Communication Strategies Used in Corporate Facebook Pages and Motivations of Consumers for Following These Pages

Gülçin İpek Emeksiz

*Communication Sciences Faculty
Anadolu University Eskisehir, Turkey*

Ali Şimşek

*Communication Sciences Faculty,
Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey*

Abstract

The new communication tool of our current era is certainly Facebook because it is the most commonly used social network application in the world. Therefore, consumers perceive businesses which are not a member of Facebook as a business which cannot keep up with the new era and thus they want their favourite brands to be on Facebook. However, for businesses to be on Facebook is not just about opening a profile page. Businesses need to create a brand community that they get into interaction with their stakeholders in order to gain dynamism and mobility to their Facebook brand fan pages. Therefore, businesses need a variety of effective corporate communication strategies that they can apply on their Facebook pages. The corporate communication strategy that a business employs on Facebook should be compatible with the goals and purposes that a business wants to reach. A business which use a certain corporate communication strategy on Facebook will determine the contents that it will share on Facebook in line with this strategy and will create the desired perception on its target audience. On the other hand, a business which doesn't apply a particular corporate communication strategy on Facebook probably doesn't know which goals that it wants to reach. Therefore, businesses which share random contents on their Facebook pages try to continue their Facebook pages by trial and error. However, because of this situation, they cannot get the desired effectiveness, appeal and efficiency from their Facebook pages in the long term. Furthermore, stakeholders need some level of motivation in order to follow businesses on Facebook. If a business knows what the motives of usage are, it can shape its Facebook messages in the right direction. This way, more followers will gather around the brand community of the business on Facebook.

Keywords: Facebook, Corporate Communication, Social Media, Communication Strategy

1. Introduction

Corporate communication is a strategic form of communication that governs business relationships with internal and external stakeholders and is used to shape the perceptions of these stakeholders. Corporate communication, which is a vital management function, helps to sustain, change or improve corporate reputation by integrating the internal and external communication activities of the business (Mazzei, 2014: 222).

Internal communication is necessary for the day-to-day workflow in enterprises, for coordination among employees, and for reaching the objectives that the business aims. In situations where internal communication is unhealthy, employees complain of lack of communication because the employees who need to be informed in the hierarchical structure of the institution are not informed in time. For this reason, a well-functioning internal communication takes place when information is transferred from upper management to employees and from employees to the upper management bidirectionally and without any difference.

External communication is the communication that a business creates with its external stakeholders, customers, investors, media representatives, and government officials. In external communications, businesses persuade their external stakeholders to buy products and services they design, to invest in their own businesses, to use state incentives easier, and to become a well-known business by using public relations and marketing communication.

With the widespread use of social media based on Web 2.0 technology, businesses have become able to communicate their corporate communication activities to their internal and external stakeholders more easily, quickly and at a lower cost than traditional media. Businesses that want to take advantage of the opportunities offered by social media have begun using social networking sites like Facebook in external communications to shape the perceptions of their stakeholders.

Being in social media has become a necessity for today's businesses. Nowadays, businesses need to open enterprise business pages on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to be more visible, to spread information about the business, to build stronger relationships with customers, to increase sales, to strengthen the image and reputation of the business and to cope with competitiveness. Especially since the structure of social media enables two way communication which is from business to customer and from customer to business, social networking sites provide significant opportunities to businesses to improve communication with their customers. Thus, conventional mass communication tools which are television, radio,

newspapers and magazines that allow one-way communication has started to lose their effectiveness compared to social media.

In particular, researches conducted in the U.S.A point to a decline in the usage of traditional communication tools. Schaefer (2014: 10) highlighted that the newspaper advertising incomes of the U.S.A. Journalism Society has declined to the levels in 1950s and most of the big newspapers which has a wide influence area has been losing its circulation. According to the 2015 New Media report of the Pew Research Center, when the newspaper advertising incomes are compared with a decade ago, it is seen that they descend half below than a decade ago and they are declined to 19.9 billion dollars (Mitchell, 2015: 6).

The decline in traditional media consumption was also observed in television viewing rates. Neilsen Media Research noted that there is a reduction in television hours watched by Americans and noted that Americans now use media providers such as Hulu and Netflix while watching their favourite programs (Schaefer, 2014: 10). Again, according to the Pew Research Center's 2015 New Media Report, well-known channels such as Fox, MSNBC and CNN on cable TV are down by 8% during the prime-time hours.

In addition, web sites have lost momentum in their click ratios as compared to the past. Between the years 2010 and 2012, two-thirds of the Fortune 500 companies, among the world's largest and most respected companies, were able to pull fewer people to their web sites (Schaefer, 2014: 10). In the face of such a decrease in use of traditional media tools, social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Wordpress have gone through a boom. The increasing number of social media users and the high rate of time spent on social media have caused social media, which is faster and cheaper than traditional media, to rise against traditional media.

2. Social Media Usage in Corporate Communication

Social media has started to be used at high rates in the field of corporate communication. When large corporations' approach to social media is considered, it is seen that the vast majority of Fortune 2000 businesses in the U.S. nearly its 69% use social media and 37% of these businesses plan to increase their social media usage within the next five years (McCorkindale, 2010). According to the Fortune 500 rankings in 2014, 157 of these big American companies (31%) have blogs, 413 of them (%83) have a Twitter account and 401 of them (%80) have Facebook accounts (Barnes and Lescault, 2014).

According to the Social Media Examiner's 2015 report, the primary purpose of US businesses to use social media is to create a loyal fan base to their businesses (69%), and 64 % of businesses which has been using social media over one year on average have had a follower group which follow them regularly (Stelzner, 2015: 17-22). Social media is a very useful tool in cutting the communication costs, promoting business

events and keeping the business' target audience up to date with the news. Today, social media is used at a high rate by large corporations, so it is important to examine what are the corporate communications strategies that these companies employ in social media.

Today's tools in the Internet age that businesses use to communicate their corporate communication activities to external stakeholders are no longer announcement boards, posters, and brochures. Initially, web sites were considered as a good alternative to traditional corporate communication tools. However, web sites are weak tools for interacting with customers because the communication in websites is one-way towards customers. On the other hand, social media tools like Facebook help businesses to develop relationships with their followers as it allows for multi-way communication.

In addition, since the usage of Facebook is easier and since it is a cheaper way of communication, it makes Facebook to be visited more often than web sites. In addition, researches show that people go to Facebook pages of businesses rather than business web sites to get up-to-date information about businesses. According to a Webtrends (2011) study, the number of first-time visitors in the top 100 U.S. Fortune's Web sites declined by 68%, on the other hand, a 40% increase was detected in the first time visitors to Facebook pages of the same companies (quoted by Haigh, Brubaker and Whiteside, 2013: 53). DeMers says that an organization's social media page generates 32% of the traffic on its website (DeMers, 2015). As a result, Facebook pages of businesses are now more visited than websites.

In addition to websites, a business that prefers to be on Facebook can create a brand community and bring brand fans together under one roof. A brand community is a private and interconnected community that is created to create social relationships among brand fans, beyond geographic boundaries (Muniz and O'guinn, 2001: 412). Brand fan pages, also known as Facebook follower pages, are common meeting points for customers with the same interests and passions about brands. To attract more people to Facebook followers' pages, businesses need incentives to get people involved in these pages.

For Facebook and Twitter brands, it is an important source of revenue for businesses to open brand fan pages in these sites. For example, Facebook earns its revenue from businesses who want to reach its targeted customer base by its advertising activities on Facebook and who agree to pay a certain amount in return. (Lilley, Grodzinsky and Gumbus, 2012: 83). Corporate brand fan pages are also attracted by followers who want to interact with brands. Today's consumers want to communicate with brands which they love, like and buy their products on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. According to an explanation made by Twitter, 88% of Twitter followers follow at least one brand's Twitter page, and more than 50% of Twitter users follow at least six or more Twitter pages on Twitter (Ha, 2012).

Through corporate brand fan pages on Facebook and Twitter, businesses learn about their customer segments, receive feedback from customers about their products and services, and learn about their customers' real needs. Thus, by making improvements in their products and services, they go to remediation. Through the brand fan pages, businesses can keep continuous communication with their followers, keep the interest of their customers to their brands alive and enter a real-time dialogue with the customers. However, businesses need to be careful to ensure that their communication with customers is consistent and meaningful. It is not a must that followers who follow businesses on Facebook and Twitter brand fan pages consist of people who always shop from those brands. According to Jang, Chang and Chen, some may not be shopping from them, but each one should be seen as a potential customer that can be earned a day; because of their suggestions or criticisms, these people bring a valuable feedback for the brand (Jang, Chang and Chen, 2015:162).

Hansson, Wrangmo and Soilen (2013), who asked a group of followers how the ideal Facebook follower pages should be, encountered two types of responses. A group of followers say that Facebook is a social structuring, and that businesses should not be on Facebook, while others think that businesses should be active in Facebook (Hannson, Wrangmo and Soilen, 2013: 121). Facebook's first goal is to connect people with each other and help them to communicate the happenings in their own world. Therefore, Facebook is a social network, however, in time, Facebook started to be used in global brand marketing by outsourcing being a popular online communication channel used for social interaction among friends.

On the other hand, according to Hannson, Wrangmo and Soilen (2013), the ideal pages should contain multiple events and competitions, so that followers can have more fun on Facebook. Those who think that the messages on Facebook pages should be simple, short and consistent, and those who bring the above criticism to Facebook, do not want to be bombarded with messages (Hannson, Wrangmo and Soilen, 2013: 121).

Another research that has been done shows that followers pay attention to dialogue rather than message bombardment on Facebook followers pages. In the end of Kwok and Yu's research, which collected messages in two categories: sales / marketing and conversation (dialogue), and which examined which messages were approved by stakeholders on Facebook, mutual conversation messages (dialogues) received more attention than sales / marketing messages (Kwok and Yu, 2012: 84). Ng (2014) says that businesses should try to develop dialogue with them, rather than pushing messages to their customers on Facebook, so that their trust is easier to earn and stronger relationships can be built (Heinonen, 2011; Ng: 2014: 378).

Corporate communication is the process of establishing and maintaining a positive reputation among the stakeholders of the institution, and thereby ensuring that the internal and external communication of the institution is effectively coordinated. (Cornelissen, 2011: 5). In social media, corporate communication plays an important

role in regulating the communication of businesses with their stakeholders. Businesses planning to open an institutional page in social networking sites should also plan how to manage this page. Mills (2015) proposes a nine-step strategic process to develop and maintain relationships with customers in the social media. This process takes place in order to identify target customers, to explore dialogues about the brand, to explore social media activities of competitors, to determine social media goals, to select social media platforms, to design social media interaction, to effectively manage social media interaction, and to reflect performance (Mills, 2015: 531).

According to Moss (2011), the communication strategy reflects the current management viewpoint of the business as well as a plan of the communication activities of the business (Moss, 2011: 125). Argenti (2003) states that an effective corporate communication strategy would involve three things. The first is to determine the communication purposes. The second is what resources are available to achieve these goals. The third is to monitor the reputation of the business (Argenti, 2003: 23). The corporate communication strategy that the business applies on Facebook places the business in the market as well as reflects the aim, plan and policy of the business. For this reason, businesses need to set their goals and to figure out how much they can afford to keep the site active before opening a corporate brand fan page on Facebook. In addition, the fact that the business has a positive reputation helps to successfully implement the corporate communication strategy. As a result, implementing a corporate communication strategy on Facebook helps businesses to build relationships and dialogue with their stakeholders.

However, when looking at international researches, it is seen that the communication of the majority of businesses on Facebook or Twitter pages are based on one-way communication (from the business to stakeholders) and many businesses are failing to engage with their stakeholders on these pages. (Lovejoy, Waters, Saxton, 2012; Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010; Saffer, Sommerfelt, Taylor, 2013). Interaction in the Facebook or Twitter environment allows followers to communicate easily by generating content without the time and physical location difference. (Vernuccio, 2014: 216). In interactive environments such as Facebook and Twitter, by sharing comments or making evaluations to the shared contents of businesses or by talking among themselves, followers exhibit a participatory performance.

 Nevertheless, businesses do not make good use of the multifaceted communication opportunity provided by social media (from business to stakeholders - from stakeholders to business). For example, Shin et.al. (2013) examined the Facebook brand fan pages of Fortune 500 companies in the U.S.A. Accordingly, it is seen that the interactive communication (multifaceted communication) used to develop relationships with followers on these pages is not sufficiently clear and customer comments are often left unanswered (Shin et. al., 2013: 77). Another study in 2015

demonstrated that 65% of retail businesses responded to customer comments within 5 days on Twitter, and they only responded to 11% of customer comments within an hour (Kapler, 2017).

Ng (2014) found that 82% of Facebook's business pages were not active and 90% of the conversations on those pages were left unanswered, and these results indicate that businesses are still trying to understand how to use Facebook effectively to interact with Facebook users. (Ng, 2014: 366). 32% of customers using social media platforms are expecting a response within 30 minutes of business hours during weekdays; with 57% of the respondents want to receive answers at night and at the same time on weekends (Morgan, 2016). From these data, it is seen that businesses are not very successful in creating participatory and interactive communication on Facebook.

A study examining the Facebook brand fan pages of global businesses has shown that product-focused brands have more Facebook pages than service-oriented brands and product brands share more content on Facebook pages than service brands and their discussion sections are more active in Facebook. (Gaur, Saransomrurtai and Herjanto, 2015: 333). Therefore, it is seen that product-oriented companies on Facebook has created more dialogue with the stakeholders than service-oriented enterprises.

Generally, businesses see Facebook brand fan pages as a commercial domain and are trying to advertise their businesses with promotional one-way messages. It is a result of research that the companies in other countries, especially in the USA, are experiencing difficulties in interacting with Facebook followers and that they have not used these pages well.

3. The Corporate Communication Strategies Used on Facebook

The corporate communication strategy is a function that regulates the communication of the business with the stakeholders. It is possible to observe the responses of the stakeholders with the feedback received from the social networking sites in exchange for the corporate communication strategy implemented by the business. By applying an accurate corporate communication strategy on Facebook, businesses can strengthen their corporate reputation and enable their customers to engage more in their corporate pages. If the corporate communication strategies that businesses use on their corporate pages on Facebook will be known, this will help businesses that plan to open a brand fan page on Facebook to achieve more successful results from their corporate brand fan pages in the future.

Today, businesses have taken action to open up a brand fan page on social networking sites, but many have not fully understood how they will reach more people (Palazon, Sicilia, and Lopez, 2015: 580). For this reason, it is necessary to have corporate communication strategies to be implemented on Facebook brand fan pages in order to enable existing and potential customers of the businesses to participate in

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

Facebook pages. The corporate communication strategy of a business on Facebook should also be compatible with the objectives the business wants to achieve (McCann and Barlow, 2015: 275).

According to Erbaşlar (2013: 43), businesses will benefit from using a specific corporate communications strategy on their Facebook pages with the following benefits:

• Businesses will be able to use the time they communicate with their stakeholders more efficiently by acting in a planned manner.

• Businesses will be able to make the right moves at the right time.

• Businesses will be able to achieve the goals they are targeting for stakeholder groups.

• Businesses will have the opportunity to increase their self-confidence as well as increase their recognition.

Kim, Kim and Sung (2014) mentions that businesses principally use three corporate communication strategies on their Facebook pages. In fact, the categorization of Kim, Kim and Sung depends on the basic categorization of Brown and Dacin (1997). Brown and Dacin (1997) highlights that there are two corporate communication strategies which affect the corporate associations of the society which are the corporate ability and the corporate social responsibility strategies. While the corporate ability strategy is about the perceptions of a consumer concerning the products and services of a business in the market, the corporate social responsibility strategy is about the perceptions of a consumer regarding the social responsibilities of a business (Kim and Rader, 2010: 60). The hybrid strategy is the third strategy taking place in this categorization. The hybrid strategy is related with the mutual usage of both the corporate ability and the corporate social responsibility strategies.

The magazine Strategic Direction (2015) summarizes these three corporate communications strategies as follows: The messages of the corporate ability strategy makes an emphasis to a business' being a leader in the industrial sector or its global successes. The main aim of the corporate social responsibility strategy is to reflect a good corporate citizenship image and to inform the public about the corporate social responsibility activities of a business. The hybrid strategy equally represents both the corporate ability and corporate social responsibility strategies (Strategic Direction, 2015:1).

Table 1: Brown and Dacin 1997; Tao and Wilson (2015: 214).

Corporate Communication Strategies and Their Signs	
Corporate Ability	**Corporate Social Responsibility**
The expertise of the business in its products' and services' quality	The environmental responsibility of the business
The global success of the business	The philanthropic responsibility of the business
The usage of quality control programme by the business	The educational responsibility of the business
The leadership of the business in the sector	The employee involvement of the business
The market orientation of the business	The public health responsibility of the business
The innovativeness of the business and the research and development efforts of the business	The sponsorship activities of the business

Businesses can decide on which strategy they will use according to the perception that they want to create in the market. According to Kim and Rader (2010), if a business wants to draw attention to social responsibility activities and wants to create a corporate social responsibility-oriented perception, it can adopt the corporate social responsibility strategy, if it wants to be perceived as an expert in producing high quality products and services in the sector, it can embrace the corporate ability strategy. (Kim and Rader, 2010: 60). The magazine Strategic Direction (2015) states that the corporate ability strategy is a viable choice to build friendships with followers in the first instance, but failing to stage to the corporate social responsibility strategy can be costly because consumers often tend to have a more positive perception of businesses that attach importance to social responsibility projects (Strategic Direction, 2015: 3). According to Fraustino and Connolly-Ahern (2015), the corporate social responsibility strategy helps to develop more positive attitudes for brands and products, to create more purchasing behaviour in customers, and to have a more positive institutional image, reputation and credibility in perceptions related to business (Fraustino and Connolly-Ahern, 2015: 457).

Kim and Rader (2010) conducted a study to determine the corporate communications strategies that Fortune 500 companies used in their web sites. According to this research, 96% (n = 478) of the Fortune 500 companies have adopted the corporate ability strategy and they want to be perceived as businesses with institutional expertise in their products and services (Kim and Rader, 2010: 75). However, the top

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

100 companies in the Fortune 500 place more emphasis on the corporate social responsibility strategy than the corporate ability and the hybrid strategy. Kim and Rader explain this situation as follows: the control of the public is increasing against businesses when they grow up, and it is therefore necessary to talk about the social responsibilities of businesses (Kim and Rader, 2010: 75).

The number of studies examining how the corporate ability, the corporate social responsibility, and the hybrid communication strategies affect stakeholders on Facebook is rather few (Haigh et. al., 2013: 53). The research of Kim, Kim and Sung (2014) is one of them. Kim, Kim, and Sung, who examined what corporate communications strategy Fortune 100 companies use on Facebook, found that 89% of companies use the corporate ability strategy, 9% use the corporate social responsibility strategy, and 3% use the hybrid strategy. Therefore, the corporate ability strategy is the most preferred corporate communication strategy by Fortune 100 companies. Tao and Wilson (2015) have also examined which corporate communications strategy has been adopted by Fortune 1000 companies on Facebook and Twitter, and have come to the conclusion that the corporate ability strategy is more popular in both sites. Of the 63 companies operating on the Facebook page, 31 use the corporate ability strategy, 19 adopt the corporate social responsibility strategy, and 13 do not use any strategy. The business that uses a hybrid strategy on Facebook is not found (Tao and Wilson, 2015: 215).

The result of the researches of Kim and Rader's (2010) on Fortune 500 companies, Kim, Kim and Sung's (2014) on Fortune 100 companies, Fraustino and Connolly-Ahern's on Fortune 500 companies and Tao and Wilson's (2015) on Fortune 1000 companies demonstrated that both on websites and on Facebook and Twitter the strategy that Fortune companies used frequently is the corporate ability strategy. Only Fortune 100 companies within Fortune 500 used the corporate social responsibility strategy the most. Haigh, Brubaker and Whiteside (2013) who examined the 114 corporate Facebook sites found out that these companies highly used the corporate ability strategy, as well. Tao and Wilson (2015) mentions that the similarity in the results of these various researches in which different online platforms were used shows that businesses give significance to the corporate ability strategy. According to Kim and Rader (2010) this choice is the result of corporations aim to create sound psychological associations on their stakeholders about their corporate expertise in their products and services (Kim and Rader, 2010, Tao and Wilson, 2015: 2018).

Table 2: The Corporate Communication Strategies Used by Fortune Companies in Social Media in USA

Author	Year	Platform	Companies	The strategy used
Kim and Rader	2010	Website	Fortune 500	Corporate ability
Haigh, Brubaker, and Whiteside	2013	Facebook	114 corporate companies	Corporate ability
Kim, Kim and Sung	2014	Facebook	Fortune 100	Corporate ability
Tao and Wilson	2015	Facebook and Twitter	Fortune 1000	Mostly corporate ability / Only the first 100 companies use the corporate social responsibility strategy
Fraustino and Connolly-Ahern	2016	Facebook	Fortune 500	Corporate ability

While the businesses determine the corporate communication strategies they use on Facebook brand fan pages, the content on Facebook pages can be examined from four perspectives. These include organizational disclosure, information dissemination, involvement, interactivity (Haigh, Brubaker and Whiteside, 2013: 57 & Kim, Kim and Sung, 2014: 354).

Table 3: Haigh, Brubaker and Whiteside (2013: 56) and Kim, Kim and Sung (2014: 354)

Organizational Disclosure	Information Dissemination	Involvement	Interactivity
Products and services	Link to the news	E-mail address	Messages which aim to get the feedback and suggestions of the followers
The history of the business	Photographs	Telephone number	Messages which enable chat online

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

The mission information	Videos	Message board	Messages which are related to action-based participation of the followers
The link to the website address	Audios	Activities calendar	Messages which are related to the general behavioural action of the followers
Logo	Press bulletins	Opportunities of volunteerism	Messages which are related to holiday greetings
Official Facebook page statement	Campaign summaries	Debate forum	Messages which are related to the daily and personal life of the followers
Legal statement	Information about successes and rewards		
Link to the Twitter page	Corporate social responsibility reports		
Link to the blog			

Another classification of the corporate communications strategies used in social media is broadcast, reactive and engagement strategy proposed by Etter (2014). The publication strategy is based on one-way communication. In the broadcasting strategy, the company disseminates information about itself to the target groups it identifies. But the broadcasting strategy is not interested in the stakeholders involved and does not answer the questions of stakeholders (Strategic Direction, 2015: 5). The broadcasting strategy is not enough to improve the relationship, as the other stakeholders are not heeded and the opportunity to participate is not given (Etter, 2014: 328). This approach is similar to the techniques used in traditional marketing and advertising communications (Strategic Direction, 2015: 5). Responsive strategy responds to questions from business stakeholders but does not approach other stakeholders by acting cautiously. Although symmetric communication takes place in this strategy, since the other stakeholders are not approached, it is difficult for the business stakeholders to find common interests. (Etter, 2014: 329). The aspect that

makes the engagement strategy different is that the business uses the proactive perspective and take the first step in communicating with the users. In the engagement strategy, the business responds to questions and comments from its stakeholders and approaches to other stakeholders. Businesses using the engagement strategy get the best efficiency and results from their Facebook or Twitter usage because they have two-way symmetrical communication with their stakeholders (Etter, 2014: 329).

Interaction process analysis, which is used in the analysis of interpersonal communication processes, has recently been used to analyse the corporate communication between the business and stakeholders. Zhang, Tao and Kim (2014) mention that the interaction process analysis used basically for analysing interpersonal dialogues can also be used to analyse the communication between businesses and customers in social media environments, because social media carries the communication features such as receiving instant feedback from customers and providing two-way communication between the business and customers (Zhang, Tao and Kim, 2014: 234). Interaction process analysis was first proposed by Bales (1976), and interaction process analysis is divided into task-oriented communication strategies and socioemotional-oriented communication strategies. According to Bales, task-oriented communication strategies consist mostly of problem solving, and searching for information, ideas and suggestions. Socio-emotional communication strategies aim at alleviating or enhancing tension in dialogue. (Bales, 1976; Zhang, Tao and Kim, 2014: 233).

Businesses may choose to use their corporate communications strategy within a certain period of time. Erbaslar (2013) explains how long businesses can use the corporate communication strategy they want to use:

• The corporate communication strategy to be used may vary according to the purpose of the business and the objectives it aims to achieve.

• The business can change the corporate communication strategy to use according to the campaign activities to be performed.

• While the corporate communications strategy is a whole, the content that the business uses on Facebook is a part of this whole (Erbaslar, 2013: 44).

4. The Motivations of Facebook Users to Follow Corporate Brand Fan Pages

The people who follow the Facebook pages of the business are the stakeholders of the business. According to Jiang, Chen, Nunameker and Zimbra, stakeholders are defined as groups of people who are needed to sustain the continuity of a business. "Stakeholders are those who will influence the realization of the business' objectives or be influenced by the realization of the objectives of the business". (Freeman, 1984, Freeman and Reed, 1993; Jiang, Chen, Nunamaker and Zimbra, 2014: 30).

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

Determining how followers, or stakeholders, follow the Facebook brand fan pages of businesses, makes it easier for businesses to expand their target groups as it helps them to organize their Facebook events more easily. The motivations of followers to follow the Facebook brand fan pages can be explained through various theories.

The first of them is the social identity theory. According to the theory of social identity, a person can increase his or her self-esteem by belonging to a group. According to this theory, the person tends to participate in social media events when he or she believes that this will improve his or her personal image and he or she will receive support from his or her peers online or be respected by others. (Muniz and Schau, 2005; Ng, 2016: 492).

Therefore, people want to be appreciated by their peers by participating in Facebook brand fan pages and appreciated by their peers with comments they make on these pages. These people think they will be able to increase their self-esteem with the interest they gather. In addition, people can increase their collective self-esteem by joining Facebook brand fan pages. People come together with the people who have relations with the business on these pages and they establish a social network and try to achieve a social status by expressing themselves in this group (Muniz and Schau, 2005; Ng, 2014: 368).

From the standpoint of social identity theory, people can influence the viewpoints and purchase behaviours of other followers by their positive or negative word of mouth activities because people are more likely to trust each other's positive and negative shares rather than trusting businesses' words in the social media and uses the power of electronic word of mouth.

In addition, it has become more difficult for businesses to manage their reputation in the online environment. Due to the instantaneity nature of the social media, negative comments can spread very quickly and an online crisis environment can be created by attracting the attention of millions of people. From the standpoint of social identity theory, followers can become brand ambassadors by defending the businesses in crises that may arise in the online environment. So they get a status within the brand community.

Another theory that is useful for understanding the motivations of followers is social exchange theory. According to the theory of social exchange theory, people are behaving in the social media because they think that they are able to benefit from having that behaviour (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Ng, 2016: 492). In other words, the aim of social exchange theory is to increase the benefits and reduce the costs. According to this model, people evaluate the benefits and risks that may arise in social relationships, and if the risks appear more than benefits, they prefer to terminate that relationship (Surma, 2016: 343).

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

In terms of social exchange theory, people follow the Facebook brand fan pages, enjoy various discounts, earn accessions, and participate in competitions. Thus, they get various financial gains from being in the online environment, they reduce financial losses the least and continue to follow those pages by maintaining social relations with the business. In addition, people follow their Facebook brand fan pages to evaluate their free time and get a chance to meet new people. In terms of social exchange theory, Facebook brand fan pages help people to benefit from their relationships with the business because it helps expand their social network. In terms of social exchange theory, Facebook brand fan pages help people to benefit from their relationships with the business because it helps expanding their social network.

Another theory is the uses and gratifications theory. According to the uses and gratifications theory put forth by Blumer and Katz, people use any media to meet their various needs. The reason people choose any kind of media is to meet a need and obtain a satisfaction. For example, people use social media for social interaction, information seeking, spending time, entertainment, relaxation, communication and purchasing needs (Strategic Direction, 2015: 5).

People can have a good time by following the Facebook brand fan pages and have enjoying activities. People can use the brand fan pages as a news source and have news information about the current events of the business. They can also search for information about businesses' new products and services. People also use brand fan pages for social interaction. People can exchange ideas with other followers on brand fan pages. Followers who are affected from business shares and user reviews can be directed to purchasing behaviour.

Followers need incentives to follow the Facebook brand fan pages of businesses and keep track of these pages for a long time. Kang, Tang and Fiore base their motivation to follow business brand fan pages on four key interest relationships. Accordingly, the elements that drive Facebook users to follow the Facebook brand fan pages are functional interests, socio-psychological interests, hedonistic interests, and financial interests.

Table 4: Kang, Tang and Fiore (2014: 153)

Functional benefits	Social-psychological benefits	Hedonic benefits	Monetary benefits
Getting current information about the business	To search for self-identity	To be entertained by other members on Facebook	To receive discounts and special offers that most of the consumers cannot attain

To communicate effectively and comfortably with the other people in the online environment	To become friends with other members	To have a good time on the Facebook page of the business	To get better prices compared to other customers
To share experiences about the business	To search for a belonging	To search for entertainment on the Facebook page of the business	To receive free coupons as a member of the business' Facebook page
	To have relationships with other people on Facebook and to maintain these relationships	To be entertained on the Facebook page of the business	

Kwon, Kim, Sung and Yoo (2014) showed that consumers have four motivations to follow brands on Twitter. These include incentive search, social interaction search, brand use / brand satisfaction and information search (Kwon, Kim, Sung and Yoo, 2014: 657).

Table 5: Kwon, Kim, Sung and Yoo (2014: 668)

To search for incentives	To search for social interaction	Brand use / Brand Satisfaction	To search for information	To search for entertainment
To receive incentives because of following the page for a long time	To talk with brand representatives	Because I use the brand right now	To learn more about the brand	To be entertained
To receive a reward because of following the page	To express myself	Because I like the brand	To receive information fast	To relax

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

for a long time				
To receive incentives (coupons, discounts)	To get into interaction with other people	Because I'm willing to buy from the brand	To have the first information about the brand	To have a good time when I'm bored
To get what I want with less effort	To tell my opinion about the brand			
To get access to special content	To be together with other people with whom I have the same lifestyle			
	To look at what other consumers say			

According to the result of Kang, Tang and Fiore's (2014) research on Facebook brand fan pages, it turns out that followers' motivation to follow these pages is based on two interests. By being a member of these communities, people feel a sense of belonging and develop relationships with other members and have a psycho-sociological gain. In addition, they enjoy and relax by following these pages, thus obtain a pleasurable gain.

5. Business Representatives on the Facebook Pages of Businesses

Businesses create a social media team to promote personal communication across Facebook. Business representatives who try to keep these pages active with visuals and videos also listen to the requests and suggestions of the customers. However, according to Tsai and Men, business representatives appear to be friends with followers on the social network in order to be able to integrate with followers, but at the same time they do not disclose their true identity. Parasocial interaction theory is misleading in the sense that followers think that they have developed a sincere and personal relationship with business representatives. (Tsai and Men, 2013: 78). That is, business representatives who excite the followers with the comments they write and who try to put the followers into action by approaching the followers as a friend, mislead the followers.

Businesses have shifted their customer service to social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, and they are answering customer questions from these platforms. Social media representatives, who are able to engage in dialogues with their customers, get more success from their Facebook and Twitter pages. For example, Starbucks, a global beverage brand, responded to Starbucks customers in six different ways on its Twitter brand fan page. These include giving information, making an apology and giving support, writing positive a comment, asking a question and making an inquiry, having chit-chat, and expressing gratitude (Taecharungroj, 2016: 552).

6. Results

Social media, which has gained momentum in the last ten years, has become a part of corporate life apart from individual uses. Many businesses around the world have begun using social media tools like Facebook and Twitter to communicate with their stakeholders and have teamed up with a team that manages social networking sites 7/24 to ensure the continuity of this communication. However, it is difficult to say that they are very successful and that they use effective strategies.

The corporate communications strategy that businesses use in these pages reflects the intent of the business and the policy it intends to implement on these pages. In other words, the corporate communications strategy shows how businesses want to promote themselves to their stakeholders and what connotations they want to evoke in their stakeholders. In addition, the corporate communications strategy that businesses use on their Facebook pages also determines whether they will interact with their stakeholders. In general, an overwhelming majority of businesses favour the corporate ability strategy that is important to promote the business' own products and services, but some large businesses with few numbers also use the corporate social responsibility strategy.

In order for businesses to successfully manage their Facebook pages, they must be able to use an effective corporate communications strategy and learn how their stakeholders can follow these pages. Stakeholders are following these pages in order to reach a certain satisfaction with their specific needs. If these requirements can be accurately determined by the business, it may become easier to create an interaction between the business and stakeholders on Facebook pages. Thus, businesses can create a dynamic brand community on Facebook pages and contribute to the appreciation of their brand.

References

[1] Argenti, P. A. (2003). *Corporate Communication,* New York: Mc Graw Hill
[2] Bales (1976). *Interaction Process Analysis.* Retrieved July 19, 2016 from http://www.meduniwien.ac.at/user /harald.trost/lv/Bales-Overview.pdf

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

[3] Barnes, N. G. & Lescault, A. M. (2014). *The 2014 Fortune 500 and Social Media.* Retrieved July 19, 2016 from http://www.umassd.edu/cmr/socialmediaresearch/2014fortune500andsocialmedia/

[4] Brown, T. J. & Dacin, P., A. (1997). The Company and the Product: Corporate Associations and Consumer Product Responses. *Journal of Marketing*, 61(1), 68-84.

[5] Cornelissen, J. (2011). *Corporate Communication. A Guide to Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.

[6] DeMers, J. (2015). Social Media Now Drives 31% Of All Referral Traffic, Forbes, Retrieved April 9, 2018 from https://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2015/02/03/social-media-now-drives-31-of-all-referral-traffic/#1d7446534315

[7] Erbaşlar, G. (2013). *Sosyal Medya'da mısınız? Asosyal Medya'da mısınız?* Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık.

[8] Etter, M. (2014). Broadcasting, Reacting, Engaging – Three Strategies for CSR Communication in Twitter. *Journal of Communication Management*, 18(4), 322-342.

[9] Froustino, J. D. & Connolly-Ahern, C. (2015). Corporate Associations Written on the Wall: Publics' Responses to Fortune 500 Ability and Social Responsibility Facebook Posts. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 27(5), 452-474.

[10] Gaur, S. S., Saransomrurtai, C., & Herjanto, H. (2015). Top Global Firms' Use of Brand Profile Pages on SNS for Marketing Communication. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 14, 316-340.

[11] Ha, A. (2 Ekim 2012). Twitter Says More Than Half Its Users Follow Six or More Brands, TechCrunch. Retrieved July 19, 2016 from https://techcrunch.com/2012/10/02/twitter-follow-brands/

[12] Haigh, M. M., Brubaker, P., & Whiteside, E. (2013). Facebook: Examining the Information Presented and Its Impact on Stakeholders. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 18(1), 52-69.

[13] Hannson, L., Wrangmo, A., & Soilen, K. S. (2013). Optimal Ways for Companies to Use Facebook as a Marketing Channel. *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*, 11(2), 112 -126.

[14] Jang, Y.T., Chang, S. E., & Chen, P.A. (2015). Exploring Social Networking Sites for Facilitating Multi-Channel Retailing. *Multimed Tools Appl*, 74, 159-178.

[15] Jiang, S., Chen, H., Nunamaker, J. F., & Zimbra, D. (2014). Analyzing Firm-Specific Social Media and Market: A Stakeholder-Based Event Analysis Framework. *Decision Support Systems*, 67, 30-39.

[16] Kang, J., Tang, L., & Fiore, A. M. (2014). Enhancing Consumer-Brand Relationships on Restaurant Facebook Fan Pages: Maximizing Consumer Benefits and Increasing Active Participation. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 36, 145-155.

ISSN 2601-8659 (Print)
ISSN 2601-8667 (Online)

European Journal of
Marketing and Economics

July - December 2022
Volume 5, Issue 2

[17] Kapler, J. (2017). Shifting From One-Way Broadcast to Two-Way Dialog Changes Everything. Adweek. Retrieved April 9, 2018 from http://www.adweek.com/digital/shifting-from-one-way-broadcast-to-two-way-dialog-changes-everything/

[18] Kim, S. & Rader, S. (2010). What They Can Do versus How Much They Care: Assessing Corporate Communication Strategies on Fortune 500 Websites. *Journal of Communication Management*, 14(1), 59-80.

[19] Kim, S., Kim, S.Y., & Sung, Kang H. (2014). Fortune 100 Companies' Facebook Strategies: Corporate Ability Versus Social Responsibility. *Journal of Communication Management*, 18(4), 343-362.

[20] Kwok, L. & Yu, B. (2012). Spreading Social Media Messages on Facebook: An analysis of Restaurant Business to Consumer Communications. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, XX(X): 1-11.

[21] Kwon, E. S., Kim, E., Sung, Y., & Yoo, C. Y. (2014). Brand Followers. *International Journal of Advertising*, 33(4), 657-680.

[22] Lilley, S., Grodzinsky, F. S., & Gumbus, A. (2012). Revealing the Commercialized and Compliant Facebook User. *Journal of Information*, *Communication and Ethics in Society*, 10(2): 82-92.

[23] Lovejoya, K., Waters, R. D., & Saxton, G. D. (2012). Engaging Stakeholders through Twitter: How Nonprofit Organizations Are Getting More Out of 140 Characters or Less. *Public Relations Review*, 38, 313-318.

[24] Mazzei, A. (2014). A Multidisciplinary Approach for a New Understanding of Corporate Communication. *Corporate Communications*: *An International Journal*, 19(2), 216-230.

[25] McCorkindale, T. (2010). Can You See the Writing on My Wall? A Content Analysis of the Fortune 500's Facebook Social Networking Sites. *Public Relations Journal*, 4(3), 1-13.

[26] McCann, M. ve Barlow, A. (2015). Use and measurement of social media for SMEs, *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 22 (2): 273-287.

[27] Mills, A. J. & Plangger, K. (2015). Social Media Strategy for Online Service Brands. *The Service Industries Journal*, 35(10), 521-536

[28] Mitchell, A. (2015). State of the News Media 2015. Pew Research Center Journalism & Media. Retrieved July 19, 2016 from http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/state-of-the-news-media-2015/

[29] Morgan, B. (2016). The Evolution of Customer Service, Forbes, Retrieved April 9, 2018 from http://www.adweek.com/digital/shifting-from-one-way-broadcast-to-two-way-dialog-changes-everything/

[30] Moss, D. (2011). *Strategy-Making and Planning in the Communications Context. Public Relations A Managerial Perspective.* London: Sage.

[31] Muniz, A.M. & O'guinn, T.C. (2001). Brand Community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27, 412-32.

[32] Ng, M. (2014). Consumer Motivations to Disclose Information and Participate in Commercial Activities on Facebook. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*, 24(4), 365-383.

[33] Ng, M. (2016). Factors Influencing the Consumer Adoption of Facebook: A Two-country Study of Youth Markets. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 54, 491-500.

[34] Palazon, M., Sicilia, M. ve Lopez, M. (2015). The Influence of "Facebook Friends" on the intention to join brand pages. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 24 (6): 580-595.

[35] Rybalko, S. & Seltzer, T. (2010). Dialogic Communication in 140 Characters or Less: How Fortune 500 Companies Engage Stakeholders Using Twitter. *Public Relations Review*, 36, 336-341. doi:10.1016=j.pubrev.2010.08.004

[36] Saffer, A. J., Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Taylor, M. (2013). The Effects of Organizational Twitter Interactivity on Organization-public Relationships. *Public Relations Review,* 39, 213-215.

[37] Schaefer, M. W. (2014). *Social Media Explained. Untangling the World's Most Misunderstood Business Trend*. Schaefer Marketing Solutions.

[38] Shin, J.H., Carithers, H., Lee, Seungae., Graham, M., & Hendricks, N. (2013). The Current Trends in Social Media Usage in Corporations: Analysis of Facebook Fan Pages of Fortune 500 Companies. In H. S. Noor Al-Deen & J. A. Hendricks (Eds.), *Social Media and Strategic Communications* (62-79), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

[39] Stelzner, M. A. (2015). Social Media Marketing Industry Report*. Social Media Examiner*. Retrieved July 19, 2016 from http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/SocialMediaMarketingIndustryReport 2015.pdf

[40] Strategic Direction (2015). Using Twitter for CSR Communication: Which Strategy Work Best? *Strategic Direction*, 31(4), 4-6.

[41] Strategic Direction (2015). Ways to Exploit Facebook's Capabilities: Finding the Appropriate Communication Strategy. *Strategic Direction*, 31(4), 1-3.

[42] Strategic Direction (2015). So Why Do People Use Facebook and Twitter? Uses and Gratifications of Social Media Use. *Strategic Direction*, 31(6), 4-6.

[43] Surma, J. (2016). Social Exchange in Online Social Networks. The Reciprocity Phenomenon on Facebook. *Computer Communications*, 73, 342-346.

[44] Taecharungroj, V. (2016). Starbucks' Marketing Communications Strategy on Twitter. *Journal of Marketing Communications*. Retrieved July 19, 2016 from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2016.1138139

[45] Tao, W. & Wilson, C. (2015). Fortune 1000 Communication Strategies on Facebook and Twitter. *Journal of Communication Management*, 19(3), 208-223.

[46] Tsai, S. (2013). Discussing Brand Information on Social Networking Sites: Implications for Global Brand Marketing. *Journal of Organizational Computing and Electronic Commerce,* 23(4), 372-391.

[47] Tsai, W.H.S. ve Men, L. R. (2013). Motivations and Antecedents of Consumer Engagement with Brand Pages on Social Networking Sites. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 13(2), 76-87.

[48] Vernuccio, M. (2014). Communicating Corporate Brands through Social Media: An Exploratory Study. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 51(3), 211-233.

[49] Zhang, X., Tao, W., Kim, S. (2014). A Comparative Study on Global Brands' Micro Blogs between China and USA: Focusing on Communication Styles and Branding Strategies. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 8, 231-249.