EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY: A CASE OF SAFARICOM COMPANY

BY

JOHN ISIKA MUSEE

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AFRICA

SUMMER 2015
EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY: A CASE OF SAFARICOM COMPANY

BY

JOHN ISIKA MUSEE

A Project Report Submitted to the Chandaria School of Business in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters in Business Administration (MBA)

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AFRICA

SUMMER 2015
STUDENT’S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University Africa in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed: __________________________ Date: __________________________
John Isika Musee (ID No 640714)

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed: __________________________ Date: __________________________
Dr. Zachary Mosoti

Signed: __________________________ Date: __________________________
Dean, Chandaria School of Business
COPYRIGHT

All rights reserved. No part of this report may be photocopied, recorded, or otherwise produced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means without prior permission of the copyright owner.

© 2015 by John Isika Musee
ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry, a case of Safaricom Company. The study was guided by the following research objectives:

To determine the effect of social media promotion outlet platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited, to explore the effect of social media customer information gathering platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited and to determine the effect of social media on improvement of the organization competitive edge.

A descriptive research design was used for the study. The total population comprised of 2,463 permanent staff members who work for Safaricom Ltd. as at March 2015. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. A sample of the group was 96 permanent employees. Primary data collection was used. A pilot study was conducted to determine the efficacy of the questionnaire and it engaged twenty respondents picked randomly from each division. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program and presented using tables, and figures to give a clear picture of the research findings at a glance.

The findings on the effect of social media promotion outlet platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited indicated that the platform is designed to boost the sales of a company’s product and services. Social media seeks to increase a company’s sales. Social media is as part of an integrated communication tool designed for any marketing communications strategy. This means that social media is a phenomenal crisis communication strategy. Social media can persuade the customers to fall in love with the conversations a firm’s brand. Social media is also designed to boost the competitiveness of a company’s product and services. Social media is a communication function that seeks to build good relationships with the consumers and competitiveness.

The findings on the effect of social media customer information gathering platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited indicated that the building blocks of a social
network are user pages, known as profiles as the leading social media platforms in gathering information. Social media facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform. Social profiles present a number of opportunities for interacting with customers including gathering information about the company’s brands. Social networking sites use emails to enable users to connect with each other. Social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. Social media develops targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than traditional media.

The findings on the effect of social media on improvement of the organization competitive edge indicated that the platform promotes word of mouth to ensure fast information spread the emergence of the word of mouth using consumer user generated created media to create an organization competitive edge. Social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Social media provides numerous opportunities for strengthening and expanding relationships to customers. Social media offers a quicker and more cost-effective way to reach highly targeted markets than marketing through traditional media, such as websites, newspapers and television.

The study concludes that social media is designed to boost the sales of a company’s product and services as part of the organization promotion outlet. Social media facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform. Social media promotes word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread the emergence of the word of mouth using consumer user generated created media to create an organization competitive edge.

The study recommends that social media should be optimised widely as an integrated marketing communication. The study recommends that the social media platforms should be optimized in gathering information from the customers. The study recommends that social media should promote word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread to enhance networking in creating a competitive organization edge.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The path to this accomplishment has been very long; however, I have always managed to keep going down the path in order to complete this degree. I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Mosoti for piquing my interests in completing this project. My supervisor spared no efforts in supporting me through the program and I wish to thank him deeply for his understanding. Also, I thank everyone for sharing their thoughts and ideas on the subject matter and allowing me to use the information to conduct my research on this topic. Last but not least, I express my deep gratitude to my family for their continued support and understanding throughout.
DEDICATION

This research proposal is dedicated to everyone who taught me the values of life, knowledge, respect, integrity, hard work, and self improvement and to those who taught me to simply stand up when I fall, be all good to people, and always encouraged me to dream and work hard towards my dreams.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

STUDENT'S DECLARATION .................................................................................................................. ii
COPYRIGHT ......................................................................................................................................... iii
ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................................... iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ...................................................................................................................... vi
DEDICATION .......................................................................................................................................... vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS ....................................................................................................................... viii
LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................................. ii
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................................... iv

## CHAPTER ONE ............................................................................................................................... 1
  1.0 INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Background of the Study .............................................................................................................. 1
  1.2 Problem Statement ....................................................................................................................... 4
  1.3 General Objectives ...................................................................................................................... 6
  1.4 Specific Objectives ...................................................................................................................... 6
  1.5 Importance of the Study .............................................................................................................. 7
  1.6 Scope of the Study ....................................................................................................................... 7
  1.7 Definition of Terms .................................................................................................................... 8
  1.8 Chapter Summary ....................................................................................................................... 9

## CHAPTER TWO ............................................................................................................................. 10
  2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW .............................................................................................................. 10
  2.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................... 10
  2.2 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage .................................... 10
  2.3 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage ......................... 16
  2.4 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge ..................................... 22
  2.5 Chapter Summary ..................................................................................................................... 26

## CHAPTER THREE .......................................................................................................................... 27
  3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ................................................................................................. 27
  3.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................... 27
  3.2 Research Design ....................................................................................................................... 27
3.3 Population and Sampling Design ..............................................................27
3.4 Data Collection Methods ........................................................................30
3.5 Research Procedures ............................................................................30
3.6 Data Analysis Methods ..........................................................................31
3.7 Chapter Summary ..................................................................................31

CHAPTER FOUR ............................................................................................33
4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS .....................................................................33
4.1 Introduction ............................................................................................33
4.2 General Information ...............................................................................34
4.3 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage .......38
4.4 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage ....43
4.5 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge ..........48
4.6 Chapter Summary ..................................................................................55

CHAPTER FIVE ..............................................................................................56
5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ....................56
5.1 Introduction ............................................................................................56
5.2 Summary ................................................................................................56
5.3 Discussion ..............................................................................................57
5.4 Conclusion .............................................................................................64
5.5 Recommendations ..................................................................................65

REFERENCES ...............................................................................................67

APPENDICES .................................................................................................72
APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION .................................................72
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE .................................................................73
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Population .............................................................................................................................................. 28
Table 3.2: Sample Size ........................................................................................................................................ 30
Table 4.1: Response Rate .................................................................................................................................... 33
Table 4.2: Social Media Provide the Most Persuasive Message to the Right Prospects .................................. 38
Table 4.3: Social Media Boost the Sales of a Product or Service .................................................................. 39
Table 4.4: Social Media Set Up Competitions with Attractive Prizes ......................................................... 39
Table 4.5: Social Media Increase PR Activity ................................................................................................. 40
Table 4.6: Social Media Develops a Relationship with the Potential Buyer ................................................. 40
Table 4.7: Social Media Measures Customer Responses .............................................................................. 41
Table 4.8: Social Media Provide Immediate Response for Customer Relationship .................................. 41
Table 4.9: Social Media Create and Implement Marketing Campaigns .......................................................... 42
Table 4.10: Social Media Presents the Opportunity and Challenge to Marketers ....................................... 42
Table 4.11: Social Media Platforms and Promotion Outlet for Organizations ................................................ 43
Table 4.12: Social Media for Different Clients and Contact Strategies .......................................................... 44
Table 4.13: Social Media Create a Centralized Management ......................................................................... 44
Table 4.14: Social Media Develop Campaigns that Reach Specific Segments ............................................ 45
Table 4.15: Social Media Enables the Upload a Video and Sharing of Information ........................................ 45
Table 4.16: Social Media Keeps In touch with the Customers ......................................................................... 46
Table 4.17: Social Media Create Public Profiles for User’s Profile .................................................................. 46
Table 4.18: Social Media Have Custom Applications ...................................................................................... 47
Table 4.19: Social Media Sending E-Mail ......................................................................................................... 47
Table 4.20: Ratings of Social Media Platforms in Gathering Information .................................................... 48
Table 4.21: Social Media Empowering Individuals and Companies ............................................................. 49
Table 4.22: Social Media Communicating with the Larger Community ......................................................... 49
Table 4.23: Social Media has a Broad Audience of Influencers and Consumers ........................................... 50
Table 4.24: Social Media Ensure a Fast Information Spread .......................................................................... 50
Table 4.25: Social Media Helps Keeps the Original Information ..................................................................... 51
Table 4.26: Social Media Connects to the Global Audience ........................................................................... 51
Table 4.27: Social Media Staying Connected with the Stakeholders of the Company ................................ 52
Table 4.28: Social Media Provides Immediate Feedback on the Product ............................................... 52
Table 4.29: Social Media is more about Receiving and Exchanging Perceptions ........................................... 53
Table 4.30: Social Media Informs on the Customers Products and Services .................53
Table 4.31: Ratings on Social Networking and Organizations Competitive Edge ........54
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents .................................................................34
Figure 4.2: Age Range of Respondents ............................................................35
Figure 4.3: Marital Status of Respondents .........................................................35
Figure 4.4: Education Level of Respondents .....................................................36
Figure 4.5: Most Used Social Media Network ...................................................36
Figure 4.6: Frequency of Social Media to Market Safaricom Products and Services ....37
Figure 4.7: Years in Using Social Media to Market the Products and Services ..........38
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Gathoni (2012), social networks and social media are part of a phenomenon that is changing the way organizations communicate with their customers and potential customers in a new market segment. Traditionally, advertising through newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and direct mail were the only way to communicate with the audience. These media make targeting specific buyers with individualized messages very difficult (Scott, 2010). For a long time commercial media have been used to convey messages designed to develop consumers’ attitudes and feelings towards brands. Today, many of the messages are designed to provoke audiences into responding, either physically, cognitively, or emotionally (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

In the modern days, people shop, read and listen to the latest news, pay bills, socialize with friends and even stream movies and TV-shows using the web. The tools and strategies for communicating with customers have changed significantly with the emergence of the phenomenon known as social media, also referred to as consumer generated media (Foux, 2009). This form of media describes a variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, spread and used by consumers’ intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues. Social media have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behaviour including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behaviour, and post-purchase communication and evaluation (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

Social media is now an integrated part of the lives of hundreds of millions of people and allow them to connect and communicate to others online. Social media such as forums, Facebook, Twitter and blogs, have grown exponentially over the past decade. Forums now exist on matters ranging from Star Wars to travel (Gaonkar, 2010). In 8 years, Facebook has gone from a page for Harvard students to more than 900 million members and Twitter is now a more popular online destination than CNN (Scott, 2010). At the same time, blogs have grown from a tool for the tech-savvy niches in 1997 when Jorn Barger first coined the term “weblog” (Wortham, 2007) to a cornerstone of the internet.
These social media developments have not gone unnoticed by the business sphere. Many companies maintain their own Facebook page and design their commercials in the hope that they will go viral (Huang et al., 2011). Creating and monitoring one’s own brand forum has been a practice adopted by managers for some time (Fournier and Lee, 2009). Bloggers are frequently sponsored in return for endorsements (Arango, 2009) and Twitter has become an increasingly important source of communication for many companies (Case and King, 2011). In total, eMarketer.com estimated 2010 worldwide social network advertising spending at USD 3.3 billion, compared to USD 2.53 billion in 2009. Yet for the vast sums of money being spent on social media marketing, there is still a great deal of insecurity among professionals about the best marketing practices in this new arena. The experiences of Sony, Wall-Mart and Nestlé are poignant examples of that (Foux, 2009).

Prior to the social media, organizations had only two significant choices to attract attention; buy expensive advertising or get third party ink from the media. With the rise of social media in recent years there has been a heightened interest from marketing professionals in the potential of these new outlets for reaching consumers. Instead of one way interruption, the social media marketing is about delivering useful content at just the precise moment that a buyer needs it (Scott, 2010). Organizations that understand the new rules of marketing and public relations develop relationships directly with consumers (Case and King, 2011). Social media has also opened a tremendous opportunity to reach niche buyers directly with targeted messages that cost a fraction of what big-budget advertising costs (Scott, 2010).

The development of social media has had a profound impact on the way client organizations communicate with their audiences. Generally, there has been a trend to reduce the amount of traditional media and an increase in the amount of digital and online media (social media) (Baines et al., 2010). Digital technologies, and the impact on digital television, internet, email, viral marketing, blogging, and social networking sites, now represents major forms of interactive and direct marketing opportunities (Baines et al., 2010). According to Baines, Chittenden and Rettie (2010) the balance within the mix of media used by organizations is changing and new ways of delivering messages are evolving. As a result of an increasing internet penetration there has been a development
and adoption of digital resources, from mobile technologies to internet and social media resources such as blogs, social networking sites, wikis, and similar multimedia sharing services. These digital trends are altering consumer expectations of their interaction with the social media or an organization, but they are also changing how products and services are marketed in the digital space (Baines et al., 2011).

Jaret (2006), for example, describes how one endorsement on a popular blog helped propel a small skin care company from $100,000 to $4,000,000 in sales. Figures like this indicate that large numbers of consumers make purchase decisions based on mentions and endorsements in social media. Yet far from all attempts from companies to harvest the potential of social media marketing have been successful. Chebet (2012) explains that the growing popularity of social media is making its mark on individuals as well as companies such as Safaricom.

Safaricom is the leading provider of converged communication solutions in Kenya. The company was incorporated on 3 April 1997 under the Companies Act as a private limited liability company. It was converted into a public company with limited liability on 16 May 2002. The company is one of the leading integrated communications companies in Africa with over 17 million subscribers. Safaricom provides a comprehensive range of services under one roof: mobile and fixed voice and data services on a variety of platforms. The company has made heavy investments in broadband capacity giving us a foothold in undersea cable, satellite, metro and trunk cable connectivity (Safaricom, 2014).

Safaricom, has the widest 3G network and the most expansive Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WIMAX) presence in Kenya. The result of this has been that over 92% of Kenyans who use the Internet regularly, access the Internet through the Safaricom network/Infrastructure. The company also pioneered commercial mobile money transfers globally through M-PESA, the most successful such service anywhere in the world. The vision of the company is to be the Best Company in Africa. To achieve this goal, Safaricom providing good network coverage, offering competitive calling tariffs, better services and investing in new technologies (Safaricom, 2015). The Kenyan mobile market is the largest in East Africa with more than 17 million subscribers (Kimutai, 2008).
Safaricom Limited uses social media to contact some section of its customers. The use of the social media in offering customer service by the mobile network service company provides value to the customers as well as the shareholder of the company. Social media helps to improve the service offered to customers leading to improved business revenues (Njau, 2014). This has made Safaricom to be recognized for its efforts on social media at the Marketing Society of Africa (MSK) in 2014 Awards (Squad Digital, 2014). The MSK was started as the Advertising Society of Kenya in 1962 which later became the Marketing Society of Kenya that is responsible for empowering and regulating the marketing industry by creating policies that govern the industry. It provides a platform for interaction and self-regulation for practicing marketers (Njau, 2014).

During the event of the awards, Safaricom emerged as the top social media blogger or influencer in the MSK Awards. Safaricom has had impressive global brands devoted on Facebook that supplemented its efforts in providing good customer care, reputation management and driving engagement (Squad, 2014). On corporate twitter account, the company was the leading followed by Bata Kenya, Chasebank, Kenya Airways and Dstv (Njau, 2014). Since majority of Kenyans have at least two mobile lines such as Safaricom, Airtel, Orange Telkom Kenya and Yu Kenya. This presents a cut throat competition in the use of social media among mobile telephone industry. With the increased use of social media activities, it has become increasingly important to understand how Safaricom can use social media to maintain and enhance its competitive advantage in winning over the masses of the consumers through the social media.

1.2 Problem Statement
A number of studies have been conducted on the use of social media in marketing. Gathoni (2012) carried out a study on the adoption of social media networks as an innovative new market entry strategy by Kentucky fried chicken in Kenya. The study sought to establish the social media as an innovative new market entry strategy into Kenya using the case of Kentucky Fried Chicken. The findings revealed that KFC used social media in entering in new markets to a very great extent hence its choice for the Kenyan market. The use of social media was found to be affordable as opposed to traditional advertising methods such as television and radio commercials, banner
advertisements, print placements and participating in promotional events were found to be costly for their businesses besides creating monotony in a highly competitive media.

Another study was done by Chebet (2012) on the use of social media as a strategic communication tool by Safaricom Ltd. The study sought to determine the factors that have influenced the adoption of social media in service delivery and also establish how the application of social media as a strategic communication tool enhances service delivery by Safaricom Limited. The study found out that social media ensured faster and instant information dissemination of information on the product and services and further ensured faster responses and feedback from customers. Social media was also employed in communication with the public on company matters; in customer relations management and managing a crisis with the company's. The study concluded that Safaricom has highly adopted social media tools on day to day activities and it has been effective in the service delivery.

Wairimu (2012) conducted a study on the influence of social media on the effectiveness of business operations of the youth operated small and medium enterprises in the municipal council of Nakuru. This study sought to establish the influence of the knowledge of use of social media, the attitude to the use of social media and the level of use of social media have on the effectiveness of business operation among 132 youths owning SMEs. From the findings of the study, it was evident that social media has played a very significant role in the performance of the youth operated SMEs. Having positively influenced business operations,' social media promised to offer many exciting, new opportunities for businesses to connect with their customers. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that businesses should rethink their future strategies and shift most of their marketing efforts towards engaging with customers.

Gathii (2010) conducted a study on the impact of social media on traditional mass media functions in Kenya using the case of Royal Media Services Limited, Nairobi. This study sought to find out whether social media have changed the way traditional media functions like surveillance, correlation, socialisation and entertainment are carried out in the news media firms by using Royal Media Services as a typical case. The study revealed that Royal Media Services uses some forms of social media tools like FaceBook, Twitter, and
Really Simple Syndication (RSS) to a small extent. It thus concludes that social media impacts traditional media functions to a small extent. Various challenges like information’ overload and audience segmentation were identified.

Nyawira (2012) conducted a study on the influence of social media on customer service in Safaricom Limited. The results indicated that social media has enabled the company to work more efficiently and innovative and gain more customer satisfaction when it comes to customer service. As a result it led to an increase in customer satisfaction levels and increased the number of users of the social media channels. The study concluded that social media is one of the cheapest and reliable channel when it comes to customer service. By comparing and contrasting the relatively large number of comprehensive studies on the aspects of social media, however, there is the relative lack of studies on how marketing via social media affects the company’s competitive advantage. While most studies have contributed to the understanding of various aspects of social media, there is still a small fraction of how the marketing practices enhance a company’s competitive advantage. Given this gap presented by the social media phenomenon, this study aims to address these issues in detail.

1.3 General Objectives
The general objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of social media platforms in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry, the case of Safaricom Company.

1.4 Specific Objectives
The study was guided by the following research objectives:

1.4.1 To determine the effect of social media promotion outlet platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited.
1.4.2 To explore the effect of social media customer information gathering platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited.
1.4.3 To determine the effect of social media on improvement of the organization competitive edge.
1.5 Importance of the Study

1.5.1 Safaricom Management

The findings from the study can help marketing managers have a deeper understanding of how social media can be used to create a competitive advantage for the organization. Such knowledge may also help marketing managers more accurately evaluate the influence of social media in providing value to the customers for long term competitive advantage.

1.5.2 Telecommunication Industry

The study can help the management of other telecommunication companies can determine how to carry out their advertising and promotional strategies appropriately using social media in the marketing of their products and services. In addition, the study will help the companies relate their social media effectiveness with business performance indicators such as repeat purchases, customer satisfaction, competitive advantage and marketing orientation. Generally, the knowledge gained through this study will assist the companies’ management in integrating effective social media practices and market effectiveness.

1.5.3 Researchers and Academicians

The study can also contribute to the body of knowledge on social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry which will be of interest to both researchers and academicians who seek to explore or investigate on the impact of the social media aspect.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to the staff of Safaricom Limited Company who use social media platform to market various products and services offered by the company. The population of the study was 2,463 permanent employees. The organization acted as the converging point of all the customers that made it easy to survey the reaction of the customers in relation to the use of the social media phenomenon. The study was conducted for a period of one month between May to June 2015. One of the limitations of the study was the high non-response rate. However, phone calls and follow up was done
to achieve a high response rate. The other issue was the publication of the research findings and this was overcome by assuring the respondents of confidentiality.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Blog
A blog is a type of content management system (CMS) that makes it easy for anyone to publish short articles called posts (Zarrella, 2010).

1.7.2 Facebook
Facebook is a social network site that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and co-workers. Anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment (Chebet, 2012).

1.7.3 Public Relation
Public relation is the practice of managing the flow of information between an organization and its publics (David, 2006). Public relations is often referred to as PR and gains an organization or individual exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payments (Grunig, James and Hunt, Todd, 2004).

1.7.4 Social Media
Social media can be defined in a broad term as the different kinds of content that form social networks: posts on blogs or forums, photos, audio, videos, links, profiles on social networking web sites, status updates and more (Case and King, 2011).

1.7.5 Social Media Marketing
Social media marketing can be defined an integrated marketing communications that coordinates all the elements of the promotional mix which includes advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing, and sales promotion to produce a customer focused message (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).
1.7.7 Twitter
Twitter is a micro-blogging social network service, which allows users to share anything with their followers by answering a simple question: ‘What are you doing?’ Answers to this question are short messages called ‘tweets’ which length is limited to 140 characters (Huang et al., 2011).

1.7.8 YouTube
YouTube is an example of a content community. It is a video sharing service. The principle of YouTube is really simple; you upload videos and share with other people. YouTube enables you to upload a video and then, put the URL as a link on your website to send people to the video (Arango, 2009).

1.8 Chapter Summary
Chapter one presents the background of the study. The chapter also describes the statement of the problem, outlines the specific objectives of this research, the significance of the study, importance and the scope of the study as well as the working definitions of specific terms used in the project. Chapter two covers the literature review based on the specific objectives. Chapter three highlights the research methodology and procedures the researcher adopted in conducting the study. Chapter four was on the results and findings. While chapter five was on the summary, discussion, conclusion and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
This chapter reviews literature on the adoption of social networking services as a management strategy. The first section of the study reviews literature on how the social media platforms offer more than a promotion outlet for organizations. The second section explores literature on how the social media platforms can be used to gather information from customers and the third section looks at how the adoption of social networking services gives organizations a competitive edge.

2.2 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage

2.2.1 Promotional Mix
Social media marketing is seen as finding its way to become a recent component of organizations’ integrated marketing communications. Integrated marketing communications coordinates the elements of the promotional mix such as advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing, and sales promotion - to produce a customer focused message (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). According to Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), Advertising refers to the means of providing the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects at the lowest possible cost. Kotler and Armstrong (2003), provide an alternative definition: Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor.

Sales Promotion is designed to boost the sales of a product or service. It may include an advertising campaign, increased PR activity, a free-sample campaign, offering free gifts or trading stamps, arranging demonstrations or exhibitions, setting up competitions with attractive prizes, temporary price reductions, door-to-door calling, telemarketing and personal (Scott, 2010). The public relations programs are a planned communication effort by an organization to contribute to generally favourable attitudes and opinions toward an organization and its products. It is a communication function that seeks to build good relationships with consumers, stockholders, and legislators. The advantages of publicity are low cost, and credibility (particularly if the publicity is aired in between
news stories like on evening TV news casts) (Huang, Lee, Cheng and Liu, 2011). New technologies such as weblogs, web cameras, web affiliates, and convergence (phone-camera posting of pictures and videos to websites) are changing the cost structure (Case and King, 2011). The disadvantages are lack of control over how your releases will be used and frustration over the low percentage of releases that are taken up by the media (Zarrella, 2010).

Personal selling is oral communication with potential buyers of a product with the intention of making a sale. The personal selling may focus initially on developing a relationship with the potential buyer, but will always ultimately end with an attempt to close the sale (Case and King, 2011). According to American Marketing Association, personal selling is the personal or impersonal process of assisting or persuading a prospective customer to buy a product or service and to act favourable upon an idea that has commercial significance to the seller. On the other hand, direct marketing involves the distribution of products, information and promotional benefits to target customers through interactive communication in a way that allows response to be measured (Jobber, 2007). It accounts for direct connections with carefully targeted individual customers to obtain an immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship (Arango, 2009).

Social media is one of the many mediums that can be used as part of integrated communication tool in designing any marketing communications strategy (Foux, 2009). This section addresses media, types of media, and social media as a revolutionary new media based on user generated content, value chain for user-generated content, social media marketing as a phenomenon and social media marketing platforms (Arango, 2009). The emergence of social media platforms offers marketers inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns (Case and King, 2011). Social media marketers typically focus on creating content that generates attention, as well as motivational incentive for people to share it with their social network (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Case and King, 2011).

As social media is about the users actively contributing to the services (Multisilta, 2008), it is even more dependent on user involvement for its development and survival compared to other forms of media. The keys to social media success are user participation, user
loyalty, user motivations, and the interaction between people. The facilitation of flexible design, user centered content, collaborative content creation, and the establishments of social networks are some of the factors making social media attractive to users, producers and business organizations (Mannonen and Runonen, 2008). The low cost of social media marketing as well as the amount of users and user information available has contributed in making social media marketing big business (Huang et al., 2011).

2.2.2 Revolutionary Aspect of Social Media

People interpret and use the term social media in different ways. Social media is a broad term to describe all the different kinds of content that form social networks: posts on blogs or forums, photos, audio, videos, links, profiles on social networking web sites, status updates and more. Social media allows people with no knowledge of coding or web development to upload and post unique content easily and share with the world instantly. Simply put, social media is any kind of information we share with our social network, using social networking web sites and services (Eley and Tilley, 2009). Shao (2008) more specifically addressed the core factor behind social media that is user generated content and what appeals people to go for user generated content. User Generated Content (UGC), also known as consumer-generated media (CGM) or media enabling user created content (UCC), refers to any material created and uploaded to the Internet by non-media professionals, whether it's a comment left on Amazon.com, a professional-quality video uploaded to YouTube, or a student’s profile on Facebook. According to Shao’s analysis, content is consumed in order to fulfil the need for information, entertainment, and mood management. To begin with, the Internet has become a mass medium for consumer-sponsored communications and social media itself competes with traditional publishers about consumer attention. Both of these reasons cause new challenges for the advertising companies (Nielsen, 2009).

2.2.3 Value chain for User-Generated Content

The content is provided on originally non-commercial terms by its creators, potentially seeking recognition, fame or later financial reward (Zarrella, 2010). While user-generated/created content may rarely be a perfect substitute for traditional media content, it seems to create value for its viewers; as evidenced by the time spent by users
downloading and watching (such as potentially high consumer surplus as content is generally available for free) (Case and King, 2011). Although the content itself may have been free, user generated content creates strong demand for various commercial products such as devices, software and Internet access to create and consume the content (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

In the UCC value chain users create content for or on user-generated/created content platforms while using devices (such as personal computers, mobile phones, digital cameras, and microphones), software (video editing tools), the UCC platforms themselves and an Internet access provider to create and post content (Huang et al., 2011). As opposed to the traditional media publishing chain and its selectivity as to what content shall be published, here all users with access are able to create and publish their content widely. In some cases, users even have their personal blog which does not rely on an external UCC platform (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). A likely greater supply of creative content based on a greater number of active and published creators is available, potentially in a lower or greater diversity of technical and content quality, yet engaging viewers (Case and King, 2011).

The selection of which content works and which content does not is done by the users themselves, through recommending and rating, possibly leading some creators to recognition which would not have been selected otherwise by traditional media publishers (Foux, 2009). The time it takes for content to be created and spread is greatly reduced as compared to the traditional media publishing chain (Huang et al., 2011). This may impact the type and quality of content. Users access the content while downloading or streaming it from the user created content (UCC) platform through their access provider and while using devices (such as laptop) and software (Such as video streaming software) (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

2.2.4 Social Media and User Generated Contents’ Impact on Advertising

Social networking as a major force on the internet represents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers since the advent of the Internet itself. Traditionally, marketers have been able to buy time or space on fixed media in a controlled context (Case and
King, 2011). In other words, they could be guaranteed their message wasn’t being delivered in a hostile or inappropriate environment (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Today, such guarantees are harder to make, and that lack of control can be a source of great anxiety for marketers. But it also represents an unmatched opportunity (Huang et al., 2011).

UGC requires marketers to alter their approach, instead of broadcasting one-way messages at their audiences; marketers are compelled to engage in a conversation. Doing so carries risks, but failure to do so carries more (Case and King, 2011). While all advertising on the Web is interactive by nature, but UGC sites offer a unique and more complex level of engagement (Huang et al., 2011). Instead of inviting individual customers into an environment made by marketers, marketers on UGC sites are entering a conversation initiated, maintained, and owned by customers themselves. This requires those marketers to behave differently, or risk what can be very vocal disapproval from those consumers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

2.2.5 Encourage Usage Feedback on New Discounts and Services

Social media content is updated frequently and indexed favourably by search engines in a more frequent manner (Xiang and Gretzel, 2012). So it is important for firms to update their social media with the latest coupons or sales. Brands that can persuade customers to fall in love with their conversations in Web 2.0 will be successful (Meadows-Klue, 2008). Wikipedia and YouTube are usually the top-five favorites in search engine results on any topic they are affiliated with. So firms that have their social media results in search engines displaying interesting messages will spark active conversations from any visitor, such as videos on new services or frequent promotions listed by the firm (Case and King, 2011). The aim of social media is also to convert these conversations into healthy feedback that encourages positive conversations between firms and customers as well as customer-customer interactions (Huang et al., 2011). Encourage Feedback for New Discounts and Services Firms must compete for consumer-related content on social media that has significant and persuasive effect on brands (Xiang and Gretzel, 2012).
The ability to get customers by interacting with other websites is a form of marketing and strategic partnership (Hoffman and Novak, 2000). Firms that have a presence in a cross or related websites in an attempt to diversify and increase their customer base are more successful in term of marketing and strategic partnerships. Social media constitute a form of cross-related website that can help to diversify, retain, and increase a firm’s customer base through marketing and strategic partnership (Huang et al., 2011). Social media are used to have a positive effect on brands, products, and services through timely responses to customers’ issues and requests (Case and King, 2011). For instance, when visitors on a firm’s social media realize that customers’ issues have not been addressed for months and the comments are negative, this implies that the firm is avoiding the situation, or the firm does not care about their customers. Also, firms can request feedback on discounts to encourage used and conversation (Xiang and Gretzel, 2012).

2.2.6 Crisis Communications

Social media can be used by public relations practitioners become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever there is a major accident or natural disaster affecting an organization and its community (Shao, 2003). Other types of crises involve bankruptcy, product failures, and management wrongdoing. In some cases, social media can call for an organization to become involved in helping potential victims; in other cases, the crisis may require rebuilding an organization’s image. In any case, experts recommend that business owners prepare a plan in advance to deal with potential crises in an honest and forthright manner (Rehman and Brooks, 2007). The main objective of such a plan is to provide accurate information quickly in order to reduce uncertainty. After the San Francisco earthquake of 1989, for example, the Bank of America utilized its public relations department especially through social media to quickly establish communications with customers, the financial community, the media, and offices in 45 countries to assure them the bank was still operating.
2.3 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage

2.3.1 Emergence of New Communication Channels
Communication and information technology development has encouraged the emergence of new communication channels that have increased the options available to organizations for building relationships with clients (Albesa, 2009). Johnson and Greco (2013) explain that desires and different hopes from different clients can sometime require certain unique information and contact strategies. Communication channels and strategies now differ broadly from the ones in former times or offline times. It is important to understand the relationship between digital communications and traditional communication in the old media; for example, TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and billboard ads, the communication model was and is one-to-many compared to one-to-one or many-to-many communication model in digital media like blogs, social networks, wikis and other social media (Chaffey et al., 2003).

The increased fragmentation of media and customers, as well as the revolution in mass communication by the new communication channels such as internet and mobile communication technologies has created the need for a new approach to marketing communications that can ensure centralized management and a consistency of communication messages sent towards various audiences (Smith, 2002). The idea of integrated marketing communication (IMC) is to create consistency and synergy by combining marketing communication elements so that they support and enhance each other, to promote potential communication understandings (Duncan and Everett, 1993). Social Media marketing is today seen by many practitioners as the new arena for market communication and on top of the list of users of the different mediums is Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn (Steltzner, 2009).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which facilitates the creation and exchange of user generated content. It consists of different Internet applications such as blogs, social networking sites, content communities, collaborative projects, virtual game worlds and social worlds. Winer (2009) affirms that many companies today are using some or all of the new media to develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than
traditional media. Foux (2006) suggests Social media is perceived by customers as a more trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than communications generated by organizations transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that marketing managers should comprise social media in the communication mix when developing and executing their Integrated Marketing Communication strategies and they presented the social media as a new hybrid element of promotion mix. Nair (2011) takes social media as a complex marriage of sociology and technology that cannot be underestimated in its impact to an organization marketing communications, choice as to when to engage, how to manage and measure, and whether to lead or to follow is complex but not an impossible task. These cannot be answered simply by one formula because the context and the market dynamics are strong variables in these decisions. Even though the interest for social media is huge, few companies understand what the term social media can mean to their businesses. But how much it has been given importance, as an IMC tool, varies from region to region (PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), 2009). Even as organizations realize the need to engage customers at as many touch points as possible, there is still a need to stay ahead of the rapidly shifting marketing and communications landscape by integrating social media into traditional strategies to reach out to B2B and B2C audiences (Pownall, 2011).

2.3.2 Content Communities

The main objective of content communities is the sharing of media content between users. Content communities exist for a wide range of different media types, including text, photos, videos and PowerPoint presentations (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). The multimedia content that is created is called User Generated Content (UGC) (Zarrella, 2010). YouTube is an example of a content community. It is a video sharing service. The principle of YouTube is really simple; you upload videos and share with other people. YouTube enables you to upload a video and then, put the URL as a link to a website to send people to the video. You can also use the “embedding” code to make the video appear on your own website or blog. Doing so is free and it will make your site look very professional. If you also allow people to embed your video you will create viral marketing and people will help you spread the word. Signing up to YouTube you get your own YouTube channel on which you can constantly update people interested in your
business (Clapperton, 2009). Watching a video online is a large commitment of attention, because of this, shorter is better. In addition your videos must be very engaging. You must strive to keep your audience engaged the entire time they are watching your videos. YouTubers are very sensitive to product pitches, so the contribution also has to be as non-commercial as possible (Zarrella, 2010).

2.3.3 Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect with each other. Users create personal information profiles, invite friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and send e-mails and instant messages to each other. These personal profiles can include any type of information, such as photos, video, audio files, and blogs (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). Social networking sites are a hot topic for marketers right now, as they present a number of opportunities for interacting with customers, including via plug-in applications, groups and fan pages (Zarrella, 2010). The building blocks of a social network are user pages, known as profiles. The profile page includes different information about the person. Profiles are for real people, and companies use specific pages or groups for their company information. Customizing the different pages and profiles is a good way of reflecting your personality and brand (Pownall, 2011).

Facebook is an example of a social networking site. According to Clapperton (2009), Facebook was possibly the site that got social networking moving. It has more or less coincided with the social media revolution and is today the largest social network site to date in terms of numbers. It also has the most features useful to the social media marketers (Zarrella, 2010). Facebook began as an academic idea which intended to keep alumni of a college in touch with each other when they did not have the time to stay in touch properly (Clapperton, 2009). It soon spread beyond academia as people without an email address ending with “.edu” could in 2006 create their own accounts (Scott, 2010). Facebook allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile. Users can connect with a page and become fans. Pages can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications (Zarrella, 2010). Essentially Facebook is one of the more complex social networking environments, but potentially very rewarding when businesses have its strengths and weaknesses in mind (Pownall, 2011). It is therefore important for businesses to not underestimate the time and effort it is
going to take to supervise the profile and pull together an online community (Clapperton, 2006). Clapperton (2006) writes that you cannot just expect that things happened, you have to be active.

2.3.4 Gaining Competitive Advantage from Information

People are accustomed to use social media in leisure activities. They are blogging about their hobbies, sharing vacation photographs in Flickr, updating their status in Facebook and uploading music videos in YouTube Zarrella, D. (2010). Most of the young people entering job markets today are referred to as people who have grown up with computers, internet and mobile phones (Scott, 2010). For them digital technology is part and parcel of life, and it can be assumed that they are willing and even eager to adopt the use of social media also in the job context. This view is supported by Xiang and Gretzel (2012) survey that revealed professional and work-related blogging is growing and that professional blogging has a positive impact on the career and the competitiveness of companies.

Companies use social media information in generating their products and services feedback. In addition to the know-how needed to produce them a company also needs to understand to whom, at what price, where, when and how the products and services should be sold in order to get the best possible profit (Baines, Chittenden and Rettie, 2011). This understanding is built on experience and knowledge that already exists within a company, but in order to see the whole picture and new possibilities and threats a company also needs information from its external business environment (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). This indicates that social media collects market intelligence acquires the information, filters and refines it to a suitable form and deliver it to the users within the organization. The goal is to make sure that all the needed and useful information and knowledge regarding competitive issues makes its way to the users. At the same time another goal is to prevent excess and unreliable information from blurring the decision making process (Greco, 2013). Implicitly social media would seem to have potential to be a valuable aid helping competitive intelligence to reach these objectives.
2.3.5 Information Source Identification and Information Gathering

Social media provides competitive intelligence from multiple sources and methods to gain the information needed in the organization. Some of the information is published and easy to reach either for free (such as companies’ statutory financial information) or against money (such as consultant reports) (Nair, 2011). Some unpublished information may be very hard or even impossible to get (such as competitor’s plans of entering new market areas, possible upcoming changes in legislation), but finding the right sources might make it reachable (Pownall, 2011). For example, a person working in a customer company may have valuable information concerning a certain competitor. Or an employee in a government department could be of assistance when pondering the impacts of a new regulation to the company. How to identify these possible sources in order to contact them is often a difficult and time consuming task. Social media can be of assistance in information source identification (Scott, 2010).

Pownall (2011) has listed and graded networking sites with information about people such as the possible human sources of competitive intelligence. Sites such as LinkedIn, Wink.com and Jobster.com are examples of business social networks, where people list their professional information. This enables extensive searching for company employees, locations, organizational charts, titles and specialties. Making a search in such a professional social network may produce company specific information such as headcount, revenue, employees by function, direct phone numbers and email addresses (Scott, 2010). The networks help to locate a possible information source and may even give his/her contact information. The information is given by the individuals using the network, and sometimes they upload company specific information that obviously should not be made public (Scott, 2010). This makes these networks even more interesting for a competitor’s competitive intelligence personnel, because in addition to helping to identify possible personal information sources the network site itself can also act as a primary information source (Qualman, 2011).

2.3.6 Information and Knowledge Sharing Within the Company

Social media successful share the information acquired within the company. Social media engages employees in the competitive intelligence process as analyzers and sharers of information and knowledge adds value to the original information. Pownall (2011) found
that employees who have acquired knowledge from external sources are quite eager to share it to others in the company. Scott (2010) states that knowledge sharing is more efficient in small-group setting, because it provides the source and the opportunity to interact in a two-way manner. Face-to-face knowledge sharing is the most natural and often also preferred setting for interactive knowledge sharing (Nair, 2011). This however is not always possible, and even less so in a geographically dispersed company. When people are located in different places globally, the possibilities for face-to-face meetings are few (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). The prevailing economical recession has decreased the possibilities of face-to-face meetings between different locations from before by making companies to reduce or even ban internal business travelling altogether. Therefore information and knowledge needs are shared in some other way, independent of geography and time zones (Nair, 2011).

Traditional groupware, such as video meetings and multi-participant phone meetings have become more popular, but they do not meet all the information sharing needs regarding competitive intelligence (Scott, 2010). One central problem is that only a limited amount of people are actually able to participate in the meetings: the individuals having the best up to date knowledge concerning the issue discussed may not be in those meetings, or them being possible information sources in the issue may even not be known (Greco, 2013). Therefore it would be advantageous to have a medium via which all essential employees could share their information about competitive issues and accumulate the company’s competitive intelligence assets which makes social media essential for intelligence sharing (Scott, 2010). The potential of social media applications in enhancing information and knowledge sharing is implicit considering the purposes they are used in leisure: communicating, publishing information and networking (Pownall, 2011; Nair, 2011).
2.4 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge

2.4.1 Empower Companies to Promote their Products and Services
Social Media turning into an influential add on to the integrated marketing communications is news to many companies and organizations (Drury, 2008). The social media marketing is a process that empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. It connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers (Weinberg, 2009). In the context of social media incorporation into integrated marketing communications, it is important to discuss the opportunities as well as the challenges it offers for the organizations. Social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread, and thereby keeps the original information, just with small deviations, and everything happens instantly at a global audience (Qualman, 2011).

2.4.2 Brand Building
Social media provides numerous opportunities for strengthening and expanding relationships to customers. These opportunities include targeted brand building with activities like podcasts, executive blogs or microsites, developed with particular focus for a specific target audience. Social media offers a quicker and more cost-effective way to reach highly targeted markets than marketing through traditional media, such as websites, newspapers and television. Additionally, social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company such as technology vendors, and distributors. Social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product and make corrections, and to move to next challenge. Including customers in the product development companies can build bonds that promote long-term product or brand loyalty. The social media also presents numerous opportunities to strengthen and expand employee communications (Weber, 2009).

2.4.3 Adoption of Different Marketing Techniques
Marketing through social media challenges a company to adapt different techniques than marketing through traditional channels. Weber (2009) explicates that marketing to the social media requires adopting a completely new way of communication with an audience
in a digital environment. Drury (2008) clarifies that marketing with traditional media was much about delivering the marketing message to the target audience. With the increase of social media networking, building a relationship and conversation has become a major and focal part of marketing adopting the pull marketing strategy. Marketing is no longer one dimensional; it has become a two-way process engaging a brand and an audience. Marketing within social media is not just about telling and giving a message, it is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas (Drury, 2008). Demographics like gender, age, education and income, together with lifestyle factors have become less relevant compared to what people do, think, like and dislike. Further the communication in social media is less about creating contained and controlled messages and more about creating persuasive environments to which people are attracted. The best online pages will combine both professional and user generated content (Weber, 2009).

2.4.4 Consumer Gain Power Courtesy Social Media
According to Constantinides and Fountain (2009), the power structure has changed due to fact that customers have access to information which previously was not available for them. As a result, the consumer attitudes changes leading to new consumer needs, values and buying behaviour. Also Hearn, Foth and Grey (2009) acknowledge that the participatory culture, enabled by recent technological innovations, shifts the communication flows away from a central business-to-consumer model. The development is towards consumer-to-consumer flows of communication as customers start to create content on their own by using new media applications and services (Hearn, Foth and Grey, 2009). In order to stay competitive it is important for the organizations to understand that it can both gain and risk when using social media as a marketing and branding tool. When planning social media marketing programs, it is also vital to know the differences between marketing done through social media compared with marketing through traditional channels.

2.4.5 New hybrid Element of Promotion Mix
Mangold and Faulds (2009) point out that the popular business press and academic literature offers marketing managers very little guidance for incorporating social media into their marketing communication strategies. Social media should be included in the promotion mix when developing and executing their integrated marketing
communications strategies. It is a hybrid element of the promotion mix because it combines characteristics of the traditional integrated marketing communications tools with a highly magnified social media influence whereby marketing managers cannot control the content and frequency of such information. Social media is also a hybrid due to it springs from mixed technology and media origins that enable instantaneous, real-time communication. Is also utilizes multi-media formats and numerous delivery platforms, with global reach capabilities (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

The rise of Internet-based social media has made user generated consumer-to consumer communications very significant in the marketplace (Case and King, 2011). The content, timing, and frequency of the social media-based conversations occurring between customers are outside managers’ direct control (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Therefore, managers must learn to shape consumer discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization’s mission and performance goals (Scott, 2010). Methods by which this can be accomplished are marked herein. They include providing customers with networking platforms, and using blogs, social media tools, and promotional tools to engage customer (Huang et al., 2011). Also Mangold and Faulds (2009) support the view that customers engaged with a product, service or idea are more likely to communicate through social media. The engagement can also be creatively stimulated for products and services which generate less psychological involvement of customers.

Both traditional and Internet based tools can be used in engaging customers. Allowing customers to see others using the product can entertain and engage customers while communicating product benefits (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The internet has become a mass media vehicle for consumer-sponsored communications. It now represents the number one source of media for customers at work and the number two source of media at home. Customers are turning away from the traditional sources of advertising: radio, television, magazines, and newspapers (Lempert, 2006). Customers also consistently demand more control over their media consumption. They require on-demand and immediate access to information at their own convenience. Customers are turning more frequently to various types of social media to conduct their information searches and to make their purchasing decisions (Vollmer and Precourt, 2008).
Customers are more likely to talk to others about products when those products support their desired self-image, or the way they want others to see them. Both product design and promotion efforts should be undertaken with the desired self-image in mind. Customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. Organizations can leverage emotional connections by embracing one or more causes that are important to their customers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The tools and strategies for communicating with customers have changed significantly with the emergence of the phenomenon known as social media, also referred to as consumer user generated created media. This form of media describes a variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, spread and used by consumers’ intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Social media have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behaviour including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behaviour, and post-purchase communication and evaluation (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The new communications paradigm developed in the research article enables marketing managers to recognize the power and critical nature of the discussions being carried on by customers using social media (Huang et al., 2011).

2.4.6 Addressing Customers’ Issues Effectively
Customers are now relying more on social media as a more reliable source of information than firms’ commercials or traditional marketing when making purchasing decisions (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Social media can be utilized to solve customer-related problems for free, thereby increasing customer service and quality while reducing service cost (Thurau et al., 2010). Customers are making purchasing decisions in real time, so the earlier firms respond to customer concerns and issues, the better for them. This is because for each comment a user posts, their friends get to see the firm’s response too, like in Facebook. This means that negative issues left unattended to can be very disastrous for the firm. On Twitter, a user’s friends get notified and they can also see all the comments when they go on their friend’s social media sites. On YouTube videos, anybody can leave a comment about each video and you do not have to be a customer or subscriber, and everyone can see each comment in real time, as in posted-article and blog commentaries. Firms should strategically use their postings to promote their products. For instance,
McDonalds and Wal-Mart have a presence on Facebook, while KPLC has a presence on Twitter.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on the adoption of social networking services as a management strategy. The first section of the study reviewed literature on how the social media platforms offer more than a promotion outlet for organizations. The second section explored literature on how the social media platforms can be used to gather information from customers and the third section looked at how the adoption of social networking services gives organizations a competitive edge. The next chapter is on the research methodology.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
The study aimed to evaluate the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry, the case of Safaricom Company. This chapter highlights various methods and procedures the researcher adopted in conducting the study in order to answer the research questions raised in the first chapter. The chapter was organized in the following structure: the research design, population and sample, data collection methods, sampling design and sample size, research procedures, data analysis methods and lastly the chapter summary.

3.2 Research Design
This research adopted a descriptive research design. A descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way. In addition, a descriptive study attempts to describe a subject, often by creating a profile of a group of problems, people or events, through collections of data and the tabulation of frequencies on research variables and the research reveals who, what, when, where or how much (Saunders and Thornhill, 2000). This design is appropriate for this study since the research intends to establish whether the said variables of social media and competitive advantage correlate in one way or another. The dependent variable for this study was the promotion of Safaricom Limited competitive advantage in the products and services while the independent variable was the social media promotion outlet platform, social media customer information gathering platform and social media on improvement of the organization competitive edge.

3.3 Population and Sampling Design

3.3.1 Population
A population can be defined as the total collection of elements about which a study makes some inferences (Welman and Kruger, 2001). The total population comprised of 2,463 permanent staff members who work for Safaricom Ltd. as at May 2015. Each of the respondents were chosen from one of the thirteen divisions which carry various departments.
The thirteen divisions are: CEO’s Office (Chief Executive Office), Information Technology, Finance, Human Resources, Risk, Commercial, Technical, Supply Chain and Administration, Corporate Affairs, Customer Care, Investor Relations, New Products and Services and Marketing and Communications Department. Table 3.1 below shows the staff distribution statistics in greater detail.

Table 3.1: Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>Employee Numbers</th>
<th>Percentage of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO’s Office</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Chain</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Affairs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Care</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investor Relations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Products and MPESA</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Communication</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,463</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3.3.2 Sampling Design and Sample Size

3.3.2.1 Sampling Frame

The sampling frame for this study was obtained from the Human Resource (HR) department employee data which was a list of all the staff members. This information was presented as a table representing the monthly headcount.

3.3.2.2 Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the number of employees from the thirteen divisions of Safaricom Ltd. The sample size of the group was 246 permanent employees. In stratified sampling the sampling frame is divided into non-overlapping groups or strata for example geographical areas, age groups and gender (Welman and Kruger, 2001). A sampling frame was taken from each stratum. For the purpose of this study each if the thirteen divisions’ in Safaricom Ltd was taken as a stratum. This was appropriate for this study as it gave a greater precision by incorporating every segment of
the population. This particular frame was obtained from the H.R Division which holds all employee records.

3.3.2.3 Sample Size

Ligthelm and Van Wyk (2005) describe the sample size as a smaller set of the larger population. In order for the researcher to get a representative sampling size, then, the sampling size must be large (Cooper et.al, 2001). The sample size is derived from Yamane (1967) formula:

\[
n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}
\]

Where \( n \) is the sample size, \( N \) is the population size and \( e \) is the margin of error (Yamane, 1967).

\[
n = \frac{2,463}{1 + 2,463 (0.1)^2}
\]

\[
n = 96
\]

From the formula the sample size of will be 96.
Table 3.2: Sample Size Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO office</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Chain</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Affairs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Care</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investor Relations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Products and MPESA</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Communication</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,463</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Primary data collection method was used. Cooper and Schindler (2006) define primary data as original research where the data being collected is designed specifically to answer the research questions. Data was collected using a questionnaire that had been developed by the researcher based on the research questions. A questionnaire comprising four sections was used to collect the data for the study. The questionnaire was divided in four sections: section one collected data on the general information of the respondents, section two on how the social media platforms offer more than a promotion outlet for organizations, section three on how the social media platforms can be used to gather information from customers and section four on how the adoption of social networking services gives organizations a competitive edge. The questions had variables which were measured in both interval and nominal scales. For interval measures, a five-point Likert-scale (1- ‘strongly agree’ to 5- ‘strongly disagree’) was used to measure respondents’ agreement with the concept under investigation.

3.5 Research Procedures

A pilot study was conducted to determine the efficacy of the questionnaire and it engaged two respondents picked randomly from each division. From the pilot study, feedback received from the pre-test was incorporated into the questionnaire before administrating
the final copy. The Pre-test incorporated at least was done on one person from each division.

Since most of the divisions are within the building or easily accessible for those located in separate premises, an email to the department Personal Assistants (PA) were sent requesting that they alert the members in their respective departments of the pilot testing. The respondents who accept to be part of the study will sent the physical questionnaire via their departmental P.A. The pilot questionnaires will be collected the next day from the P.As by the researcher.

A total of three research assistants were identified and thoroughly trained on expectations and objectives of the research. The final revised and final questionnaire were then prepared and administered among the targeted respondents in April of 2015. The questionnaires were coded to ensure ease of tracking when doing the final data analysis. The data collected was coded to establish the division and department within the division and all responses were put into a data base using the SPSS package.

3.6 Data Analysis Methods
To ensure easy analysis, the questionnaire was coded according to each variable of the study. This study used descriptive statistics. According to Denscombe (2006), descriptive analysis involves a process of transforming a mass of raw data into tables, figures, frequency distribution and percentages, which are a vital part of making sense of the data. In this study, the descriptive statistics was used to measure frequency distribution while correlation regression will be used to measure multiple variable analyses. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program and presented using tables, and figures to give a clear picture of the research findings at a glance.

3.7 Chapter Summary
This chapter discussed the methodology that was used to collect data for the research, the population and sampling design, data collection and the method of analyzing the data collected. The chapter highlighted the methods that were used to conduct the research and justifies the use of this method. It further describes the population of the study, sampling technique used, sample size and justifies the sample size. Finally the chapter describes the
data collection method used for the study and provides the method that was used to analyze the data. Chapter four focuses on presenting the results and findings of the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the primary data collected from the field using the questionnaire as a tool. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry, the case of Safaricom Company. The study was guided by the following research objectives: To determine the effect of social media platforms in offering more than a promotion outlet for organization, to explore the effect of social media platforms in gathering information from customers and to determine the effect of social media improves the organization competitive edge.

The chapter presents an analysis of the information designed to respond to the research objectives as outlined in the study. There are four subsections presented on the questionnaire. The first is a general section which addresses the respondents’ demographic characteristics. The following three subsections address specific research questions and they include the general information, the effect of social media platforms in offering more than a promotion outlet for organization, the effect of social media platforms in gathering information from customers and the effect of social media improves the organization competitive edge.

Ninety six questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, however, 72 responded thereby creating a response effective rate of 75%. This response rate makes the data collected from the field more representative enough to answer the research questions. The results are indicated in the following Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Target Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Response Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Respondents</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 General Information
The general information for the study comprised of the gender of the staff respondents, age of the respondents, marital status, education level, the most used social media network and the years used in social media to market the company products and services.

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents
The researcher sought to find out the gender of the target respondents involved in the study. The findings in Figure 4.1 illustrates that 36% of the respondents are females as compared to 64% males. Thus, the findings indicate that majority of the respondents were male.

![Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents](image)

4.2.2 Age Range of Respondents
The researcher sought to find out the age of the target respondents involved in the study. The findings in Figure 4.2 established that most of the respondents were aged between 21 to 30 years (74%), followed by 31 to 40 years (17%), 4% above 51 years and 3% between 41 to 50 years. Thus, the findings indicate that most of the respondents were below 40 years.
4.2.3 Marital Status of Respondents

The results in Figure 4.3 indicated that most of the respondents were single (54%), 42% were married and 4% were separated. This indicates that majority of the respondents were unmarried or either dating.
4.2.4 Education Level of Respondents
The study intended to determine the major education qualification from the target respondents involved in the study. The findings on Figure 4.4 illustrates that 82% of the respondents had undergraduate degree and 18% of the respondents graduate degrees.

![Figure 4.4: Education Level of Respondents](image)

4.2.4 Most Used Social Media Network
The researcher sought to determine the mostly used social media network from the respondents approached in the study. The findings in Figure 4.5 revealed that 40% of the respondents used facebook as the most famous social media network, 24% used youtube, 15% used twitter and 11% used blogs as a social media. This shows that majority of the respondents used facebook as the most used social media network.

![Figure 4.5: Most Used Social Media Network](image)
4.2.5 Frequency of Social Media to Market Safaricom Products and Services

The researcher sought to determine the frequency of using the social media to market Safaricom products and services. The findings indicated 38% of the respondents suggested that they used the social media multiple times per day to market Safaricom products and services, 25% suggested that it was once per day, 20% stated a few times per week, 16% mentioned weekly and 1% of the respondents used the social media a few times a month or less to market the company products and service on the platform. The findings indicates that majority of the respondents suggested that they used social media multiple times per day to market Safaricom products and services. Figure 4.6 indicates the findings.

![Frequency of Social Media to Market Safaricom Products and Services](image)

**Figure 4.6: Frequency of Social Media to Market Safaricom Products and Services**

4.2.5 Years in Using Social Media to Market the Company Products and Services

The researcher sought to determine frequency in using social media to market the company products and services from the target respondents involved in the study. The findings in Figure 4.7 indicated that most of the respondents (46%) used social media once a week, 19% once a month and another 19% once in a year and 16% everyday. This indicates that the frequency of using social media was relatively high.
4.3 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage

4.3.1 Social Media Provide the Most Persuasive Message to the Right Prospects
The study intended to determine whether social media provided the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects from the respondents involved in the study. The findings illustrate that 35% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 41% disagreed, 6% were neutral, 7% agreed and 6% strongly agreed that the social media provided the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects. Thus, the results showed that most of the respondents disagreed that the social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects. The findings are indicated on Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Social Media Provide the Most Persuasive Message to the Right Prospects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 Social Media Boost the Sales of a Product or Service
The study intended to determine whether the Social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service from the respondents involved in the study. The findings indicate
that 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 16% disagreed, 46% neutral, 21% agreed and 8% strongly agreed that Social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service. Thus, the results show that the Social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service. The findings are indicated on Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Social Media Boost the Sales of a Product or Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3 Social Media Set Up Competitions with Attractive Prizes

The study intended to examine whether the social media sets up competitions with attractive prizes from the respondents involved in the study. The findings indicate that 60% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 15% disagreed, 6% were neutral, 7% agreed and 10% of the respondents strongly agreed that the social media set up competitions with attractive prizes. Thus, the results indicate most of the disagreed that the social media sets up competitions with attractive prizes. The findings are indicated on Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Social Media Set Up Competitions with Attractive Prizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media set up competitions with attractive prizes</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4 Social Media Increase PR Activity

The researcher wanted to know if the social media increase PR activity. The findings tell us that 45% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 28% disagreed, 5% were neutral, 9% agreed and 7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the social media increase PR activity. Thus, the results indicate most of the disagreed that the social media increase PR activity. The findings are indicated on Table 4.5.
Table 4.5: Social Media Increase PR Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media increase PR activity</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.5 Social Media Develops a Relationship with the Potential Buyer

The study intended to investigate whether the social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer. The findings indicate that 40% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 38% disagreed, 6% were neutral, 7% agreed and 3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer. Thus, the results show that most of the respondents disagreed that the social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer. The findings are indicated on Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Social Media Develops a Relationship with the Potential Buyer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.6 Social Media Measures Customer Responses

The study intended to determine whether the social media allows response to be measured from the respondents involved in the study. The findings illustrate that 37% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 41% disagreed, 3% neutral, 11% agreed and 7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the Social media allows response to be measured. This shows that most of the respondents disagreed that the social media allows response to be measured. The findings are indicated on Table 4.7.
Table 4.7: Social Media Measures Customer Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media allows response to be measured.</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.7 Social Media Provide Immediate Response for Customer Relationship

The study aimed to determine whether the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship from the respondents involved in the study. The findings show that 17% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 56% disagreed, 8% were neutral, 9% agreed and 8% strongly agreed that the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship. Thus, the results show that the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship. The findings are indicated on Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Social Media Provide Immediate Response for Customer Relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.8 Social Media Create and Implement Marketing Campaigns

The study examined whether the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns from the respondents involved in the study. The findings indicate that 59% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 14% agreed, 9% neutral, 8% agreed and 9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns. Thus, the results show that the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns. The findings are indicated on Table 4.9.
Table 4.9: Social Media Create and Implement Marketing Campaigns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.9 Social Media Presents the Opportunity and Challenge to Marketers

The study determined whether the social media presents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers. The findings illustrate that 45% of the respondents strongly agreed, 28% agreed, 8% neutral, 9% agreed and another 9% strongly disagreed that the social media presents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers. Thus, the results show that most of the respondents disagreed on social media presents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers. The findings are indicated on Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Social Media Presents the Opportunity and Challenge to Marketers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The company creates an Social media presents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.10 Social Media Platforms and Promotion Outlet for Organizations

To determine the ratings of the social media platforms and promotion outlet for organizations from the respondents involved in the study. The findings established that most of the respondents claimed that the social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service (mean=3.04) as the leading social media platforms and promotion outlet for organizations. This was followed by the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship (mean=2.24), social media become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever (mean=2.11) and the social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects (mean=2.04).
On the other hand, few respondents claimed that the social media sets up competitions with attractive prizes (mean=1.91), fewer respondents mentioned that the social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer (mean=1.89) and very few respondents mentioned that the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns (mean=1.81) with a high (Cvar-0.662) of data. The findings are presented in Table 4.11.

### Table 4.11: Social Media Platforms and Promotion Outlet for Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Platforms and Promotion Outlet for Organizations</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Index (Coefficient of Variation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.124</td>
<td>0.552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>0.334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media set up competitions with attractive prizes.</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.369</td>
<td>0.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media increase PR activity</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>0.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.998</td>
<td>0.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media allows response to be measured</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.079</td>
<td>0.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.017</td>
<td>0.455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.196</td>
<td>0.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media presents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1.190</td>
<td>0.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.152</td>
<td>0.546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage

#### 4.4.1 Social Media for Different Clients and Contact Strategies

The researcher examined whether the Social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies. The findings indicate that 60% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 40% of the respondents disagreed. Thus, the results show that the respondents disagreed that the Social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies. The findings are indicated on Table 4.12.
Table 4.12: Social Media for Different Clients and Contact Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Social Media Create a Centralized Management

The study investigated on whether the social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. The results indicate that 28% of the respondents strongly agreed, 47% disagreed, 8% were neutral, 11% agreed and 6% strongly agreed that the social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. Thus, the results shows that the respondents disagreed on the social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. The findings are indicated on Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Social Media Create a Centralized Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3 Social Media Develop Campaigns that Reach Specific Segments

The study aimed to determine whether the social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments from the respondents involved in the study. The findings indicate that 48% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 23% disagreed, 9% neutral, 13% agreed and 6% strongly agreed that the social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments. Thus, the result disagreed that the social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments. The findings are indicated on Table 4.14.
Table 4.14: Social Media Develop Campaigns that Reach Specific Segments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.4 Social Media Enables the Upload a Video and Sharing of Information

The study examined whether the social media enables the upload a video and sharing of company information from the respondents involved in the study. The findings tell us that 46% of the respondents strongly agreed, 24% agreed, 12% were neutral, 7% disagreed and 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the Social media enables the upload a video and sharing of company information. Thus, the results show that the social media enables the upload a video and sharing of company information. The findings are indicated on Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Social Media Enables the Upload a Video and Sharing of Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Social media enables the upload a video and sharing of company information</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.5 Social Media Keeps In touch with the Customers

The researcher aimed to find out whether the social media keeps in touch with the customers. The findings indicate that 24% of the respondents strongly agreed, 8% agreed, 36% neutral, 15% disagreed and 17% strongly disagreed that the Social media keeps in touch with the customers. Thus, the results show that the respondents were neutral by the Social media keeps in touch with the customers. The findings are indicated on Table 4.16.
Table 4.16: Social Media Keeps In touch with the Customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media keeps into contact with the customers.</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.6 Social Media Create Public Profiles for User’s Profile
Looking at whether the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile from the respondents involved in the study. It was established that 10% of the respondents strongly agreed, 44% agreed, 40% neutral, 2% disagreed and 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile. Thus, the results show that the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile. The findings are indicated on Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Social Media Create Public Profiles for User’s Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.8 Social Media Have Custom Applications
Investigating on whether the social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications from the respondents involved in the study. The findings illustrate that 6% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% agreed, 43% neutral, 6% disagreed and 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications. Thus, the result shows that most of the respondents agreed that the social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications. The findings are indicated on Table 4.18.
Table 4.18: Social Media Have Custom Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.9 Social Media Sending E-Mail

Examining if the social media are used to send e-mails from the respondents involved in the study, the findings tell us that 10% of the respondents strongly agreed, 19% agreed, 63% neutral, 4% disagreed and 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media are used to send e-mails. Thus, the results show that the respondents were undecided on the social media are used to send e-mails. The findings are indicated on Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Social Media Sending E-Mail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media send e-mail</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.10 Ratings of Social Media Platforms in Gathering Information

To determine the ratings of social media platforms in gathering information from the respondents involved in the study. The findings established that most of the respondents claimed that the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile (mean=3.71) as the leading social media platforms in gathering information. Second, a substantial proportion of the respondents claimed that the Social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications (mean=3.45), Social media send e-mail (mean=3.35) and the social media allows instant messages between the customers and the organization (mean=3.17). However, fewer respondents mentioned that the social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments (mean=2.27), social media create a centralized management
and a consistency of communication messages (mean=2.19) and very few respondents mentioned that the social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies (mean=2.11). The findings are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Ratings of Social Media Platforms in Gathering Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratings of Social Media Platforms and Gathering Information from Customers</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Index (Coefficient of Variation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.172</td>
<td>0.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.126</td>
<td>0.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.346</td>
<td>0.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media enables the upload a video and sharing of company information</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.140</td>
<td>0.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media keeps in touch with the customers.</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.428</td>
<td>0.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td>0.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>0.242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media send e-mail</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.839</td>
<td>0.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media creates a website that send video to people on their products and services</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>.794</td>
<td>0.250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge

4.5.1 Social Media Empowering Individuals and Companies

The researcher intended to investigate whether the social media empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels from the respondents involved in the study. The findings are indicated on Table 4.21.
Table 4.21: Social Media Empowering Individuals and Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media empowers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individuals and companies to</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promote their websites, products</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or services through online social</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>channels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2 Social Media Communicating with the Larger Community

The findings on whether the social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels from the respondents involved in the study indicated that 19 of the respondents strongly agreed, 14% agreed, 55% neutral, 19% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed that the Social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. Thus, the results show that the respondents were indecisive on social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. The findings are indicated on Table 4.22.

Table 4.22: Social Media Communicating with the Larger Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media communicate with</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and tap into a much larger</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community that may not have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>been available via traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertising channels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.3 Social Media has a Broad Audience of Influencers and Consumers

An investigation of whether the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. The findings illustrate that 19% of the respondents strongly agreed, 56% agreed, 16% were neutral, 7% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed that the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Thus,
the results show that the respondents agreed that the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. The results are indicated on the Table 4.23.

Table 4.23: Social Media has a Broad Audience of Influencers and Consumers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.4 Social Media Ensure a Fast Information Spread
An examination of whether the social media helps word of mouth to ensure fast information spread. The findings demonstrate that 14% of the respondents strongly agreed, 48% agreed, 32% neutral, 4% disagreed and 2% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread. Thus, the results show that the Social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread. The results are indicated on the Table 4.24.

Table 4.24: Social Media Ensure a Fast Information Spread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread.</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.5 Social Media Helps Keeps the Original Information
The researcher aimed to examine whether the social media helps keeps the original information. The findings indicate that 7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 64% agreed, 19% neutral, 4% disagreed and 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media helps keeps the original information. Thus, the results show that the social media helps keeps the original information. The results are indicated on the Table 4.25.
4.5.6 Social Media Connects to the Global Audience

The study examined whether the Social media connects to the global audience. The findings established that 7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 27% agreed, 52% were neutral, 9% disagreed and 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media connects to the global audience. Thus, the results show that some of the respondents were indecisive on the social media connects to the global audience. The results are indicated on the Table 4.26.

### Table 4.26: Social Media Connects to the Global Audience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media connects to the global audience.</td>
<td>3 6 36 19 5 69</td>
<td>5 9 52 27 7 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.7 Social Media Staying Connected with the Stakeholders of the Company

The researcher wanted to know whether the social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company from the respondents involved in the study. The findings indicate that 8% of the respondents strongly agreed, 16% agreed, 45% were neutral, 28% disagreed and 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company. Thus, the results show that majority of the respondents were indecisive on where the social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company. The findings are indicated on Table 4.27.
Table 4.27: Social Media Staying Connected with the Stakeholders of the Company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company.</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.8 Social Media Provides Immediate Feedback on the Product

The research aimed to examine whether the social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product from the respondents involved in the study. The findings indicate that 12% of the respondents strongly agreed, 53% agreed, 32% neutral, 1% disagreed and another 1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the Social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product. Thus, the results show that the social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product. The findings are indicated on Table 4.28.

Table 4.28: Social Media Provides Immediate Feedback on the Product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product.</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.9 Social Media is more about Receiving and Exchanging Perceptions

The research established that 15% of the respondents strongly agreed, 26% agreed, 52% neutral, 4% disagreed and 1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas. Thus, the results show that the respondents were indecisive on the social media is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas. The findings are indicated on Table 4.29.
Table 4.29: Social Media is more about Receiving and Exchanging Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media is more about</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receiving and exchanging</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perceptions and ideas.</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.10 Social Media Informs on the Customers Products and Services

The study investigated on whether the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. The results reveal indicate that 11% of the respondents strongly agreed, 23% agreed, 60% neutral, 3% disagreed and another 3% strongly disagreed that the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. Thus, the results show that the respondents were indecisive on the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. The findings are indicated on Table 4.30.

Table 4.30: Social Media Informs on the Customers Products and Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media tell customers tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others about products and services</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to which they are emotionally</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connected.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.14 Ratings on Adoption of Social Networking in Organizations Competitive Edge

To determine the effect of adoption of social networking in organizations competitive edge from the respondents involved in the study. The findings established that the leading response was that the social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread, (mean=3.65). Also, a large proportion of the respondents mentioned that the social media helps keeps the original information (mean=3.56), the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected.
(mean=3.52) and the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers (mean=3.41).

However, fewer respondents mentioned that the social media empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels (mean= 3.31), the Social media connects to the global audience (mean= 3.16), the social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels (mean= 3.00) and very respondents mentioned that the social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company (mean= 2.85). The findings are presented in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31: Ratings on Social Networking and Organizations Competitive Edge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adoption of Social Networking and Organizations Competitive Edge</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Index (Coefficient of Variation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>.824</td>
<td>0.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>0.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>.939</td>
<td>0.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread,</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.847</td>
<td>0.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media helps keeps the original information</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td>0.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media connects to the global audience</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.871</td>
<td>0.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td>0.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>0.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>0.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>2.886</td>
<td>0.820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 Chapter Summary
The findings on the effect of social media platforms and promotion outlet for organizations indicated that the platform is designed to boost the sales of a company’s product and services. Social media seeks to increase a company’s sales. Social media can focus on developing a relationship with the potential buyer. Social media is as part of an integrated communication tool designed for any marketing communications strategy. Social media is also designed to boost the competitiveness of a company’s product and services. Social media is a communication function that seeks to build good relationships with the consumers and competitiveness. The findings on the effect of social media platforms and gathering information from customers indicated that the building blocks of a social network are user pages, known as profiles as the leading social media platforms in gathering information. Social media facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform. The findings on the adoption of social networking and organizations competitive edge indicated that the platform promotes word of mouth to ensure fast information spread the emergence of the word of mouth using consumer user generated created media to create an organization competitive edge. The next chapter is on the discussion, conclusion and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this section, the researcher provides a discussion on the findings of the research as compared to the findings in the literature review, the summary of the study and recommendations for further improvement on identifying the measures to be taken on the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry. The research is concluded on the basis of the conclusions drawn from the research objectives.

5.2 Summary

The general objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry, a case of Safaricom Company. The study was guided by the following research objectives:

To determine the effect of social media promotion outlet platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited, to explore the effect of social media customer information gathering platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited and to determine the effect of social media on improvement of the organization competitive edge.

A descriptive research design was used for the study. The total population comprised of 2,463 permanent staff members who work for Safaricom Ltd. as at March 2015. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. A sample of the group was 96 permanent employees. Primary data collection was used. A pilot study was conducted to determine the efficacy of the questionnaire and it engaged twenty respondents picked randomly from each division. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program and presented using tables, and figures to give a clear picture of the research findings at a glance.

The findings on the effect of social media promotion outlet platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited indicated that the platform is designed to boost the sales of a company’s product and services. Social media seeks to increase a company’s sales. Social media is as part of an integrated communication tool designed for any marketing
communications strategy. This means that social media is a phenomenal crisis communication strategy. Social media can persuade the customers to fall in love with the conversations a firm’s brand. Social media is also designed to boost the competitiveness of a company’s product and services. Social media is a communication function that seeks to build good relationships with the consumers and competitiveness.

The findings on the effect of social media customer information gathering platform on competitive advantage in Safaricom Limited indicated that the building blocks of a social network are user pages, known as profiles as the leading social media platforms in gathering information. Social media facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform. Social profiles present a number of opportunities for interacting with customers including gathering information about the company’s brands. Social networking sites use emails to enable users to connect with each other. Social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. Social media develops targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than traditional media.

The findings on the effect of social media on improvement of the organization competitive edge indicated that the platform promotes word of mouth to ensure fast information spread the emergence of the word of mouth using consumer user generated created media to create an organization competitive edge. Social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Social media provides numerous opportunities for strengthening and expanding relationships to customers. Social media offers a quicker and more cost-effective way to reach highly targeted markets than marketing through traditional media, such as websites, newspapers and television.

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage

Social media is designed to boost the sales of a company’s product and services. The findings established that most of the respondents claimed that the social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service as the leading social media platforms and promotion outlet for organizations. The findings indicate that the respondents agreed
that social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service. The results showed that the social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service. Social media seeks to increase a company’s sales. Similarly, Scott (2010) argues that the social media creates a planned communication effort by an organization to contribute to generally favourable attitudes and opinions toward an organization products and services.

Social media can focus on developing a relationship with the potential buyer. The findings revealed that the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship. The findings show that the respondents disagreed that the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship. The results showed that the social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship. This means that social media presents information and promotional benefits to target customers through interactive communication in a way that allows response to be measured and creation of relationships. Similarly, Case and King (2011) argues that social media creates a process of assisting or persuading a prospective customer to buy a product or service and to act favourable upon an idea that has commercial significance to the seller. Arango (2009) adds that the social media accounts for direct connections with carefully targeted individual customers to obtain an immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship.

Social media is as part of an integrated communication tool designed for any marketing communications strategy (Foux, 2009). The findings established that the social media become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever. This means that social media is a phenomenal crisis communication strategy. Similarly, Case and King (2011) suggests that social media creates an inexpensive way to create and implement marketing campaigns. Similarly, Case and King (2011) suggests that social media marketers manage crisis by focussing on creating content that generates attention, motivational incentive for people to share and manage crisis in the social network.

Social media can persuade the customers to fall in love with the conversations a firm’s brand. The findings established that the social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects. The findings illustrated that the respondents disagreed that the social media provided the most persuasive possible selling message to
the right prospects. The results showed that most of the respondents disagreed that the social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects. Persuasion is made possible by the display of interesting messages that spark active conversations from any visitor and frequent promotions listed by the firm (Case and King, 2011). Huang et al. (2011) explains that the aim of social media is to convert these conversations into healthy feedback that encourages positive conversations between companies and customers. Xiang and Gretzel (2012) suggest that customer-customer interactions encourage feedback for new products and services to compete for consumer-related content on social media that has significant and persuasive effect on brands.

Social media is also designed to boost the competitiveness of a company’s product and services. The findings established that few respondents claimed that the social media sets up competitions with attractive prizes. The findings indicate that the respondents disagreed that the social media set up competitions with attractive prizes. The results indicated most of the disagreed that the social media sets up competitions with attractive prizes. Scott (2010) suggests that social media has an aggressive campaign for increased PR activity, a free-sample campaign, offering free gifts, arranging demonstrations or exhibitions, setting up competitions with attractive prizes, temporary price reductions, door-to-door calling, telemarketing and personal.

The findings also established that very few respondents mentioned that the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns. The findings indicated that the respondents disagreed that the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns. The results showed that the social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns. Huang et al. (2011) explains that these communication efforts by an organization contribute to generally favourable attitudes and opinions toward an organization and its products. Social media is a communication function that seeks to build good relationships with the consumers and competitiveness.
5.3.2 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage

The building blocks of a social network are user pages, known as profiles (Zarrella, 2010). The findings established that most of the respondents claimed that the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile as the leading social media platforms in gathering information. It was established that the respondents strongly disagreed that the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile. The resulted show that the social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile. The social media user profile enables users to connect with each other. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) suggest that users create personal information profiles, invite friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) suggest that social media facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform.

The same way corporate creates profiles to filter customer information using e-mails, instant messages, photos, video, audio files, and blogs. The study revealed that a substantial proportion of the respondents claimed that the Social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications. Companies use specific pages or groups for their company information (Pownall, 2011). Similarly, Zarrella (2010) suggests that social profiles present a number of opportunities for interacting with customers including gathering information about the company’s brands. However, fewer respondents mentioned that the social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments. Winer (2009) affirms that many companies today are using some or all of the new media to develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than traditional media.

Social networking sites use emails to enable users to connect with each other. The findings established that the social media can be used to send e-mail. The findings illustrated that the respondents agreed that the social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications. The result showed that most of the respondents agreed that the social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications. Emails are used to instant messages between users. The findings established that the social media allows instant messages between the customers and the
organization. The receipt of instant information through emails presents a trustworthy source of information. Similarly, Foux (2006) suggests that social media is perceived by customers as a more trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than communications generated by organizations transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix.

Social media has created the need for a new approach to marketing communications that can ensure centralized management and a consistency of communication messages sent towards various audiences (Smith, 2002). The findings revealed that the social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. Duncan and Everett (2013) suggests that the idea of integrated marketing communication (IMC) is to create consistency and synergy by combining marketing communication elements so that they support and enhance each other, to promote potential communication understandings. Steltzner (2009) adds that social media marketing is today seen by many practitioners as the new arena for market communication and on top of the list of users of the different mediums is Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. The study also revealed that the very few respondents mentioned that the social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies. Similarly, Winer (2009) suggest that social media develops targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than traditional media.

5.3.3 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge

Social media promotes word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread (Qualman, 2011). The findings established that the leading response was that the social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread. The findings demonstrated that the respondents agreed that the social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread. The results showed that the Social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread. This indicates that the tools and strategies for communicating with customers have changed significantly with the emergence of the word of mouth using consumer user generated created media to create an organization competitive edge. Similarly, Drury (2008) suggests that social media turning into an influential add on to the integrated marketing communications as a new word of mouth for many companies and organizations to use to gain a competitive edge.
The social media marketing is a process that empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. Social media presents the opportunities for the organizations competitiveness to the world (Qualman, 2011). The revealed that the social media connects to the global audience. The findings established that the respondents agreed that the social media connects to the global audience. The result showed that some of the respondents were indecisive on the social media connects to the global audience. Similarly, Weinberg (2009) suggests that social media providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Social media have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behaviour including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behaviour, and post-purchase communication and evaluation.

Social media helps keep the original information (Qualman, 2011). A large proportion of the respondents mentioned that the social media helps keeps the original information. The findings indicated that the respondents agreed that the social media helps keeps the original information. The results showed that the social media helps keeps the original information. In this regard, customers are more likely to talk to others about products when those products support their desired self-image, or the way they want others to see them. The product design and promotion efforts should be undertaken with the desired self-image in mind. The revealed that the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. The results revealed that the respondents agreed that the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. The results showed that the respondents were indecisive on the social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. Customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. Similarly, Mangold and Faulds (2009) suggest that organizations can leverage emotional connections by embracing one or more causes that are important to their customers.
The new communications paradigm enables marketing managers to connect to a broader audience (Huang et al., 2011). The findings established that the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. The findings illustrated that the respondents agreed that the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. The results showed that the respondents agreed that the social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Weinberg (2009) suggests that social media incorporates integrated marketing communications. However, fewer respondents mentioned that the social media empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels. Drury (2008) adds that the social media marketing empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels.

Social media provides numerous opportunities for strengthening and expanding relationships to customers. The findings established that the social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. The findings on whether the social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels from the respondents involved in the study indicated that the respondents agreed that the Social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. The results showed that the respondents were indecisive on social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. Social media offers a quicker and more cost-effective way to reach highly targeted markets than marketing through traditional media, such as websites, newspapers and television. Weber (2009) suggests that social media also presents numerous opportunities to strengthen and expand employee communications. The findings established that very respondents mentioned that the social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company. Social media build bonds that promote long-term product or brand loyalty.
5.4 Conclusion

5.4.1 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage

Social media is designed to boost the sales of a company’s product and services. Social media seeks to increase a company’s sales. Social media can focus on developing a relationship with the potential buyer. This means that social media presents information and promotional benefits to target customers through interactive communication in a way that allows response to be measured and creation of relationships. Social media is as part of an integrated communication tool designed for any marketing communications strategy. This means that social media is a phenomenal crisis communication strategy. Social media can persuade the customers to fall in love with the conversations a firm’s brand. Social media is also designed to boost the competitiveness of a company’s product and services. Social media is a communication function that seeks to build good relationships with the consumers and competitiveness.

5.4.2 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage

The building blocks of a social network are user pages, known as profiles as the leading social media platforms in gathering information. Social media facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform. Social profiles present a number of opportunities for interacting with customers including gathering information about the company’s brands. Social networking sites use emails to enable users to connect with each other. Emails are used to instant messages between users. The receipt of instant information through emails presents a trustworthy source of information. Social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages. Social media develops targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than traditional media.

5.4.3 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge

Social media promotes word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread the emergence of the word of mouth using consumer user generated created media to create an organization competitive edge. Social media presents the opportunities for the organizations competitiveness to the world. Customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected. Social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and
consumers. Social media empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels. Social media provides numerous opportunities for strengthening and expanding relationships to customers. Social media offers a quicker and more cost-effective way to reach highly targeted markets than marketing through traditional media, such as websites, newspapers and television.

5.5 Recommendations
5.5.1 Recommendation for Improvement
5.5.1.1 Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage
The study recommends that social media should be optimised widely as an integrated marketing communication. This will lead to the boost of the company sales; develop a strong relationship with the existing customers and acquire potential customers. The social media platform should be more interactive in a way that allows response to be measured and creation of customer value. Social technology should be used to enhance market niche for any marketing communications strategy. Social media should be used in crisis communication strategy. Social media content should be more persuasive to build brand loyalty and equity in the promotion of the organization products and services.

5.5.1.2 Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage
The study recommends that the social media platforms should be optimized in gathering information from the customers. Social media should facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content on the platform. Organizations should use the platform to explore the opportunities for interacting with customers including gathering information about the company’s brands. Social media should be used to enable users to connect with each other at anytime as well facilitate instant exchange of messages between users. Social media should be a trustworthy source of information. Social media should create a centralized information management for organizations in an attempt to reach specific market segments.

5.5.1.3 Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge
The study recommends that social media should promote word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread to enhance networking in creating a competitive organization edge. The organization should use social media to appropriately network and connect with the
customers worldwide. Social media network should be optimized in connecting with other service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Social media should be used to empower individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels. Social media should be used to provide numerous opportunities for strengthening and expanding relationships to customers. In addition, social media should be used to reach highly targeted markets.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Further Studies

The main current study evaluated the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry. The study recommends that future researcher should focus on other industries such as the manufacturing and the banking sector.
REFERENCES


Chebet, M.D. (2012). *Social Media as a Strategic Communication Tool by Safaricom Ltd*. A Thesis Submitted for the Award of Masters in Business Administration at the University of Nairobi.


Njau, S. (2014). *Safaricom beat Chase Bank, Orange and Airtel to win the Customer Care category as well as the overall Corporate-of-the-Year in the second OLX Social Media Awards (SOMA)*. Retrieved from SOMA: http://industry.shortyawards.com/nominee/6th_annual/07/safaricom-ltd-kenya


To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are pleased to inform you that the bearer of this letter is a graduate student at United States International University pursuing a degree of Masters in Business Administration (MBA). As partial fulfillment of his degree, Mr. John Musee is conducting a research on the effect of social media in promoting competitive advantage in the products and services in the telecommunication industry, the case of Safaricom Company.

Please note that any information you give will be treated with confidentiality and at no instance will it be used for any other purpose other than for this project. Your assistance will be highly appreciated. I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours Faithfully,

John Musee
(Researcher)
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Demographic Profile

1. Gender:
   Male □  Female □

2. Age:
   Under 20 years □  31-40 years □
   21-30 years □  41-50 years □
   Above 51 years □

3. Marital Status:
   Single □  Separated □
   Married □  Divorced □
   Widowed □

4. Education Level:
   Undergraduate □  Graduate □

5. Most Used Social Media Network
   Facebook □  Twitter □  Blog □  YouTube □
   Other____________

6. Frequency of Using Social Media to Market Safaricom Products and Services
   Multiple times per day □  Once per day □  A few times per week □
   Weekly □  A few times a month or less □

7. For how long have you used social media to market the company products and services?
   Less than 1 year □  2 – 5 years □  6 – 9 years □
   Above 10 years □
### Section B: Social Media Promotion Outlet Platform and Competitive Advantage

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by using a scale of 1 to 6 where 1= strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree. Circle (O) which best describes your opinion of the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social media provide the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Social media is designed to boost the sales of a product or service</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social media set up competitions with attractive prizes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social media increase PR activity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Social media develops a relationship with the potential buyer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Social media allows response to be measured</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Social media encourage immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Social media use inexpensive ways to create and implement marketing campaigns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Social media presents the greatest opportunity and challenge to marketers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Social media become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. What other sales promotion strategies not mentioned above does the service provider utilize to enhance its brand preference?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Section C: Social Media Information Gathering Platform and Competitive Advantage

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1= strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree. Circle (O) which best describes your opinion of the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Social media cater for different clients through unique information and contact strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Social media create a centralized management and a consistency of communication messages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Social media develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Social media enables the upload a video and sharing of company information</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Social media keeps intouch with the customers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Social media allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user’s profile</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Social media can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Social media send e-mail</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Social media allows instant messages between the customers and the organization</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Social media creates a website that send video to people on their products and services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Social media create viral marketing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. What other direct marketing strategies not mentioned above does the service provider utilize to enhance its brand preference? Please rate as above
Section D: Social Media on Improvement of the Organization Competitive Edge

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree. Circle (O) which best describes your opinion of the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. Social media empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Social media communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Social media connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Social media helps word of mouth to ensure a fast information spread,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Social media helps keeps the original information</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Social media connects to the global audience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Social media is a tool for staying connected with other stakeholders of the company</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Social media can be seen as opportunity for the research and development department to get immediate feedback on the product</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Social media is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Managers learn to shape consumer discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization’s mission and performance goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Social media tell customers tell others about products and services to which they are emotionally connected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34. What other public relations strategies not mentioned above does the service provider utilize to enhance its brand preference? Please rate as above