the body of knowledge by applying and contrasting marketing culture, strategy and tactics to these facets of entrepreneurship. Such cross-overs include services marketing, relationship marketing, e-marketing and guerrilla marketing.

Table 1 Entrepreneurial marketing characteristics that relate to social media implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Sector</th>
<th>Value creation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-activeness</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploiting opportunities</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management</td>
<td>Market orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource leveraging</td>
<td>Internal venture orientation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Marketing as practical implementation theory

Implementing social media requires a sometimes risky trial and error and experimentation by organisations. This means a practitioner-based, applied orientation may be more relevant than academic theory. This then brings up the long-recognised unresolved tension between theory and practice in the field of entrepreneurship (Rae 2004). We thus need to examine the terminology of entrepreneurial marketing, scrutinising especially how theoretical concepts can be applied to actual practice. Where academic theory is abstract, generalized, and explicit, and seeks to be provable or at least testable, practical theory is different. Practical theory emerges from the implicit, intuitive, tacit and situated scene of practice and from the rich experiences of real-world phenomena. Practical theories as “articulated” by real entrepreneurs contribute to the theoretical understandings of academic theory, thus bridging the artificial divide between theoretical knowing and practical action (Rae 2004). Practical theory gives testimony to learning from failure (Gulst and Maritz 2009). Organisations that are implementing social media learn from early failures as an experiment and take a “suck it and see” approach to discover what works, thus inventing their own theory to describe their phenomena.

A conceptual definition of entrepreneurial marketing (EM)

Just as there are multiple definitions of social media, and their technological platforms are constant changing, so too there is no agreed definition of entrepreneurial marketing despite the vast increase in the literature, and despite the commonalities between marketing and entrepreneurship having been identified (Hills and LaForge 1992). This may be because EM is characterised by responsiveness to the environment and an intuitive ability to anticipate changes in customer demands (Shaw 2004). It is our view that an adaptation of the Morris et al (2002) page number definition serves as the basis for this research, to wit: **Entrepreneurial marketing is the pro-active identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining appropriate stakeholders through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation.**

We prefer “stakeholders” over “customers”, as marketing activities today incorporate relationships not just with buying customers but also with others who have an interest in the success of an organization in delivering products and services. We also prefer “value creation” over “profit”, as this latter excludes the value-adding activities of social entrepreneurship (Morris, Schindehutte et al. 2002; Shaw 2004). Key conceptual links between entrepreneurship and social media include opportunity evaluation, risk, resources (Shane and Venkataraman 2000) and value (Maritz and Nieman 2008). pro-active identification mirrors entrepreneurial orientation (Maritz 2006). The acquisition and retention of stakeholders incorporates the service profit chain (Maritz & Nieman 2008). Furthermore, innovative approaches reflect the integration of innovative marketing (Maritz and Nieman 2005) and EM. We place emphasis on the relationship between entrepreneurship and radical innovation, whereby innovation transforms existing markets, creates new markets, and stimulates economic growth (Shaw 2004). Finally, it is important to note that we define EM as a process (Martin, 2009) not limited to the entrepreneurial small or medium-size business but also adaptable to corporate venturing within large organisations (Covin and Miles 1999; Zahra, Nielsen et al. 1999).
Marketing for entrepreneurs

There is a body of thought that entrepreneurs do not conform to traditional marketing methods largely due to scarcity of resources. This does not mean that EM initiatives are sub-standard or inferior to traditional marketing strategies. In fact, many EM initiatives listed in this article were well strategised and competently implemented. From their success it is apparent that they have provided exceptional value to their ventures.

Nonetheless, an opportunity certainly exists to compare the effectiveness of such EM initiatives against traditional measures, obviously taking cognizance of resource allocation or scarcity. This opens a new avenue for research in EM. It may well be documented that EM means marketing for entrepreneurs, corporate venturers, and for initiatives within entrepreneurial contexts. However, EM may also be associated with initiatives in other entrepreneurial contexts, such as innovative marketing applications and solutions within the social media space.

The EM link with entrepreneurial orientation (Maritz 2006), opportunity evaluation (Morris et al, 2002), market orientation (Maritz 2006) and internal venture orientation (Maritz & Nieman 2005) cannot be over-emphasized. After all, it is a combination of these factors that enhance the effectiveness of entrepreneurial marketing applications (Maritz et al 2010) and in particular the implementation of social media.

In summary, it can be seen that entrepreneurial marketing must incorporate the characteristics of organisations most likely to implement change successfully, which in the case of this paper is the type of change required to embrace and successfully implement social media.

A strategic typology of entrepreneurial marketing

One way to deepen our understanding of those characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing that affect the take-up and successful implementation of social media is to examine a useful typology provided by Miles and Snow (1978). These authors provide insights into organisations that undertake entrepreneurial marketing and successful social media implementation. They describe three business strategies—Prospect, Defender, and Analyser—that evince differing degrees of how organisational structure (especially decision making process, human resource, and control systems) can adapt to the external environment.

- **Prospectors** are the most entrepreneurial. They achieve competitive advantage through being first into new markets with new products. The Prospector is innovative and entrepreneurial, and adapts to new technology well. Prospectors invest more in new innovative features and building brand equity than the other strategic types.

- **Defenders** achieve competitive advantage by becoming more efficient with older less innovative and less technologically advanced products and activities. Defenders tend to provide the highest quality products and excellent customer service.

- Finally, **Analysers** are Prospectors in some respects and Defenders in others. In terms of the entrepreneurial dimension, Analysers are midway between the most entrepreneurial Prospector and the non-entrepreneurial Defender. Analysers are usually the second to market with improved products more efficiently produced than prospectors.

On first view, one might expect that the Prospector, being most entrepreneurial, would be the first to implement social media. But it might equally the case that the Analyser is the one who can overcome implementation problems. Meanwhile, the Defender might be last to embrace social media and least able to adapt to the internal changes required for successful implementation, at least in the short term. However, over time, as the role and implementation aspects of social media become well understood, the Defender might adopt and catch up.

Social media vs. “generic” digital marketing media

Here we would like to distinguish between four types of marketing communication. Marketing communication can be either “digital” (like the Internet) or “traditional” like newspapers and television (even though TV is electronic). Digital channels are interactive and traditional channels are usually one-way, which is why television, though increasingly digital, falls under this category. Furthermore, marketing communication can be “push” (push your content towards the audience) or “pull” (the customer pulls your content because they are interested in learning more). Push marketing involves both the marketer (creator of the message) as well as the recipients (the user). Pull marketing involves
the user having to seek out and directly select (or pull) the content. Push and pull message technologies can also be used in conjunction with each other.

So we distinguish four types:

Table 2 Digital, traditional, push and pull channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digital</th>
<th>Pull</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phones, SMS/MMS,</td>
<td>Web search, Web site, blogs, streaming media (audio and video), IM,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>display / banner ads,</td>
<td>Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, Flickr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email, RSS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio, television,</td>
<td>Letter campaigns, telephone campaigns, relationship marketing,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspapers, magazines,</td>
<td>direct marketing, public relations, community events, press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outdoor advertising.</td>
<td>conferences, word of mouth, events and concerts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In essence, this study is focused the role of entrepreneurial marketing in digital/pull media, which we characterise as social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, and Flickr. Again, it is important to note that a “traditional” channel can be electronic or physical. What matters is whether it is largely uni-directional. This leads to our definitions:

- “Digital Push Marketing” is a one-way, asynchronous, anonymous Internet “push” medium from a single sender to a mass audience of dispersed individuals. The marketer has to send (push) the messages to the users (subscribers) in order for the message to be received. Feedback is time-shifted, if at all.

- “Digital Pull Marketing” (also known as Digital Social Marketing) is a “pull” or opt-in medium where users and advertisers “co-create” content.

- “Traditional Push Marketing” is a non-interactive, one-way, asynchronous, anonymous, technologically transferred (but non-Internet) medium from a single sender to a mass audience of dispersed individuals. Feedback is time-shifted, if at all. It can be both electronic and non-electronic.

- “Traditional Pull Marketing” is the interactive (bi-directional), synchronous, reciprocal interaction (exchange of marketing information) between senders and receivers (individuals).

Multi-channel complexity

The literature highlights how complex the process is to combine digital and traditional channels. Coelho et al. (2003) state that when moving to multiple channels, organisations face more complex channel design decisions to obtain increased benefits. The introduction of the Internet and other digital channels has increased the chances of organisations making strategic errors arising from increasing channel complexity. The great increase in digital channels is not necessarily reducing the number of traditional channels being used, rather there are more channels that need to be managed and greater implementation complexity (Wilson and Daniel 2007). This leads to increased chances of poor organisational performance when implementing multi-channel marketing communications. However, multiple channels also present an opportunity for organisations that make effective channel decisions to distance themselves from competitors who are less effective in implementing a multi-channel strategy or who remain champions of a single channel.

Further, the complexity associated with implementing and managing multi-channel marketing is made more complicated as consumers are increasingly moving between channels at different stages of their purchase process. To improve multi-channel decision making, marketers must understand consumer motivations and how they use alternative channels (Van Dijk, Minocha et al. 2007).

The role of entrepreneurial marketing in overcoming the challenges of social media

The characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing discussed above would appear to be useful for organisations evaluating or implementing social media. They address both strategy formulation and
strategy implementation. Although social media (or Web 2.0) are having a pervasive effect on the marketing strategy of organisations, a number of implementation problems are identified below. The reasons for organisations introducing social media as part of the communication mix include: gaining competitive advantage (Smith 2008) (Chen 2009), superior engagement with consumers (Mangold and Faulds 2009), monitoring consumers (Barnes 2010), collaboration with stakeholders and partners (Nath, Singh et al. 2010), co-creation of products with consumers (Manyika, Roberts et al. 2008) and reaching consumers more efficiently as they reduce consumption of traditional media (Mangold and Faulds 2009). At the present time, there seem to be many worthy reasons to experiment and/or introduce a social media strategy.

However, there are many and varied challenges faced by organisations implementing social media. These include: risk of losing control of marketing (Pauker Kreitzberg 2009); monetising social media to create actual value (Manyika, Roberts et al. 2008; Nath, Singh et al. 2010); measuring and validating ROI (Fisher 2009); internal structure and culture (Chui, Miller et al. 2009); managing risk (Chui, Miller et al. 2009); comprehending the role of social media (Saperstein and Hastings 2010) (van Dijk, Minocha et al. 2007); and winning stakeholder support (Chakravorti 2010); and the complexity of managing a greater number of media (Wilson and Daniel 2007). Social marketers face special difficulties that include lack of precedent; threat to the status quo; and the rapidly changing dynamic nature of social media.

Research provides a number of best practice implementation principles. To some degree these principles overlap the characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing discussed earlier. (Chui, Miller et al. 2009) identified the following best practices: the need for a bottom up culture; user input; integration within existing workflows; experimenting to find sources of the best ideas on role of social media; being comfortable with risk and change and discontinuity.

This is why we believe that the theory of entrepreneurial marketing may provide guidelines for organisations based on the characteristics or components of the theory. Entrepreneurial organisations are those demonstrate pro-active opportunity evaluation (Shane and Venkataraman 2000), risk management and taking resource leveraging and value creation (Maritz and Nieman 2008). These are certainly relevant in the age of social media. As a result, the following three research questions address the potential of entrepreneurial marketing to guide organisations in terms of social media decision-making and implementation:

- What characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing enhance the ability of organisations to correctly evaluate the potential of social media?
- What characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing enhance the abilities of organisations to successfully implement social media?
- Do organisations that conduct entrepreneurial marketing implement social media more successfully than non-entrepreneurial marketing organisations?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Thematic analysis**

This research takes a qualitative approach to examine issues associated with social media implementation so that we and other researchers can develop testable propositions. A number of previous researchers have also used qualitative research methodologies to develop marketing theory (Bonomo 1985; Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Frazier and Antia 1995; Workman, Homburg et al. 1998), including Frazier and Antia (1995), who used a qualitative methodology to develop marketing channel theory.

The qualitative methodology of thematic analysis with the aim of exploring senior marketers views was chosen as a prelude to a later quantitative methodology using a questionnaire (Zhang, Xu et al. 2009). With the goal of developing propositions, the complexity and dynamism associated with social media was deemed to be more suitable to discovery-oriented research, especially since the terms used to discuss strategy implementation are value-laden and difficult clearly to define. We used open-ended in-depth interviews to help identify the key dimensions relevant to the research problem (Zhang, Xu et al. 2009). While the small sample means that one-off cases studies are not generalisable, but they do have the benefit in eliciting detailed insights (Braun and Clarke 2006) provided which enables the building of research propositions suitable for quantitative testing.
Thematic analysis is an extensively used method for developing meaning from verbal responses from respondents (Aronson 1994). This qualitative method provides themes based on responses that allow us better to understand a given process (Aronson 1994), in our case the implementation of social media. Thematic analysis provides meaning to fragments of ideas by providing a holistic “sense making” context (Leininger 1985) and that may be overlooked using alternative approaches. Finally, the choice of a qualitative method such as thematic analysis used with a purposive yet small sample allows an understanding of a range of attitudes required to develop research propositions as opposed to resulting in generalisable findings (Warwick and Liniger 1975).

**Sampling**

In our case, the number of senior marketing managers in Melbourne’s “big end of town” is not precisely known but is like not bigger than 200 individuals. We employed purposive sampling of senior marketing executives in order to obtain respondents with significant responsibility (Shiell, Hawe et al. 2009) and/or deep knowledge of social media. The participants can hence be considered “expert informants” and highly relevant to the research objectives. Respondents were selected from a cross-section of industrial sectors to ensure that the diversity of the industries provided more comprehensive understanding of the key challenges in social media.

Respondent recruitment was stopped when we reach “saturation”, namely that additional respondents were not raising new themes (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Respondent numbers of thirteen were considered to be adequate to achieve saturation of a qualitatively analysed topic which have been as low as thirteen in previous studies (Guest, Bunce et al. 2006). Table 4 Industry sector of respondents provides respondent industry characteristics.

**Data collection**

Our methodological protocol followed the guidelines proposed by Gilly and Wolfinbarger (1998) and Ramaseshan and Pitt (1990) for open-ended qualitative data collection. A pilot test was undertaken where the proposed question was sent to three academics and one practitioner to ensure question clarity and relevance, which resulted in minor wording changes. Respondents were requested to limit their feedback to 75 words. This was done to take into consideration the tight time schedules of the senior marketers and to identify their top of mind issues. Forty-two potential participants from a cross-section of industry sectors were e-mailed and invited to participate, which was followed up with one reminder. Of the initial forty-two managers contacted, thirteen responded over a two week period. Responses were anonymised (Shiell, Hawe et al. 2009). The senior marketers were asked to respond to the three questions:

- **Q.1.** In 75 words or less, what is the biggest challenge your organisation faces in implementing a social media strategy within your communications strategy?
- **Q.2.** In 75 words or less, how would you describe your intended role for a social media strategy?

The third and final question in the survey asked the senior marketers to choose from four paragraph descriptions of an organisation’s degree of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Table 3 Survey questions regarding entrepreneurial type
One researcher undertook thematic analysis (Miles and Huberman 2006) to identify concepts emerging from the responses and to develop themes. Themes were defined as patterns in the responses (Aronson 1994) and included topics, meanings or feelings contained within the responses (Taylor and Bogdan 1984). A second researcher then independently reviewed the classification of responses according to themes in order to ensure adequate fit. There was 100% consistency in assessments and thus no formal assessments of inter-coder reliability were undertaken.

The final stage of the thematic analysis involved integrating the literature to add a richer understanding and justify the themes identified (Aronson 1994). This stage confirmed the validity of the themes. In the following discussion we have incorporated appropriate quotes from the respondents to illustrate and clarify the themes (Shiell, Hawe et al. 2009).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Of the thirteen respondents in Table 2, the most common job titles were “Marketing Manager”, “General Manager Marketing”, and “Head of Marketing”. The respondents represented a broad range of industry sectors, with banking and finance being the most common. This ensured that a broad range of issues was identified.

Table 4 Industry sector of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Sector</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banking/Finance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMCG</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The qualitative data were examined to categorise the challenges associated with implementing social media according to strategy type as discussed above, namely that the Prospector strategy (2 respondents) would be the most entrepreneurial, the Analyser (ten respondents) evenly balance
between entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial, and the reactor (1 respondent) not having a clear strategy. There were no Defenders in this study, with the Defender strategy being the least entrepreneurial of the Miles and Snow types. The italicised direct quotes relate to specific issues raised by the senior marketers and are de-identified to protect the identity of the respondent and their organisations.

The role of social media

Analysers - Of the thirteen respondents, ten were Analysers or a mixture of entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial activities and characteristics. Of the ten, four had no role for social media in their marketing communications, two had an emerging role, and four were embracing social media. The roles for which social media were used included:

Table 5 Roles of social media - Analysers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand building in communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching consumers in new channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining feedback /monitoring the conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing brand propositions in communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extending traditional communications in a low-cost way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to comments to protect the brand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some respondents listed more than one role for social media

One quote that summed up an integrative perspective to social media was:

*The primary role of our social media strategy is to provide additional channels for client engagement. This encompasses a number of areas – to develop and improve brand engagement, including providing ways to personalise the brand experience; to provide help and support on using products, including connecting together our community of users; as an avenue for client feedback; and as a channel for delivering information.*

Entrepreneurial organisations are those demonstrate pro-active opportunity evaluation (Shane and Venkataraman 2000), risk management and taking, resource leveraging and value creation (Maritz & Nieman, 2008). In terms of analysers, it would appear social media is not always appropriate. The ability to evaluate an opportunity is critical in making this decision.

Prospectors - Of the thirteen respondents, two were classified as Prospectors; they were the most entrepreneurial, adaptive and innovative of the Miles and Snow types. Although the sample is small, both Prospectors in the study embrace social media. The question arises, was this because they have the core capabilities to overcome implementation barriers, or because they have the ability to leverage any new opportunity (Shane and Venkataraman 2000), or asset . According to one respondent “(social media can) *Position our company positively in the market, help generate interest and leads*”.

Reactors - Of the thirteen respondents, one was a Reactor, which is the least coherent strategy and least coherent organisational configuration within the Miles and Snow types. As can be expected, the role of social media in marketing communications was not pro-active “*Currently it is reactive, one of monitoring references to the organisation, and where appropriate, responding to issues which may be raised via social media*”.

Defender - Surprisingly, there were no Defenders amongst the thirteen respondents. It was expected that a defender would be the least able to assess and innovative external opportunity such as social media. If social media were to have a role for defenders, it could be in reducing the cost of customer contact or distribution.

In summary the qualitative responses provided an indication of the diverse roles in which social media is being used. However, with ten of the thirteen respondents being analysers, more thorough comparisons between types were not possible. Within the analyser group, there was a mix of users and non-users, which is to be expected, since strategy is not strongly entrepreneurial or strongly defensive.

The implementation challenges of social media
Analysers - As discussed earlier, of the thirteen respondents, ten were Analysers, who are a mixture of entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial activities and characteristics. Table 4 shows the six main challenges in implementing social media for Analysers.

Table 6 Implementation challenges of social media – Analysers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Challenge*</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educating internal stakeholders as to the role of social media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Determining location of authority and responsibility for social media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding type and amount of value social media adds</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less relevant for B2B organisations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk of giving up control of message in order to be authentic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having something valuable to say in ongoing way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining implementation between and/or within departments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some respondents listed more than one implementation challenge for social media

The types of characteristics of entrepreneurial organisations would appear to assist organisations in implementing social media include opportunity evaluation (Shane and Venkataraman 2000), risk management and taking, and resource leveraging and value creation (Maritz & Nyman, 2008). In other words, marketers who implement social media face challenges in a) planning; b) doing; and c) monitoring the effectiveness of social media.

Prospectors - Of the thirteen respondents, two were Prospectors, who both were using social media although one having a limited role. They listed a range of implementation barriers. These included one respondent saying “a fragmented approach”, and “(social media) lacks any history to enable us to understand the results we can drive”. The other Prospector made two points, “Many people within the organisation are simply unaware of the commercial potential for social media” and “cross functional departmental understanding of potential impacts”. These issues both relate to traits of Entrepreneurial marketing, namely pro-active opportunity identification (Maritz 2006) integrating stakeholders with the service profit chain (Maritz & Nieman, 2008).

Reactors - Of the thirteen respondents, the single Reactor was not implementing social media and provided the following reasons: “(lack of) agreement at senior levels”, “(lack of) understanding of our members’ appetite for this medium”, “other priorities in our marketing communications strategy”. A reactor would be expected to have many implementation problems with a lack of alignment between strategy and implementation.

Defender - With no defenders in this study, it can only be speculated that the rigid processes and structures combined with a top-down decision-making of a Defender would hinder the implementation of social media. In a study by Chui et al (2010), the organisations that had successfully implemented social media had devolved authority and developed flexible tasks and processes. In contrast, the culture and strategy of a Defender is to avoid the cost of experimentation and innovation, which is important for the implementation of social media.

In summary, the qualitative responses provided an indication of the implementation challenges faced by the respondents. The challenges range from the internal (organisational structure) to external (message control and creation).

One limitation of the study concerned ten of the thirteen respondents being Analysers. This prevented a tentative answer to the final research question being reached. “Do organisations that conduct entrepreneurial marketing implement social media more successfully than non-entrepreneurial marketing organisations?” With more of the entrepreneurial Prospectors and the non-entrepreneurial Defenders in the study, a comparison of social media introduction and/or success between types could have been done.
CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

The findings of this study suggest the theory of entrepreneurial marketing can provide guidance for marketers in terms of, firstly, assessing the potential value that social media offer, and, secondly, overcoming the challenges of implementing social media. Our contribution is to propose research propositions based on the perception of senior marketers regarding the use and implementation of social media as part of marketing communications.

The responses of the senior marketers suggest a number of research propositions that can be explored in future research on the implementation of social media.

- P1: Entrepreneurial marketing organisations will be more likely to utilise social media.
- P2: Entrepreneurial marketing organisations will be more likely to assess the value of social media accurately.
- P3: Entrepreneurial marketing organisations will be more likely to overcome implementation challenges of social media.
- P4: The characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing organisations such as Pro-activeness, risk taking, risk management, resource leveraging, value creation and innovation will assist organisations overcome the challenges of implementing social media.

In summary, the exploratory findings of this study are a preliminary step on the path to a greater understanding of how organisations can a) evaluate; and b) implement social media.
REFERENCES


