

**Individual and Firm Participation in Social Media Marketing:
A Review and Synthesis of the Literature**

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Introduction

Organizations have realized social media to be a new set of business processes and operations (Hanna et al. 2011) that may help firms increase sales (Dewan and Ramaprasad 2014), manage customer relationships (Laroche et al. 2013), and monitor brand evaluations (Naylor et al. 2012). In the marketing literature, scholars have specifically emphasized the effects of online word of mouth through social media activities (Kimmel and Kitchen 2014).

Although the importance of social media has been studied at both the individual and organizational levels, we still have a limited and incomplete understanding of the various individual and firm behaviors occurring in social media. Thus, based on the systematic review of 43 representative studies, we conduct a multi-dimensional analysis of individual and firm participation in social media, summarizing key research issues in the current literature and suggesting important questions for future research.

Research Method

We conducted our study by following the concept-driven systematic review method (Webster and Watson 2002). Related studies derived from a keyword “social media” are included in our analysis and synthesis. We had conducted our search, ended in March 2015, through EBSCO database which covers the majority of

publications in business and management. Our criteria were to include only peer-reviewed publications in reputable journals in management, marketing, and management information system (MIS).

Our initial search resulted in 89 articles which potentially represented our primary research focus. We further analyzed the abstracts of the 89 articles and only retained 43 relevant studies representing social media research primarily in the marketing field.

Results and Discussion

To organize our major findings, we follow King et al., (2014)'s framework and provide our results in Table 1. The antecedents and consequences for both individual and firm behaviors on social media constitute the primary focus of this study. At the individual level, we enumerate antecedents of people's participation in social media (Q1) and its consequences (Q2). Similarly, we summarize the antecedents and consequences of social media participation at the firm level (Q3 & Q4). In addition, we identify four research questions that managers and social media scholars have encountered but have yet to be fully understood. We discuss several ways of moving the social media research forward on these important questions. As much research is involved on social media, this study will help managers in utilizing social media to better understand customer behaviors on social media and enhance firm's various performances.

Table 1. Social Media Framework

<p>Q1: Antecedents of people’s participation on social media</p>	<p>Q2: Consequences to individuals</p>
<p>Social interaction (Croft 2013; Phang et al. 2013; Toubia and Stephen 2013)</p> <p>Knowledge thriving (Fischer and Reuber 2011; Rishika et al. 2013; Rollins et al. 2014)</p> <p>Community commitment (Bateman et al. 2011; Jiang et al. 2014; Moe and Schweidel 2012)</p> <p>RQ1: <i>What factors influence customers in deciding which social media platforms they will participate?</i></p>	<p>Knowledge enhancement (Fischer and Reuber 2011; Rollins et al. 2014)</p> <p>Purchasing decision (Goh et al. 2013; Phang et al. 2013)</p> <p>RQ2: <i>How participation in different social media platforms impact individual decision?</i></p>
<p>Q3: Antecedents of firms’ participation on social media</p>	<p>Q4: Consequences to firms</p>
<p>Reputation and impression management (Rokka et al. 2014; Schniederjans et al. 2013)</p> <p>Managing marketing strategies (Kozinets</p>	<p>Brand equity (Fischer and Reuber 2014; Kumar et al. 2013; Laroche et al. 2013; Naylor et al. 2012; Oestreicher-Singer and Sundararajan 2012; Rapp et al. 2013; Rishika et al. 2013)</p> <p>Firm value (Jiang et al. 2014; Luo and</p>

<p>et al. 2010; Schulze et al. 2014)</p> <p>RQ3: <i>Which marketing strategies are applicable on social media?</i></p>	<p>Zhang 2013; Nam and Kannan 2014; Schniederjans et al. 2013; Yu et al. 2013)</p> <p>Sales (Dewan and Ramaprasad 2014; Gopinath et al. 2013; Rui et al. 2013; Stephen and Galak 2012)</p> <p>RQ4: <i>What are the impacts of social media to the structuring of a firm's business model?</i></p>
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References Available Upon Request