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SOCIAL MEDIA: PLATFORMS, CONTENT AND CUSTOMERS IN THE HUMAN-TO-HUMAN (H2H) ERA

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Social media – overview

The term social media refers to computer-based technology which enables users to share information, ideas, and thoughts through virtual networks in communities via the internet. Users can upload and share personal information, pictures, videos, and documents from different devices such as desktop computers, laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones (investopedia.com).

To clarify the terms and articulate the difference between social media and social networking, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) state that while social media allows the creation and exchange of User-Generated Content, the emphasis being on sharing this content, these platforms do not necessarily focus on continuous and ongoing contact between the users. Successful social networking sites do not function primarily as ‘networking’ tools to initiate relationship between people who do not know each other, but rather people use them for communicating with people who are in their extended network (Boyd and Ellison 2007: 211). Hence, social networking sites are a distinct subgroup of sites from social media sites, fulfilling different functions in the daily routine of their users. Yet, social networking sites make use of social media technologies (Dahl 2018: 3).

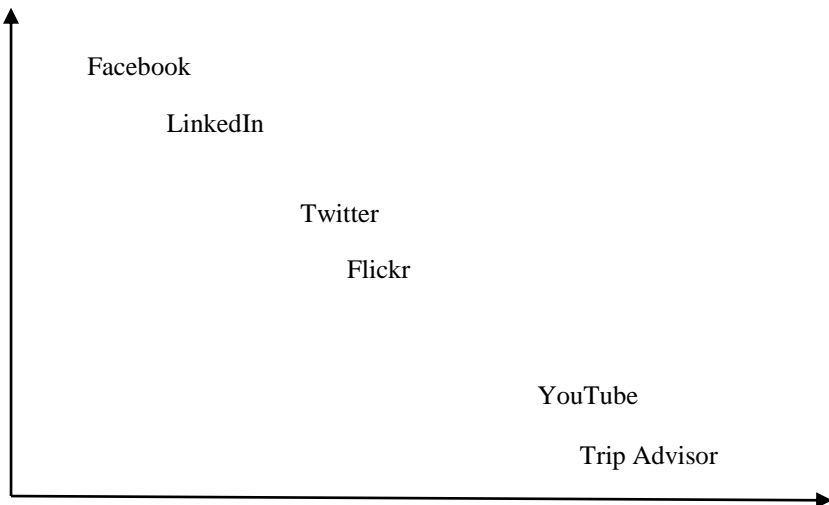


Figure 1. **Taxonomy of social media sites.** (Source: Dahl 2018: 3)

However, delineation between social media and social network sites is fluid in many cases. Dahl (2018: 4) created the following classification of sites (*Figure 1*):

1. Social networking sites where the emphasis is on social networking between mostly personally known users, such as Facebook and LinkedIn.
2. Sites relying on user-generated content that is shared amongst users that may not be personally known to each other, such as TripAdvisor or YouTube.
3. Sites which can be used as both social networking sites and social media sites, integrating functionality for both elements dependent on the user. For example, a photographer can use Flickr to showcase user-generated pictures and share this with relative strangers, in the same way as the site can be used to circulate pictures from a family event to other members of a family.

The history of social media goes back to the Bulletin Board System (BBS), the online meeting places, where users could communicate with each other through a central system, download files and games. However, the first real predecessor of social networks was the AOL (America Online) umbrella, states Sah (2016). In the searchable system people could find member profiles just like in today's social media networks.

The next milestone in social network history was Classmates.com in 2002, where users could locate their old schoolmates among the 57 million registered users. That time there was no possibility to create user profiles yet.

In 2003 LinkedIn, which now has more than 297 million members, launched its networking platform for businesspeople to connect with other professionals. Just one year later, a Harvard-only, campus-oriented site, called Facebook came to live, but it did not open to the general public until 2006 and by now it has become the world's leading social media network.

Due to the advancement in technology, a growing number of people live in a hybrid world, where the boundaries between digital and physical world are blurred (Jordan, B. 2009), and these changes obviously made changes in media consumption habits too. The percentage of people accessing the internet via mobile is around 92% (digital 2021), which resulted in the evolution of a mobile first ecosystem. Contents get virtual – in the early years of cellphones users texted each other from their holidays,

then a few years later it was possible to send home photos in the form of MMS, which were replaced by video messages – and by now with AR and VR our family our friend can be with us. Social media platforms utilized this abrupt rise in mobile computing and developed their applications, so that people can check in anywhere and anytime. However, instead of offering a comprehensive networking experience, each specializes in a specific kind of interaction service (e.g., Instagram for sharing images, Snapchat for private sharing, Foursquare for augmented reality). People use these various services in conjunction with other platforms, creating a digital identity (Sah 2016) where the physical and the digital, the real and the virtual, interact.

As *Table 1* shows, Facebook has the biggest share of people who are unique to the platform (0.7%), followed by LinkedIn with 0.3%, users of all the other social media platforms have an account with another ones too.

Table 1. Social media platforms: user overlaps as in October 2021. (Source: Digital2021)

October 2021	unique to platform	also using FB	also using YT	also using IG	also using SChat	also using Twitter	also using TikTok	also using Pint	also using LIn
FB	0.7%	100%	75.2%	77.6%	32.2%	49.2%	44.9%	36.6%	31.9%
YT	1.0%	79.9%	100%	77.8%	29.9%	52.1%	42.6%	38.6%	31.9%
IG	0.1%	83.1%	78.8%	100%	36.7%	55.0%	47.8%	40.7%	31.9%
SChat	0.1%	83.7%	79.2%	88.9%	100%	62.8%	58.4%	51.0%	38.9%
Twitter	0.2%	83.8%	80.9%	87.5%	41.2%	100%	51.9%	44.6%	40.2%
TikTok	0.1%	85.0%	81.3%	84.4%	42.6%	57.7%	100%	44.4%	31.7%
Pint	0.1%	83.0%	80.5%	86.3%	44.5%	59.5%	53.2%	100%	42.2%
LIn	0.3%	88.4%	78.3%	82.5%	41.6%	65.4%	46.5%	51.5%	100%

Social media marketing

Social media platforms allow for a dialogue between the brand / manufacturer / seller and the consumer. Dialogue, unlike messages sent over traditional mass media, allows you to send a targeted or personal message to users (Klausz 2020: 115-117). These messages can be posts on your own social media page, replies to comments, personalized messages on Facebook messenger, or targeted PPC and remarketing ads.

A feature of social media marketing is that it is suitable for reaching both the general public and target groups, the information provided is actually a set of micro-information with a low cost of dissemination. Content itself is a tool

for image creation. The content of the message may not be accurately preserved, as the consumer comments and redefines it, so it is difficult to control the spread of information especially that we can talk about fast, real-time spread. The quality of the content is mixed, determined by the needs of the consumers, and consumers have access to almost everything. (Klausz 2020)

It is important that consumers can choose the content they find engaging, since the primary goal of brands on social media platforms is direct communication with customers. Depending on the platform, posts can be text posts, link posts, images, infographics, or video content. Typically, visual content is more spectacular, easy to decode, and does not impose a large cognitive burden on the recipient. Images can only be illustrations of the text but can also provide additional information. Tagging also helps select content that interests followers. After the hashtag (#), it is a good idea to enter the keywords that your audience is most likely to find on the topic, since searching for the hashtag will show all such posts on that page.

The advancement of video content in recent years has been very common. There is a lot of video content in both the posts and the ads. In this case, the first few seconds are available to grab the user's attention, if it fails, they scroll further or click to close. For videos distributed online, it is very important to have a good storyline, have a spoiler in the first 5 seconds, and something astounding so you do not lose viewer attention.

The video should be spiced with twisting dynamics, with mood-boosting audio-visual elements and worth branding from the start to make sure the message reaches the consumer. If this does not work in the first 3 seconds or so, it was a waste of money to make the video, as it takes about that time for us to scroll through the content on the touch screen and get the video out of our sight. Keeping in mind that the majority of consumers use social media on their mobile phones, the format should be optimized for this as well, and it is definitely worth using subtitles so that whoever uses their phone muted can follow it.

A new trend on social media sites is that users are increasingly demanding messages that are personalized in some way. This also applies to the expression of social questions and the personal and human response given to clients. According to Neticle's research (Lippai 2021), the number of templates or machine responses is declining, "customers and users expect transparency, direct communication, and more direct care from the brand." One-way communication is no longer sustainable, users want a human voice they can identify with (this can even be achieved by involving influencers).

This paradigm shift indicated by a change in consumer attitudes has already been recognized by many brands and they are trying to communicate honestly and openly with consumers.

Based on the stages of traditional digital sales funnel (awareness, consideration, evaluation, purchase), the role of communication can range from desire generation to demand generation, the message accordingly from presenting the brand image to the relevant offer. The purpose of the posts ranges from awareness raising to direct response (activation).

The most significant social media platforms are Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and LinkedIn. Each platform has different characteristics, used by different age groups as the primary platform. Typically, Facebook, where longer text or link posts and videos are shared, so decoding can be more cognitive compared to Instagram or TikTok, is actively used by middle-aged and older people.

Young people and young adults prefer Instagram, where they post pictures and short videos the most, it is more personal, and more experience based than Facebook. The popularity of TikTok is growing, and while initially teenagers shared videos in which they lip-synched and danced to the music there, the older generation also appeared, and even the brands. YouTube is the largest video-sharing site in the world, but since users can like and comment on content, a dialogue can develop, it can be seen as a social media platform. LinkedIn is primarily a professional site, Pinterest functions as an inspirational platform for organizing and saving images on various boards, while the most notable microblog is Twitter. In each case the algorithm of the platform is the key reason social networks can draw us in and keep us paying attention.

The opportunities offered by the platforms (story, filters, closed groups, shopping, etc.) are constantly changing, as is who they are popular with. (Just think that Facebook was initially the platform for young people, then their parents showed up, but young people also stayed there, only less actively, often joining closed groups. In the meantime, Instagram came to the fore, but later there was a shift, it became more and more popular among the elderly, then came TikTok – which is no longer exclusively for young people either, then the popularity of Clubhouse, a social audio application, was coming up.) That is why companies and brands need to consider when designing social media campaigns where their target audience is, how they can most safely reach them, and when creating content, platform-specific content comes to the fore. We can also advertise on social media, effectively reaching our target audience (e.g. image and video ads, gallery format,

collectible ads, featured posts on Facebook or Instagram, full-screen brand ads, or brand takeovers on TikTok).

However, it is worth noting that the algorithm on platforms may change, making it increasingly difficult for posts to reach those they have targeted. That is why it is worth reaching back to the basics and filling the corporate website with valuable content, keeping it in order from an SEO point of view.

As *Figure 2* shows, a few years ago 67% marketers named Facebook as their primary platform, but by 2021, this number dropped to 54%, while Instagram (also owned by Facebook) and LinkedIn showed increase.

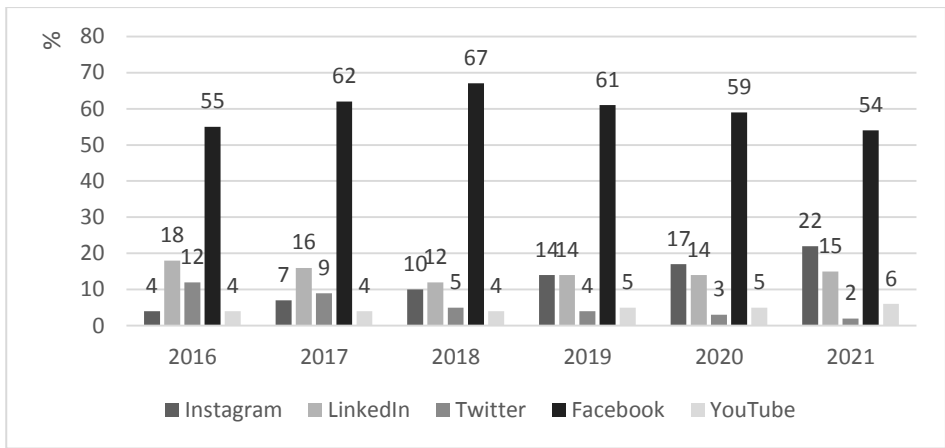


Figure 2. **Brands' primary platforms.** (Source: socialmediaexaminer.com)

Facebook

Although there are fears that people slowly abandon Facebook, since over the last 4 years it has eliminated organic reach for content creators, thus many of them shifted to other platforms, and people under the age of 24 are not actively using Facebook (socialmediaexaminer.com), with roughly 2.89 billion monthly active users as of the second quarter of 2021, it is still the biggest social network worldwide. In 2012 Facebook was the very first social media platform, where the number of active users (who have logged in during the past 30 days) surpassed one billion. In the first quarter of 2021, 3.51 billion people were using at least one of the company's (Meta) core products (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram or Messenger) (statista.com).

Facebook has repeatedly said that one of the key goals of the platform is to build and support communities (and even significant communities).

And this is clearly tied to the groups, which are regularly expanded with new features. According to a survey by Hootsuite and Wearesocial, the highest proportions of posts are link posts (47.2%), followed by images (35.5%) and finally videos (15.1%) (Digital 2021).

The biggest engagement among these is generated by photos, and posts with no links generate double engagement of posts with a link. Obviously, companies want to redirect Facebook readers to their website, but it certainly looks like the Facebook algorithm does not support it, since the platform itself also wants to keep the users on as long as possible (Cucu 2021).

Among the posts we can find games, sales promotion posts, prize draw games and competitions. Because the algorithm ranks the posts for each user individually and shows those that are expected to generate meaningful dialogue, each post reaches about 2-4% of active followers. For this reason, it is worthwhile to use interaction-enhancing games and competitions, so the post will appear to a larger percentage of followers (Klausz 2020). That is why a brand should use interaction-enhancing posts: puzzles, word search, quizzes like „who’s celebrating their birthday...?” „Which is your favorite...?” (write in a comment, tell with emojis). However, these should be treated with caution: those comments do not represent a real commitment, they only comment to win the prize, but in such cases the number of shares is high.

Instagram

Instagram, also owned by Meta, is primarily a communication platform for sharing images and videos, but we can also run ads on it. By its nature, it was initially suitable for image campaigns, now, with the advent of the Instagram shop, it is also suitable for sales purposes (shop function). Instagram’s 1.39 billion users are generally younger than Facebook users. Of particular importance is the 24-hour story (which also exists on Facebook now), which can be a picture and a video. The stories you want to preserve can be placed in so-called highlights, highlights on the page, where they are preserved and easy to find.

Instead of the previous chronological order, Instagram's algorithm now shows users the post based on how often they interact with the posts and videos of the user who posted them, how they usually respond to these types of posts (image, carousel, video, etc.) and when the post was

published. But it also considers how often a user checks in, how many pages they follow, and typically how much time they spend on Instagram (Cooper 2021).

In general, carousel-type posts (when multiple images are stacked one after the other) generate a higher number of likes than single images. Here, too, the purpose of posts can be to increase awareness, conversion, sign-up, or increase the follower base.

To increase engagement and trigger interactions, similar content is used here as on Facebook: prize draws, quizzes, questions (write in comments). Hashtags are typically used in captions, as they allow users to find content. Many brands also use custom hashtags, typically having their own brand name hashtags. In addition to hashtags, branded filters can also play a significant role in the popularity of a post, with virtual reality and augmented reality filters an advantage. The platform also allows you to post short videos in a feed or story, possibly a Reels video, which most people use, as well as using IGTV (for posting longer videos). Now Instagram has announced the merger of its video feed posts into a single format, which means the retirement of the IGTV brand, and that feed posts, Stories and Reels all now have the same 60-second video post length (Hutchinson, 2021a).

The app also gives brands the opportunity to mark the products in the image and offer the option to purchase it in the shop.

YouTube

In addition to Facebook, the other largest social media platform YouTube (owned by Google), with its 2.29 billion users in 2021. It also acts as a search engine, with many referring to it as the second largest search engine after Google, launching millions of searches a day. However, it is not just a video-sharing platform: it also has attributes typical of social media: it can be used for building a community, liking or disliking videos, allowing users to comment, and responding to comments.

Users can interact with the brand and with each other. The algorithm used by YouTube is actually composed of two algorithms: one is the home page algorithm, the other selects the suggested videos for users. The latter selects the ones that the user is most likely to watch based on their interest and activity to date (Southern, 2021).

The type of brand videos (*Figure 3*) by content can be help (also known as hygiene), hub and hero (thinkwithgoogle.com).

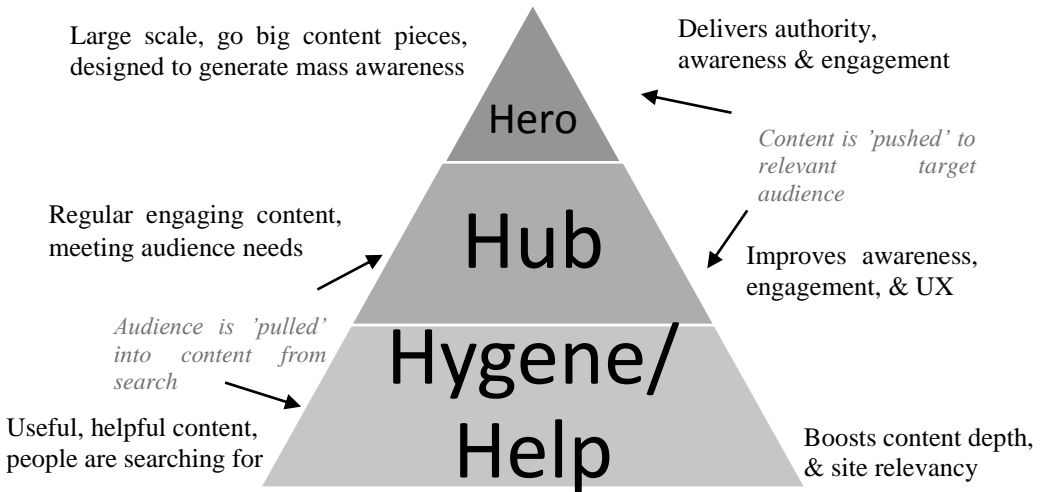


Figure 3. **Hero, hub, help content.** (Source: Underwood 2017)

Help content takes advantage of searches, with each video offering a solution to a problem, highlighting how the brand can help. These are the most often published “pull” content. It is important that the content is easy to understand and follow, and the title of the video contains the search keywords that users type in the search engine to find a solution to their problem.

Hub content is regularly produced, characterized by consistent visual language, suitable for the brand to build a loyal audience with it. They are usually made every week or two, often with the same characters, and can be pull and push content. The hub content gives users a reason to return to the channel, increases brand awareness, and generates engagement. It encourages customers to move on to the next stage of the sales funnel. These can be influencer videos, interviews, demo videos about the products.

Hero content is rarely produced, we see one or two such videos a year because they are high budget, related to campaigns or occasions. Hero content is suitable for gaining new fans, since they are typically bold, humorous, inspiring, fun or all at once. They are often television commercials as well.

TikTok

TikTok became the most often downloaded mobile app after acquiring Musical.ly (the company behind TikTok, ByteDance, acquired Musical.ly in 2018 and merged it with the already existing TikTok). The bottom line is that users were able to upload “lip- synch” videos to it. This means presenting a performance on well-known songs or other audio material. In 2021 it is available in 155 countries and has 800 million active users. It is permanently among the top 10 most downloaded apps in the App Store. 66 percent of its users are under the age of 30, with the majority of the audience being Chinese (500 million Chinese users) and running in China as Douyin.

TikTok is based on a two-part feed. The main feed on the right is a continuous content that is “for you page” recommended by the system. As you slide down between videos, you can like the videos. The feed on the left, on the other hand, is made up of videos made by the video content creators you follow. The videos are arranged vertically and occupy the entire screen. Most of the content is video of 15 seconds or less, but video clips can be up to 60 seconds long. Each video is repeated continuously. TikTok’s live video is also available for those with more than a thousand followers (Németh 2019).

The nature of the TikTok algorithm makes it important on the app to find an existing community users can engage with, and unlike on other social networks, where people spend much of their time engaging with accounts they already follow, TikTokers spend most of their time on the For You page. So, it is the highly personalized TikTok algorithm that fuels the For You feed is what makes the app so addictive (Newberry 2021). As TikTok itself defines: “A stream of videos curated to your interests, making it easy to find content and creators you love ... powered by a recommendation system that delivers content to each user that is likely to be of interest to that particular user” (newsroom.tiktok.com).

Brands can also take advantage of the app’s popularity: they can have their own account, create, and post content there, work with influencers in their niche, have brand takeovers, participate in hashtag challenges, or use branded effects.

Twitter

Twitter is a real-time microblogging platform with which enables users to write short text messages to each other or post it on Twitter's homepage, or other programs using Twitter APIs. The first tweet was sent by Jack Dorsey (Twitter's CEO) on March 21, 2006, and it took 3 years, 2 months and 1 day to reach the milestone of having one billion total tweets on the platform. Twitter currently has 369.5 billion users, and 206 million users access it daily, 75% of them are not based in the US. Twitter is most popular among users aged 25-34, most of them male (Dean 2021).

At launch, its defining features were the tight limits placed on each post, known as a tweet. Originally, users could only use 140 characters, although in 2017 that was doubled. You can also place links in the text, so you can briefly share important messages. There are two basic concepts on Twitter, followers and following. Of course, the two statuses are not mutually exclusive, whoever I follow can follow me and vice versa. It comes from the peculiarities of the structure that there are many who are followed by a large group of users – well-known people, actors, athletes, musicians, but even news sites – and of course there are many users who almost exclusively just follow others. The other characteristic concept is ReTweet, or RT. This means that if you like someone else's tweet, you can "re-tweet" it too, meaning you will post it to those who may not be following the original source, but are following you. This way, news can spread at lightning speed.

The other important feature, as already mentioned, is the communication of links. Since the original 140 characters were very few, it is possible to shorten the links on different pages, such as a <http://bit.ly/>; <http://tinyurl.com/>; <http://twurl.com/>. Of course, the need to share images soon arose, for which Twitter maintains its own hosting service, this is <http://twitpic.com>. Here users can upload the image they want to share on their Twitter account (netpedia.com). Now Twitter is experimenting with new formats of tweets, such as donations and currency, and it recently launched Twitter Spaces, a clone of Clubhouse's live-audio platform (Iqbal 2021)

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social networking platform created specifically for professionals and currently it has more than 660 million users in more than 200 countries around the world. As of October 2021, nearly 60 percent of LinkedIn users worldwide were between the ages of 25 and 34 years old (statista.com). Unlike other everyday social networks, on LinkedIn people do not search for friends, but seek to strengthen existing business relationships with other professionals or try to build new ones. It focuses primarily on building careers and building business relationships, meaning it helps users connect and share content with, among others, professionals, including colleagues, potential employees, business partners, and more. And it also offers companies an ever-improving opportunity for marketing (webshark.hu).

So, on LinkedIn, it does not necessarily matter who has how many “contacts”, but the nature of the relationship between two users.

Just like on other social media platforms, users can show engagement with the posts. The number of likes is usually proportional to the visual content. The more image and video content you upload to a business page, the more we will like each post. This is even more typical for pages under 10,000 followers. At this follower base size, it is a good idea to mix the ratio of photos to videos and test which one your audience prefers. In addition to the likes, the other main goal may be to get the readers to interact and comment. This is not an easy task, perhaps this is where most of the challenges lie. Using visual content can also be a good solution for this. Readers are more likely to comment on images, video posts, making it easier to contact them (Fodor 2021).

The primary purpose of LinkedIn is to build networks, but it also has several features common to other social platforms. For example, in addition to a personal profile, you can create profiles for companies, write posts, share external content, and the platform even has its own advertising system. There are so-called groups on LinkedIn that deal with topics related to different industries or skills. Members can take part in the conversation and even post job opportunities. There are both open and closed groups - in the latter, group leaders must accept user connection requests.

Pinterest

Pinterest is not just a social network — it is also a visual search engine and bookmarking tool. This platform can best be described as a virtual discovery system where we find ideas for almost every walk of life. It was launched in 2010, first in beta only, with an invitation system, and then became available to everyone. As of October 2021, it has got 444 million monthly active users, most of them are women aged 18-44 (digital 2021).

By their own definition, Pinterest is about connecting people through images that they consider important because of their interests, but being a social media platform, Pinterest can also be used for sharing pins to a friend or a group or messaging with them.

Pins are bookmarks that you can use to save your favorite ideas. If you click through the Pin, you can visit the website to learn how to make it or where to buy it. Upon registration, Pinterest “queries” the new user about their favorite topics and based on their answers, then it generates a personalized feed. Typically, a user’s smart feed is based on things they had clicked on previously, saved or interacted with them. The change to their algorithm introduced in mid-2020, the so-called “controllable distribution” sets a target number of impressions for different types of content – based on what users have seen in the past. Thus, brands can get their content seen even by users who have never interacted with them (Mullery, S. 2021).

Following the latest trends, Pinterest is looking to align with the rising interest in video-consumption and introduce a new native-content format called Idea-Pins, which can drive deeper and more frequent engagement. As they say

“Creator-driven content has proven to be an engine for engagement on other platforms, but Idea Pins offer differentiated value to both Creators and Pinner because they are designed to inspire action rather than simply to entertain.” (Hutchinson, A. 2021b).

They are also planning to introduce live shopping, just like many other social media platforms do, many times in cooperation with influencers.

Snapchat

Snapchat is an application – and a visual social media platform – available on smartphones released in 2011. As of October 2021, Snapchat has 538 million users and 293 million daily active users. Snapchat allows us to send fleeting images, videos, and text to each other and, also, share a story. The app was launched in 2011 and changed immediately the way people communicated on social media. Two years later, in 2013 the Stories function was added, which has been adapted by other social media platforms since then. Previously users’ text posts, statuses, photos, and videos were published, people commented on them, and all these stayed there forever. Snapchat has changed that.

Snapchat initially focused on private, person-to-person photo sharing, but several functions have been added to it since its launch. The most popular feature of Snapchat is that the servers automatically delete all Snaps (images and videos) and stories after they have been seen by the recipients and it also deletes unopened snaps after 30 days. Users can link snaps together and broadcast them as they were captured. These appear to their followers as a “story” reel, they can watch every snap and follow the creator’s whole day, but it can be played back only for 24 hours, and it is deleted (or can be saved to the Memory section).

It also offers a large variety of filters, lenses and 3D world lenses, and “spectacles”, i.e. glasses that bring augmented reality to life. Nowadays, Snapchat does not only enable users to record and share live videos, but to video chatting, messaging, locating friends on engaging maps and applying AR-based lenses are also popular functions with the users (Beveridge, 2021)

They can also create caricature-like Bitmoji avatars. There is even a designated “Discovery” area that showcases short-form content from major publishers (Tillman 2021).

While users are connecting with their friends via the “Chat” area, Snapchat connects them with brands and creators via the “Discover” icon. So, for businesses targeting people under the age of 35, Snapchat is a suitable platform to connect with a younger demographic.

Creating content for social media platforms

When creating content for social media platforms, it is essential that visitors get content which is valuable for them. Per definition,

„Content marketing is the marketing and business process for creating and distributing content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience — with the objective of driving profitable customer action” (Pulizzi 2014).

As the entry threshold for content production and distribution in case of social media platforms is low (it is lower than for other types of media, even a smartphone is enough) and consumers themselves are also producing content, and since traditional advertising is not only becoming more expensive but also narrowing due to ad avoidance and increasing advertising noise, content retention has advanced in recent years. At the same time, precisely because of these, consumers have become increasingly demanding.

Thus, brands need to produce content that is able to attract users to the different platforms of the brand. Content can be created from virtually anything: you can make a video from an event, post with a photo, behind-the-scenes short video, interview with participants – the possibilities are endless. Brands can either *create* original content, re-use the ones which paid off earlier (*curate*) or *collaborate* with influencers to reach the users. These may be turned into platform-specific content so that they can better reach their target audience who will resonate with the content published on the different platforms.

The quality of the content also varies, determined by the needs of consumers. It is important for them to be able to select the content they are interested in. Search tags and hashtags (#) help with this. Of course, in the case of social media, we can also discover the integration of online and offline content in many places: for example, magazines often post their articles on their social media pages, but some content is only available in print.

New frontiers and challenges in H2H marketing context

As Dahl (2019) stated, social media is really a fundamental game-changer, but traditional communication models still apply. While new forms of communication appeared and made a profound impact on the choice of channel, the manner communication is conducted through them, fundamentals of communication and communication theories have not been annihilated by them. For instance, what Aristotle said about rhetoric, is still valid, obviously, with some adjustments to today's society. The factors connected to personality of the speaker (ethos), the impact he (or she) makes on the audience (pathos) and his (or her) reasoning (logos) have been and will always be of great importance, and today's influencer marketing is also based on this 'who-said-what-to-whom' concept.

The power of the customer has increased with the spread of the Internet, also, customers' habits have fundamentally changed. Live shopping on social media sites is already reality, but pages will enable customers even more to respond directly without causing potential damage to the brand. Since in electronic word-of-mouth marketing, besides specialized forums and chatrooms, social media platforms also play a significant role and negative reviews, comments can cause serious damage to the brand image.

Information and content creation and their distribution has become unprecedentedly easy, which brought new dynamics into the markets and customers have become more aware of possibilities and options (Kotler et al, 2021). Along with the increase in digitalization, which, by now, has reached basically every corner of the world with 59.5% of Internet penetration in global population (Digital 2021), using marketing automation and artificial intelligence in the processes even in our everyday life has also become common now. At the same time, the need for a human voice has also increased on the customer side, which leads us to the development of H2H marketing and communications, which approach, as Kotler and his fellow-researchers define (Kotler et al, 2021: X) "challenges the core competencies needed to create and deliver meaningful value propositions to customers and other collaboration partners". In this human-to-human mindset customers are not any longer abstract elements, passive recipients of communication, but human beings, "who make the decision with all their rational and irrational behavior, emotions and wishes" (Kotler et al, 2021: 100).

Apart from creating and consuming content, people will probably use social media more to join closed groups and to join in crowd-based activities with people they do not know but have things in common with.

The Coronavirus Pandemics in 2020 has taught businesses not to praise their own greatness anymore; instead of sending sales-oriented messages they had learn to create content, which their customers could resonate with and, they had to select the channels which are relevant for them in the future. In the era of wearable technology and mobile first ecosystem, new trends are emerging in social media too. Technological developments and changing user needs affect social media platforms fundamentally: some of them get more popular, some lose popularity, others might even disappear; sometimes certain content types like video get more attention, some lose spotlight. No matter what changes take place, one thing is definite: people always remain people, the basic rules of human communication, behavior, persuasion, and motivation will remain the same and will always apply.

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