



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Department of Economics

# **Strategies for social customer relationship management**

- The case of social media in the Swedish food industry

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Furthermore, this study is builds on empirical material; thus it would not have been possible to perform if the interviewees had not shared their valuable experiences, knowledge and time with me. So, thank you. I hope that the participating companies will find some use of this project.

# Summary

Consumption of meat and poultry has increased during the last ten years while the production in Sweden has decreased. Cheap imports are competing with Swedish products and consumers, restaurant and retail let the price decided what to purchase. Swedish food producers can become better at communicating the added values that meat and poultry produced in Sweden has. Social media gives companies a possible tool for communication in order to communicate and create a relationship with consumers. The rise of social media does not only affect consumer decisions making, but also corporate communication.

The objective of this project is to investigate how social media can connect the farmer to the consumer. It translates to an academic ambition to enhance the understanding of using social media. The aim of this project is to explain strategies for improving communication in social media in the Swedish meat and poultry sector.

This study is a multiple case study where seven companies in the Swedish meat and poultry business are interviewed regarding social media and an observation is made on their social media channels. All of the participating companies have some social media channel, but they use social media differently. Something that is common for them all is that there is room for improvement.

Social media can be useful in creating relationships with consumers; however, there are pitfalls that companies need to avoid. It can furthermore help companies develop since the amount of information about what consumers want are more available than ever due to social media. Social media is originally a medium meant for consumers to interact and not a marketing channel for companies. Therefore it is important to be aware of the fact that consumers instead of marketers are in control here. Companies that regard consumers as controllable are not likely to succeed, instead, see the consumer as a co-creator of the brand meaning.

Swedish actors in the meat and poultry industry are likely to gain by evaluating their social media channels and develop a strategy for how they should be managed. Furthermore they should take advantage of the interactive properties of social media in order to better understand what the users of their channels want to see in from their social media presence. Social media is a complex phenomenon and therefore it is important to not underestimate the affect it can have on business.

This area of research is still rather new and there has been many questions developing during the academic process. They were presented as future research and can hopefully help another researcher to develop another problem statement to expand the academic understanding of social media.

# Sammanfattning

Konsumtionen av kött och fågel har under de senaste tio åren ökat, medan produktionen i Sverige har minskat. Svenska produkter konkurrerar med billig importen och konsumenter, restaurang- och detaljhandels låter priset besluta vad man ska köpa. Svenska livsmedelsproducenter kan bli bättre på att kommunicera de mervärden som kött och fågel som produceras i Sverige har. Sociala medier ger företag ett möjligt redskap för att effektivt kommunicera och skapa relationer med de svenska konsumenterna. Den ökade användningen av sociala medier, påverkar inte bara konsumenternas köpbeslut utan också hur företaget arbetar med kommunikation.

Syftet med detta projekt är att undersöka hur sociala medier kan knyta lantbrukaren närmare konsumenten. Det kan översättas till en akademisk ambition att öka förståelsen av att använda sociala medier inom företag. Syftet med projektet är att förklara strategier för att förbättra kommunikationen i sociala medier i den svenska kött- och fjäderfäsektorn.

Denna studie är en multipel fallstudie där sju företag inom den svenska kött- och fjäderfä industrin intervjuats gällande deras användning av sociala medier dessutom har en observation utförts på deras sociala mediekkanaler. Alla företag i denna studie är aktiva på någon kanal inom sociala medier. Men deras användning av sociala medier skiljer sig åt. Något som är gemensamt för dem alla är att det finns utrymme för förbättringar.

Sociala medier kan vara användbara för att skapa relationer med konsumenter, men det finns fallgropar som företagen behöver lära sig att undvika. Sociala medier kan dessutom hjälpa företag att utvecklas då informationen gällande konsumenter är mer lättillgänglig än någonsin. Sociala medier är dock ursprungligen ett medium avsett för konsumenter och inte en marknadsföringskanal för företag. Därför är det viktigt att vara medveten om att konsumenter och inte marknadsförare har kontrollen. Aktörer som betraktar konsumenten som kontrollerbar kommer sannolikt inte att lyckas, i stället ska konsumenten ses som en medskapare av varumärkets mening.

Svenska aktörer inom kött- och fjäderfäindustrin kommer sannolikt att vinna på att utvärdera sina sociala mediekkanaler och utveckla strategier för hur de ska hanteras. De bör dessutom utnyttja de interaktiva egenskaperna hos sociala medier för att bättre förstå vad användarna av deras kanaler förväntar sig av deras närvaro sociala medier. Sociala medier är en komplex miljö och därför är det viktigt att inte underskatta den inverkan den kan ha på verksamheten.

Detta forskningsområde är fortfarande ganska nytt och många frågor har utvecklats under den akademiska processen. De presenterades som framtida forskning och kan förhoppningsvis hjälpa en annan forskare att utveckla en problemformulering för att öka den akademiska förståelsen av sociala medier.

# Abbreviations and special terms

B2B	Business to business
B2C	Business to consumer
CC	Corporate communication
CRM	Customer relationship management
eWOM	electronic Word of Mouth
Followers	Users that actively have decided to get information from the account that they want to follow. Information from that will show on their newsfeed on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.
Hashtag	The symbol # is used to categorize the post on Instagram or Twitter. By doing this users can search for specific hashtags and find pictures or posts that they find relevant.
IMC	Integrated marketing communication
Like	Users can chose to like posts on Facebook, pictures on Instagram, Videos on YouTube. By liking you show just that you like the information that has been posted. It is a type of interaction with least possible engagement.
Post	Post is the information, picture or video the users decide to publish.
Retweet	A repetition of a tweet that a user for some reason wants to spread to their network.
SM	Social media
Talking about	Users sharing a link to the brand page.
Tweet	The same as post but on Twitter.
UGC	User generated content
Wall	This refers to the page where posts are uploaded on Facebook. The wall consists of posts made by the account owner, comments made on the posts and posts uploaded by other users.
Web 1.0	Refers to the older usage of Internet as a more static organism.
Web 2.0	Refers to Internet, as it is today, interactive and social.
WOM	Word of Mouth
@	This symbol makes it possible for users to mention other users in the posts that they do. By doing that the user will get a notification that it was mentioned. It is for example useful if you want to start a conversation.

# Table of Contents

<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 PROBLEM BACKGROUND .....	2
1.2 PROBLEM .....	3
1.3 AIM .....	4
1.4 DELIMITATIONS .....	4
1.5 OUTLINE .....	5
<b>2 METHOD .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	6
2.2 QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY .....	7
2.3 COLLECTION OF DATA.....	8
2.3.1 <i>Choice of sector and companies.....</i>	8
2.3.2 <i>Social media channels.....</i>	9
2.4 ENSURING QUALITY .....	10
2.4.1 <i>Email Interviews .....</i>	11
2.5 DATA ANALYSIS .....	12
2.6 ETHICS .....	13
<b>3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT .....	14
3.2 THE SOCIAL MEDIA OCTOPUS .....	15
3.3 RELATIONSHIP MARKETING.....	16
3.4 SOCIAL MEDIA – A PART OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION .....	17
3.4.1 <i>Brand reputation management.....</i>	17
3.4.2 <i>Strategies for quantifying social media efforts.....</i>	19
3.5 SOCIAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT .....	20
3.5.1 <i>Reaching CRM objectives – differences between lower and higher engagement .....</i>	22
<b>4 BACKGROUND FOR THE EMPIRICAL STUDY .....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 CORPORATE COMMUNICATION .....	24
4.2 SOCIAL MEDIA.....	24
<b>5 THE EMPIRICAL STUDY .....</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE OBSERVATION .....	27
5.2 SVENSKT KÖTT .....	27
5.2.1 <i>Facebook.....</i>	28
5.2.2 <i>Instagram .....</i>	29
5.2.3 <i>Twitter .....</i>	29
5.2.4 <i>Youtube .....</i>	29
5.3 SVENSK FÅGEL .....	30
5.3.1 <i>Facebook.....</i>	30
5.3.2 <i>Instagram .....</i>	31
5.3.3 <i>Twitter .....</i>	31
5.3.4 <i>YouTube .....</i>	31
5.4 SCAN.....	31
5.4.1 <i>Facebook.....</i>	32
5.4.2 <i>Instagram .....</i>	32
5.4.3 <i>Twitter .....</i>	33
5.5 HÄLSINGESTINTAN.....	33
5.5.1 <i>Facebook.....</i>	33
5.5.2 <i>Instagram, Twitter and Youtube.....</i>	34
5.6 EJMUNDS.....	34
5.6.1 <i>Facebook.....</i>	35
5.6.2 <i>Instagram .....</i>	36
5.6.3 <i>Twitter .....</i>	36
5.7 GULDFÅGELN.....	36

5.7.1 Facebook.....	36
5.7.2 Instagram and Twitter.....	37
5.7.3 YouTube .....	37
5.8 BJÄREFÅGEL .....	37
5.8.1 Facebook.....	38
5.8.2 Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.....	38
<b>6 ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>39</b>
6.1 CASE COMPANIES USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA .....	39
6.1.1 Strategy development process .....	39
6.1.2 Implementation process .....	41
6.1.3 Value co-creation process.....	41
<b>7 DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>45</b>
7.1 HOW CAN COMPANIES PLAN FOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA? ...	45
7.2 WHAT KIND OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IS EXPECTED IN THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA?.....	46
7.3 HOW CAN SOCIAL MEDIA HELP COMPANIES TO WORK WITH CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT? .....	47
<b>8 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>48</b>
8.1 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS .....	49
8.2 DATA QUALITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH .....	49
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Literature and publications.....	50
INTERNET.....	56
PERSONAL COMMUNICATION.....	58
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>1</b>
APPENDIX 1: HISTORICAL CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION OF MEAT AND POULTRY IN SWEDEN. ....	1
APPENDIX 2: A DESCRIPTION OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS, FACEBOOK, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER. ....	2
APPENDIX 3: DETAILS OF THE CHOSEN COMPANIES SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS. ....	4
APPENDIX 4: THE INTERVIEW GUIDE. ....	5
APPENDIX 5: DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS IN TERMS OF RESOURCES, DISSEMINATION AND ENGAGEMENT. ....	6
APPENDIX 6: MODIFIED VERSION OF FIGURE 6.....	7



## List of figures

Figure 1: Illustration of the outline of the study. ....	5
Figure 2: The number of publications found when searching for "social media strategy" in Google scholar 2007-2013.....	7
Figure 3: The social media octopus (adopted from Savar, 2013:22) .....	15
Figure 4: Strategic options for social media measurement (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010:47) .....	19
Figure 5: The social consumer relationship management house (Malthouse et al., 2013:272). 21	
Figure 6: Framework for the process engaged in creating a strategy for social media marketing (Flinck, 2011:79).....	23

## List of tables

Table 1: Databases and search words that were used in this study.....	6
Table 2: A presentation of companies and their social media efforts.....	9
Table 3: Social media channels and their possible usage for companies .....	10
Table 4: A description of the participants and their roles each company.....	12
Table 5: The philosophies of marketers past and present (Qualman, 2011:129-130) .....	18
Table 6: Differences between traditional CRM and Social CRM (adopted from Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011:28) .....	20
Table 7: Main differences between traditional media and social media (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013:752) .....	25
Table 8: Summarized effect of activities on the different corporate social media channels in the period of 11 <sup>th</sup> of February to 1 <sup>st</sup> of April .....	27
Table 9: Observation of brand posts on Svenskt Kött's Facebook page.....	29
Table 10: Observation of brand posts on Svensk Fågels Facebook page.....	30
Table 11: Observation of brand posts on Scan's Facebook page.....	32
Table 12: Observation of brand posts on Hälsingestintans Facebook page.....	34
Table 13: Observation of brand posts on Ejmunds Facebook page .....	35
Table 14: Observation of brand posts on Guldågelns Facebook page .....	37
Table 15: Observation of brand posts on Bjärefågel's Facebook page.....	38



# 1 Introduction

”Consumers seem to want information to help them derive more pleasure from food, to achieve a better diet, to avoid certain allergens or to know the origin and environmental, ethical and technological conditions under which the food has been produced and processed ” (Verbeke, 2008:281).

The statement above indicates that there is a need for information to be communicated to consumers. Ottman (2011) furthermore mean that consumers want their shopping choices to comply with their values, and they appreciate marketers that provide them with the knowledge they need to make informed purchasing decisions. Purchasing decisions are influenced by cultural, social and personal factors (Kotler & Keller, 2005:174). Emotion-laden messages are particularly important as they make consumers acquire a sense of control over their lives and the world (Ottman, 2011:115). It is common that consumers chose products that have a brand personality, which is consistent with their own actual self-concept, or at least how they would like to view themselves (Kotler & Keller, 2005). Furthermore consumers tend to trust recommendations from friends and family as well as consumer opinions posted online (Ottman, 2011). The advances of information technology and development of social network sites have made it easier than ever before to access user information regarding a product. As a result, online word-of-mouth (**WOM**) plays an important role in consumer purchasing decisions (Duan *et al.*, 2008). The rise of social media does not only affect consumers decisions making, but also corporate communication. Social media has made it possible for companies to interact with their customers. These interactions can help develop intangible assets like reputation and image (Boheneck & Bili, 2013). Instead of just communicating the benefits of a brand, advertisers can take the opportunity to educate and engage consumers about issues that are important to them (Ottman, 2011:123). Social media has created the possibility for one single consumer to communicate with numerous people about products provided to them by different companies. A commonly used definition (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013) of *social media* is

“a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61).

This means that each consumer have a great possibility to influence the brand image (Ottman, 2011). Mangold and Fauld (2009:358) describe the growing significance of social media as:

“They 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”

As the statement above indicates, social media spreads information and the different content on the channels are often influenced by happenings in society. The authors further argue that it is unfortunate that little information of how to incorporate social media in the integrated marketing communications (**IMC**) strategies is available for marketing managers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Nine out of 10 marketing professionals in the USA use some kind of social media, but many of them lack necessary information to implement their programs efficiently (Savar, 2013:22). In Sweden, the number of companies that are present in some social media channel is approximately 50% (SCB, 2013:9). Managers tend to underestimate the role of

social media in the company's advertising (Savar, 2013:22). Social media can have two roles; first as a tool of communication with the customers and second, consumers can use it to communicate with each other and other stakeholders, in this way consumers can affect the brand without corporate interference (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Social media can also be referred to as "conversation marketing". This means that companies and consumers have dialogue and exchange useful information with each other. According to Bjurström (2013) there is a need for marketers in the Swedish food industry to educate its consumers regarding the added values of Swedish produced foods since the benefits are not always clear to the customer (Bjurström, 2013). Through value co-creation it is possible to influence purchase intention, eWOM can help influence this and intimately involve the consumer and the corporation to jointly creating value that is unique to the consumer and sustainable for the firm (See-To & Ho, 2013). By communicating added values in social media, eWOM can spread and make it possible for consumers to make educated purchasing decisions that involve the corporation, thus creating value for them both (*ibid.*). In times of pricing-pressure and increasing costs, companies need new strategies to secure their position on the market (Wikström, 2010). By being active in social media channels, companies can create a relationship with customers (Ang, 2011).

If Swedish food producers are going to compete with price, they will lose (JBV 1, 2011). Social media offers several channels that can be used in order to create relationships with customers (Woodcock, 2011). Organizations in the Swedish food industry can become better at using these channels when communicating and educating consumers to make the "right" choice (Bjurström, 2013).

## 1.1 Problem background

Sweden is one of the countries in Europe with the fastest growing urbanization rate, with an increasing distance between the city and the countryside (Bjurström, 2013). At the same time the distance between food consumer and food producer is increasing. The decoupling between how agricultural commodities are grown, and how the processed products are presented, decreases the understanding of the "real" value of food (*ibid.*). The majority of Swedish consumers want to be able to see the country of origin on Swedish meat (Svenskt Kött, 2013). This information has reached marketers, leading to some dishonest labelling, where industrially as well as imported meat is marketed as local and authentic (Friman, 2013). It is the responsibility of the government and the corporations to educate the consumer so that they can make an educated choice (Svenskt Kött, 2013:9). The interest for food in Sweden is bigger than ever, but to buy food of good quality and cook from scratch is a challenge for many consumers (Bjurström, 2013). It is hard for consumers to recognise the different quality attributes of a product, this decreases their willingness to pay. There is a need for clear quality communication and increased trust between the consumer and the company (Wikström, 2010). The majority of consumers prefer Swedish meat when they buy fresh whole meat in the store. When it comes to processed products and restaurant meals, the trend is not the same. Many consumers find it hard to see the origin of the products or do not have the habit of asking where it is from (Svenskt Kött, 2013).

The consumption of meat has increased in Sweden during the last two decades and the world market is growing. Total consumption of meat in Sweden reached its highest level ever, 87 kg per person per year in 2011 (JBV, 2013:5). There are many reasons for the increase in meat consumption. The EU entry in 1995 allowed for cheap import of meat and food taxes was reduced from 21% to 12% in 1996 (JBV 2, 2011). Furthermore the average purchasing power

of households has increased with 19% since 1980 (Ekonomifakta, 2013:1). Product development has made way for additional products and brands for consumers and new diets have received media attention – these are some examples of changes that have occurred in the last two decades leading to a higher meat consumption (JBV 2, 2011). The consumption of poultry meat has also increased in Sweden, as well as in the rest of Europe, the last ten years (JBV 3, 2011). Swedish consumption of poultry meat was approximately 19 kg per person (2012) (Svensk Fågel 1, 2012:1). Chicken meat gains in popularity as consumers realize that it is tasty, easy to cook and contains several important nutrients (Svensk Fågel 2, 2013).

The conditions to produce meat in Sweden are suitable, with good access to pasture, grain, spreading area and production. Animal welfare and environmental concerns are of high standards (LRF 1, 2013). Production of Swedish meat contributes to keeping landscapes open, increases biodiversity and has healthy animals, which results in low use of antibiotics, something that is positive for human health. Since 2005 the total meat production in Sweden has declined with 15% and the rate of investment in primary production is very low (LRF 1, 2013:3). As a result only 55% of meat consumed in Sweden is actually produced in the country (*ibid.*). According to Svenskt Kött (1:2014), self-sufficiency rate of Swedish produced meat (beef, pig, sheep and lamb) is the lowest ever, 61% of total consumption and Swedish producers continue to become fewer. Self-sufficiency rate of poultry in Sweden is 71% (JBV 2, 2011:5) of total consumption; the rest of the meat is imported. The total import of chicken has increased with 121% between 2001 and 2011 (JBV 3, 2011:6). For a more thorough description of Swedish meat and poultry see appendix 1.

Increased demand for meat in combination with decreasing production is not sustainable in the long term if Swedish consumers want to continue to eat Swedish meat and poultry. If the industry can develop their presence and strategies in social media, they might be able to establish customer relationships that can be of great value in order to increase the demand and willingness to pay for Swedish produced meat and poultry. Gustafsson (2012) stresses that Swedish actors in the food industry must become better at communicating and sharing knowledge of food productions role in modern society to consumers.

## 1.2 Problem

There is plenty of information regarding the separate pieces of the complex puzzle of social media marketing. Brand owners need to realize that social media is a part of everything they do (Savar, 2013). Furthermore there is a need for knowledge about social media in the corporate sphere (Svensson, 2013). In Sweden, organisations within the food industry have room for improvements of their usage of social media (Bjurström, 2013). Marketing scholars have studied the subject of certain social media channels in isolation but there are few studies that have incorporated several channels in the same study (Smith *et al.*, 2012). Little academic research has furthermore been focused on how marketers use social media platforms for marketing and communication (Kumar & Rani, 2013). The growing use of social media has consequences for how consumer behave, share and interact, in their normal day life, where food-related decision-making regarding consumption traditionally is an important part (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, Qualman (2011) stresses the importance of listening to the consumers by stating:

“...companies and marketers better start spending more time listening to their customers and less time spending countless hours creating the next award-winning, but-no-consumer-getting, 30-second television commercial” (Qualman, 2011:98).

This indicates that there is an on-going shift in marketing and communication strategies. Research in social media suggests that there is a need for further studies focusing on social media marketing (Akar & Topcu, 2011; Brady *et al.*, 2008 in Royle & Lang, 2013) and the addressing of industry needs (Brady *et al.*, 2008; Reibstein *et al.*, 2009 in Royle & Lang, 2013) thus strengthening the link between academia and industry.

### 1.3 Aim

Social media can affect many different areas and stakeholders of the business no matter if the organisation is actively involved or not (Qualman, 2011). Using social media actively may benefit an organisation (Ang, 2011). In the Swedish food sector there is a lack of social media presence and at the same time the consumer is more disconnected to the farmer than ever (Bjurström, 2013). In Sweden the import of meat and poultry are increasing and farmers are struggling (LRF 1, 2013). Furthermore, very little research has been done on examining the explosion of new social media in the specific context of food risk and benefit communication (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013). The objective of this project is to investigate how social media can connect the farmer to the consumer. It translates to an academic ambition to enhance the understanding of using social media. The aim of this project is to explain possible improvements in strategies for communication in social media in the Swedish meat and poultry sector.

To answer the aim I will focus on three research questions:

- How can companies plan for challenges and opportunities within the use of social media?
- What kind of communication strategies is expected in the use of social media?
- How can social media help companies to work with customer relationship management?

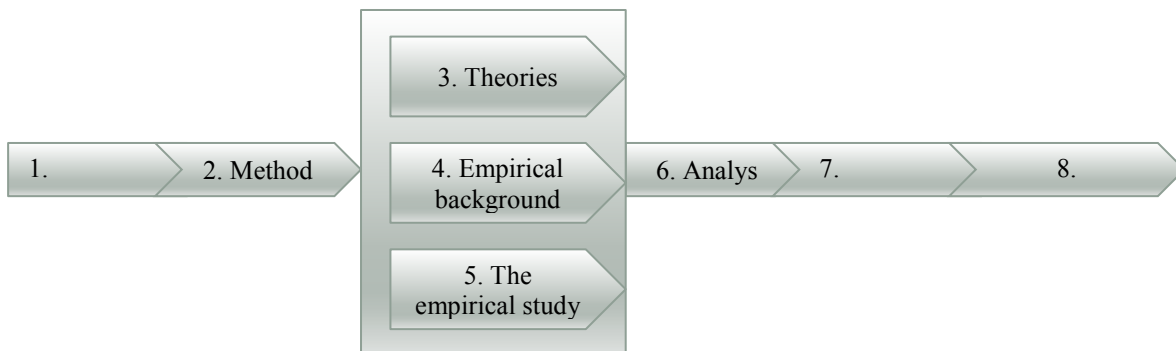
### 1.4 Delimitations

This project has been made as an independent study within the frame of a master thesis. It focuses on seven case companies in the food industry. One person in each company was interviewed; it could have been beneficial to increase the number of interviewees in each company to get a more holistic picture of the case. But due to the scope of the study, only persons with a direct responsibility for social media were interviewed. Another empirical delimitation is that this study does not focus on what motivates users to engage in brands even though it might be useful. In the frame of a master thesis it would be hard to focus on that aspect as well since it is another complex parameter of social media marketing.

There are also theoretical delimitations. This study focuses on strategic management of corporate communication in order to create and maintain relationships with customers. Relationships in this project refer to a long-term relationship where consumers might even end up as ambassadors for the brand or the product. This means that the goal with social media in this case refers to creating customer ambassadors that can further spread the benefits of the products. Thus it is not focused on short-term relationships. Furthermore it could be of good use to incorporate consumer behavioural theories. But due to the scope of this study it is instead suggested as further research.

## 1.5 Outline

The outline, presented in figure 1 is meant to be a tool for the reader to get a picture of the structure of this essay. Chapter one gives a brief introduction to the problem background, the reason for this study, statement of the problem, a presentation of the research questions and the aim. The second chapter describes the methods used in this project. It explains motives for different choices made and offer explanations of how the project was conducted so that it is possible to repeat. Chapter three describes the literature that will help develop the analysis. It starts with a brief introduction of strategic management and continues with theories on relationship marketing. After that social media as a part of the corporate strategy is presented. The chapter finishes with social customer relationship management, and an empirically grounded model of strategic processes in implementing social media, which is the primarily used framework in the analysis. The fourth chapter gives the empirical background. It starts with an introduction to corporate communication and then further explains social media. Chapter five presents the results from the interviews with the companies. The observation that was made of their social media channels is also presented.



*Figure 1: Illustration of the outline of the study.*

Chapter six offers an analysis of the empirics, which was conducted using the theoretical framework as a tool. In this part the varying actors management of social media channels is analysed in order to develop an understanding of social media strategies in communication in the Swedish meat and poultry industry. In chapter seven the results of the analysis are discussed in relation to the aim of the project. The last chapter discuss the findings; suggest future research and the strength and limitations of the study.

## 2 Method

Researchers always have former experiences, ideas and views that can impact the choice of subject, theoretical perspective and analysis method. Due to this, researchers should not focus on total objectivity but rather transparency and reflexivity (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 1994). In this chapter the unique choices made in this study are presented, furthermore, the methods that was used to carry out this project are explained and motivated.

### 2.1 Literature review and theoretical framework

In order to get a grasp of the area of subject and be able to develop a research question, it is necessary to conduct a literature review (Robson, 2011). Developing a research question demands a lot of preparation; therefore the literature review should be conducted as a means to an end and not as an end in itself. In order to conduct a successful case study, it is important to carefully choose research question and unit of analysis (Yin, 2003). To be able do that, it is important to develop a theoretical understanding from which the research question can be identified (Robson, 2011).

The literature review was based on peer reviewed articles within the field on marketing, strategic management, and communication. During this project there was two types of research phases. In the first phase, key words involving social media and marketing were used to get a picture of the field of research. When that first scan was conducted and the area of subject was decided upon, the research was refined, see table 1 for specific search terms. Phase one led to an expansion of the needed vocabulary and made it possible to define the terms of search. Google scholar was the primarily used database followed by: Primo, Sciencedirect and Jstor. Articles that were found useful were also sources of literature, as their bibliographies were scanned for potential material. The function “recommended articles” in Sciencedirect was also used in combination with the search words below. The second phase of the literature review was based on keywords like, CRM, SCRM and brand image in combination with the keywords used in the first phase.

*Table 1: Databases and search words that were used in this study*

<b>Google scholar</b> <b>Primo</b> <b>Sciencedirect</b> <b>Jstor</b>	Social media +marketing +strategy +WOM	Brand pages +Social Media	Strategic management +social media +marketing	Corporate communication +social media +strategy	Relationship marketing +social media +food industry	CRM +Social media +SCRM
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The development of theories and conceptual framework is an important process to create a deeper understanding of the phenomena studied (Yin, 2003). Developing a conceptual framework is useful for the researcher since it helps to make the study more clear. It also helps to decide what is important and what relationships need to be considered. This is useful when the researcher is to decide what type of data that should be collected (Robson, 2011; Yin, 2003). The conceptual framework developed in this study was built on the concept of social customer relationship management and the strategic processes used when developing a social media strategy. The theoretical framework was developed before the data was collected in order to make sure that the data was relevant for the study.



Research made within the area of social media might be out of date when it is published (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). Therefore it has been important to look for newly published relevant material. Since social media can change rapidly it has been important to read the literature with an open mind to decide whether or not it was still relevant.

The area of research is rather new which is natural since Facebook, which is the biggest social media channel today was started in 2004, but companies were only allowed there in 2007. The number of hits one gets if “social media strategy” is searched for in Google scholar is shown below, in figure 2.

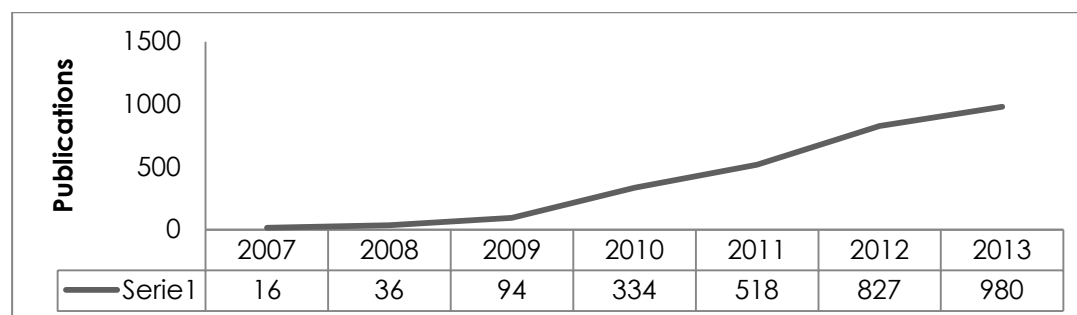


Figure 2: The number of publications found when searching for “social media strategy” in Google scholar 2007-2013.

The result shows that social media is a growing area of research. But at the same time, it is a dynamic area and thus it is important to read literature and be observant to whether or not the material is still relevant.

## 2.2 Qualitative case study

In a qualitative design participants are seen as a tool to better understand reality (Robson, 2011). A qualitative study was chosen in this project in order to answer the aim, namely to explain how social media is used by Swedish food industry actors.

A qualitative case study is a research approach that makes the exploration of phenomena in its context possible through using a variety of data sources. This research approach ensures that the study is explored through several lenses instead of one (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The method of case study makes it possible for the researcher to get the whole picture of real life events i.e. individual life cycles or organisational and managerial processes. A case study can be useful when the research questions are explanatory formulated, so called “how” and “why” questions. Furthermore a case study is to prefer when current events and relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated (Yin, 2003). According to Gummesson (2006) there are certain characteristics of research studies that are suitable for a qualitative design, namely; *complexity, context and persona*. Research within areas of modern management and business are fields of research with high complexity, since internal and external factors as well as the environment affect them (*ibid.*). This study was performed in the business field where the context was social media and the personas were both communicators at the organisations and users of brand pages. It is worth mentioning that, this study only focused on the users as in how and what kind of replies they received after interaction on corporate social media channels. This choice was made since this study focuses on strategies within organisations and not what engaged users to participate.

The strength of case studies is that they can deal with many different types of evidence documents like, artefacts, interviews and observations (Yin, 2003). There are also weaknesses with conducting a case study; it is a challenging task that does not have any routinized approach. Yin (2003:46) states that single and multiple case studies can be conducted within the same methodological framework. There are both advantages and disadvantages with doing a single versus a multiple case study. The multiple case study evidence is often seen as more convincing and the overall study is thus considered more robust (Yin, 2003:46). Multiple case studies do though require more resources from the researcher; therefore every case study within a multiple design should have a clear purpose in the overall scope study (Yin, 2003). In this project, seven companies were studied which means that it could be categorised as a multiple case study. Since a large part of the data collection was based on observation of four social media channels, it was possible to plan the project without having to adjust the time plan to the availability of the seven organisations.

## 2.3 Collection of data

Data was collected from two sources in this project. The first one was the different social media channel and the second one was email interviews with representatives of the chosen companies.

### *2.3.1 Choice of sector and companies*

Research within the social media marketing area would benefit from focusing on companies active within the same industry. In such a case the researcher might be able to narrow down the questions instead of focusing on social media marketing overall (Langer, 2014). In this study the intention has been to focus on one sector with the goal of achieving sector specific results and not social media marketing overall, as mentioned above. The choice of sector, meat and poultry industry in Sweden has been influenced by my years at SLU and the on-going debate about low profitability in Swedish agriculture.

The companies were chosen since they are actors in the meat or poultry industry in Sweden and are present and active on at least one social media channel. Firstly companies that were commonly known and offered products in the average and/or the premium price segment were identified. Secondly companies that were less well known and offered products in the premium segment were identified. Ten organisations in the meat and poultry sector were chosen for this study. However after the initial contact on email, seven of them decided to participate, see table 2. In order to grasp a wider perspective of the use of social media in the sector, the study included the two Swedish trade organisations for meat and poultry, Svenskt Kött and Svensk Fågel.

Three of the case companies are active within the Swedish meat production. Scan is the biggest actor and a commonly seen brand in Swedish stores. They have products in different price segments, offering both premium and bulk products. Hälsingestintan is a family business with their own production but they also buy other producers meat and sell it under their label (www, Hälsingestintan, 2014). Ejmunds is the smallest of the three actors, it is also a family business, but they only sell their own produce under their own brand (www, Ejmunds, 2014). Both Hälsingestintan and Ejmunds are considered to be companies that offer premium products since they are in the upper price segment in retail stores.

The two companies in the poultry industry are Guldfågeln and Bjärefågel. Guldfågeln is a big actor within poultry with a production of 30 million chickens per year (www, Guldfågeln 1,

2014). While Bjärefågel is a family business that has its own production but also sell chicken from five other farmers under their brand. They produce approximately 625 thousand chickens every year (www, Bjärefågel, 2014). They are offering a premium product and therefore their prices are higher than the products from Guldfågeln. Bjärefågel sell their products in stores all over Sweden but they also have their own store and restaurant in Lunds saluhall. Both Guldfågeln and Bjärefågel are members of Svensk Fågel.

Despite the fact that some of the organisations are international, the study will only focus on the communication channels in Sweden. Besides being different in structure and size, the companies have differences in the number of social media channels they are active on, how active they are and how long they have been active. Table 2 gives summarised information on the companies, for more specific information regarding the social media channels see Appendix 2. The research has not been focused on internal environmental factors since it according to Gummesson (2000) is the external environment that is more important in marketing. That is where consumers, middlemen, competitors, politicians, legislators and trade organisations make the real decisions.

*Table 2: A presentation of companies and their social media efforts*

Companies	Social media channels	Turnover	Characteristics	Years with social media
Svenskt Kött	4	14,5 MSEK (www, Proff 1, 2014)	Trade association in beef, pork and lamb.	3
Svensk Fågel	3	14,1 MSEK (www, Svensk Fågel, 2013)	Trade association in poultry.	2
Scan	3	91 BSEK (www, HKScan 1, 2014).	Owned by HKScan, The biggest company in meat and meat processing in Sweden. Average to premium price.	5
Hälsingestintan	4	129 MSEK (www, Proff 2, 2014)	Family business, with production, but also buy meat from other producers. They have their own brand and shop. Premium price.	5
Ejmunds	4	17 MSEK (www, Proff 3, 2014)	Family business, with production, they only sell their own meat with their own brand and web shop. Premium price.	4
Guldfågel	2	1,2 BSEK (www, Proff 4, 2014)	Family business that belongs to Blentarpsgruppen. Average price.	3
Bjärefågel	1	40 MSEK (www, Proff 5, 2014)	Family business with their own production, buys chickens from 5 other producers. Premium price.	1

(www, Svenskt Kött 2, 2014; Svensk Fågel 1, 2014; HKScan 2, 2014, Hälsingestintan 1, 2014; Ejmunds 1, 2014; Guldfågeln 2, 2014; Bjärefågel 1, 2014).

The information provided in Table 2 shows the differences between the chosen case companies.

### *2.3.2 Social media channels*

The study focuses on communication through social media. Social media channels that were studied in this project are, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. They were chosen for three reasons; first some of the chosen companies were active on all of them, secondly they can be utilized in different ways, see table 3, and third, the area of research including more than one social media channel is small (Smith *et al.*, 2012). For a deeper description of the channels see appendix 2.

*Table 3: Social media channels and their possible usage for companies*

Channel	Purpose
Facebook	Pictures, texts, videos and links can be shared, easy to have “discussions”
Twitter	Immediate announcements
YouTube	Share videos
Instagram	Get a look “inside” the company, pictures

Table 3 above illustrates some of the most obvious purposes of using the chosen social media channels. All data gathered on the corporate social media channels were collected from their social media channels. In Facebook it was possible to click on the number of likes on corporate brand pages. In that way it was possible to see the biggest age group and statistics on “likes” and “talking about”. The brand pages “wall” was then observed. On Twitter and Instagram research was conducted on the application on iPhone and on the website. Due to inability to search hashtags on the Instagram website, this was only conducted from the phone. The search function allows the user to search for either users or hashtags. When that choice is made a search can be completed for any of them. By using the search function on Twitter and Instagram it was possible to see how many times different corporate names had been hashtagged. Data collection on social media channels was conducted three times. The first observation 11<sup>th</sup> of February, was made to see how many followers; likes and so on the companies had in the start of this study, see appendix 3. The next observation of the same kind took place about two months after the initial one 1<sup>st</sup> of April, to see if there had been a change in the number of users active in the corporate social medias see table 2. Furthermore, an observation of the specific corporate social media pages was completed during two weeks from the 7<sup>th</sup> of March and the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. This was done in order to get a picture of how the companies managed their channels and to see how active they were. Parameters like frequency of uploading posts, type of posts that were uploaded and what kind of interaction they led to as well as how the company responded to users comments of posts. It can be a problem that interviewees cannot express themselves due to tacit knowledge or a shortness of words (Gummesson, 2006). The observation of the channels in combination with interviews, allowed for a deeper understanding of how the channels were managed.

The timespan of two weeks for the detailed observation was appropriate for the companies that were active on social media since they had many updates. However, one actor posted irregularly, which made it difficult to find a suitable timespan. Therefore the observation in that case focused on observing a number of posts of different character. This was done in order to be able to understand user reactions to different types of posts.

## 2.4 Ensuring quality

“Quality is an unusually slippery concept, easy to visualize and yet exasperatingly difficult to define...quality remains a source of great confusion to managers” (Garvin, 1988 in Gummesson, 2000:157).

The quote above illustrates the confusion regarding what quality is and how it is achieved. In qualitative research, the researcher emphasizes validity. Therefore it is important to evaluate if the evidence really reflect the reality (Gummesson, 2000). The chosen companies are of different size and have been active in social media for varying periods of time. This can lead to a spread of the results, which might make it hard to draw conclusions that suit all the seven companies. This does not have to be negative though since research is a complex area and generalization is not the goal with this study.

#### 2.4.1 Email Interviews

The goal of in depth interviews are to deepen the knowledge about social and cultural phenomena's and processes rather than to produce objective facts about reality and make generalizations about populations (Fidel, 1993; Pettigrew, Fidel & Bruce, 2001; Wang, 1999 in Meho, 2006). It has though been identified that in-depth interviews includes cost, time and limited access to participants. Therefore researchers have started to explore the possibilities of Internet in order to conduct research while maintaining or improving quality. Online, in-depth interviews are conducted via email and are an on-going conversation between the respondent and the interviewee over a period of time. Email interviews are cheaper than telephone or face-to-face interviews, it is also possible to invite a larger geographically spread group of respondents. It also saves costs of transcribing interviews. Email interviews are asynchronous and thus not tied to schedules; this has pros and cons (Kazmer & Xie, 2008). For example it may take days, weeks or months before a respondent answers (Meho, 2006). By keeping continuous contact with the participants, it was possible to predict when the answers were to be given. Email interviews make it possible for the researcher to get a hold of characters that are usually very hard to meet face-to-face or talk with on the telephone. It also allows the researcher to interview groups that could not or would not have been studied otherwise (*ibid.*). In order to get answers on questions regarding communication through social media, this study has focused on interviewing employees that have an insight in corporate communication.

One of the most important differences between email interviews and face-to-face interviews are media richness and the ability of a communication medium to foster interaction and feedback and using multiple senses. On the other hand email interviews eliminate issues that come connected to visual or non-verbal cues or status between the two (Meho, 2006).

“According to Kraut *et al.*, (2004), “research on the Internet is not inherently more difficult to conduct or inherently riskier to subjects than more traditional research styles. But because the Internet is a relatively new medium for conducting research, it raises ambiguities that have been long settled in more conventional laboratory and field settings” (p. 114)” (Meho, 2006:1289).

The statement above indicates that it is possible to use the same method of a face-to-face or telephone interview of semi-structured kind in an email interview. By using semi-structured interviews the participants are allowed to share experiences and the researcher can interpret the meaning participants give to ideas and terms (Kvale, 1997). This study was based on semi-structured email interviews with employees responsible for communication on the chosen case companies, see appendix 4 for the interview guides. The questions were formulated in order to give the participant a possibility to develop answers that were specific for their situation and not merely yes or no. Email interviews were chosen since it seemed to be the best alternative if the spread of the seven companies would be possible to have in this study. The interviewees were contacted via email to seek consent of participation before the questions were distributed. After that the questions were developed when the theoretical framework was finished. The questions were then tested per email on a group of four people to see if there was a need for any clarifications or developments. After that the supervisor of this thesis had a look at the questions. When these steps were taken the questions were emailed to the interviewees.

Even though questions are tested there are always room for misinterpretation (Meho, 2006). By including additional information, it is possible to narrow participant interpretations of the

questions thus constrain their responses (*ibid.*). To avoid misinterpretation, there was an introduction to the purpose of the study that the participants were encouraged to read before answering the questions, see appendix 4. The participants and their role at respective company as well as date for sending and receiving information is described in table 4.

*Table 4: A description of the participants and their roles each company*

Company	Participant	Role	Date of sending questions	Date of receiving answers
Svenskt Kött	Qvarford, E Elsmark, J	Communication	2014-02-16	2014-04-28
Svensk Fågel	Donis, M	CEO	2014-02-16	2014-04-24
Scan	Nordlund- Othén, J	PR and communication	2014-03-20	2014-04-25
Hälsingestantan	Stegs, A	Social media	2014-02-20	2014-04-28
Ejmunds	Norman, M	Sales and marketing	2014-02-16	2014-04-24
Guldfågeln	Grindestam, J	Social media	2014-02-16	2014-04-22
Bjärefågel	Andersson, S	Marketing and communication	2014-02-16	2014-04-14

As table 4 shows, participants of this study were chosen based on their role in the company. Only in one case, Svensk Fågel, was there no one better suited to answer the questions than the CEO.

The quality of the response gained through online research is much the same as traditional research. Furthermore, studies has showed that email participants are more focused on the interview questions and provide more reflective dense accounts than their face-to-face counterparts (Curasi, 2001; Meho & Tibbo, 2003; Murray, 2004; Murray & Harrison, 2004 in Meho, 2006). This does not mean that email research is better but merely shed light on the benefits of using it (Meho, 2006).

The answers that were received in this study were interpreted and follow-up questions were emailed to the participant if needed. A summary of the answers were then transcribed and emailed to the respondents in order to make sure that the information had been correctly understood.

## 2.5 Data analysis

The information that is collected through interviews and observations needs to be described and summarised for the research to familiarize with it (Robson, 2011). It may require that the researcher seek relationships between various themes that have been identified. Furthermore the researcher can make use of relating behaviour and ideas to the respondents' characteristics. Qualitative research is interpretive and somewhat subjective since the researcher is involved in the analysis process. There is no one right way to analyse qualitative data, there are many different approaches available. Framework analysis is one approach and it has the benefit that it provides systematic and visible stages of the analysis process; this makes it easier to follow the analysis for the reader (Lacey & Luff, 2001). In this project a framework analysis has been used through the analysis of the empirical data. The interviews were naturally transcribed by the participants and have been returned to and interpreted with the help of the theoretical framework. Throughout the familiarisation and analysis common themes have been found and integrated in the discussion with an inductive approach.

Qualitative researchers should make a difference of information that is common for the participants and information that is unique for one participant. Information that is unique has limited usefulness outside the interpretation on the individual; still it may be crucial in order to understand the individual. An idea that reoccurs in different contexts can be interpreted as a theme (Ayres *et al.*, 2003). Themes might help the analysis and lead to more generalizable explanations. In this project, the results were analysed and common characteristics were identified in order to be able to explain common strategies in how the Swedish meat and poultry industry worked with social media. However individual characteristics were also given attention in order to develop an understanding of specific actors and analyse differences between them.

## 2.6 Ethics

Research ethics is not a static area. New issues arise, as new scientific methods develop. In recent years stem cell and nano research have attracted a big interest as well as commercialisation of research and effects of research on environment and society from a global perspective. A crucial part of research ethics is about how people participating in the study are treated (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011). Research involving people can cause stress, anxiety and other negative consequence for participants. It is important that participants are made well aware of what they are involved in (Robson, 2011). It is also important to think about the ethical aspects early in the research process. Ethics in social studies commonly involves commitment to participant's rights and respect for them. Several ethical codes are fairly vague, which allows the researcher to adopt "situational relativist" approach in which ethical decisions are made (Robson, 2011).

Participants should have full information on what kind of research they are taking part in. They should also be informed that they can withdraw their participation at any time. This is commonly referred to informed consent. On the one hand, some mean that the benefits of informed consent are that it leads to better data since both researcher and participant is prepared. It can also create a moral relationship between the two, which might lead to participants being more open. On the other hand some mean that informed consent is bad since the quality of the data suffers, meaning that informed consent has adverse effect on participant rate (Robson, 2011).

All participants in this study were contacted via email, inviting them to participate in this study. They were given information about what kind of study it was and where it was to be published. If they had any more questions, they were answered. After the invitation of 10 companies, seven chose to participate in the study. The companies could throughout the study chose to end their participation.

It is also worth mentioning what the results of this study might be used for. The aim is to understand how the farmer can get connected to the consumer through social media. But the results could be used as a tool to persuade consumers to buy a certain products, instead of inform consumer so they are able to make educated purchasing decisions.

### 3 Theoretical perspective and literature review

In this chapter the theoretical framework is presented. The chapter is introduced with a discussion on strategic management in general and in the context of social media. After that the theoretical framework is build around Malthouse's *et al* (2013) concept of social customer relationship management (SCRM) and Flinck's (2011) model on strategic processes involved in social media management.

#### 3.1 Strategic management

The vitality of strategic management might be due to the many conceptual elements it consist of, which allows exploration of a wide array of theoretical and practical issues. Even though there are many differing definitions of strategic management it is held together by agreement of basic definition and purpose (Nag, 2007). According to Nag (2007) representative samples of strategic management scholars within the management area gave the definition of the term as: "Strategic management is the process of building capabilities that allow a firm to create value for customers, shareholders, and society while operating in competitive markets" (Nag, 2007:946). This implies that strategic management is important in every part of an organisation with the goal to create benefits for its main stakeholders.

According to Porter (1996) strategic management should include building and sustaining competitive advantages. Strategy is an important tool for companies to differentiate and gain competitive advantages. A competitive strategy is about being different and offering the customers unique values. Moreover, to create a unique position on the market, strategy is needed; it is a dynamic process and is developed through continuous interactive learning processes within the organisation (*ibid.*). To develop a strategy in a new technology is intimidating. Managers face a high rate of uncertainty about customer needs and what services will be the best. Due to uncertainty and the risk of getting behind or being wrong, companies match all features, offer all new services and explore new technologies. The most successful companies will be the ones that were early in defining and positioning in a new unique activity (*ibid.*).

If there are major structural changes in the industry a company might have to change its strategy. The choice of a new position must though be driven by the ability to find new trade-offs and leverage a new system of complementary activities into sustainable advantage. One of the crucial functions is performance measurement, which includes, evaluating performance, reviewing changes in the surrounding environment, and making adjustments along the process (Aracıoğlu, 2013). The ways to measure performance is a growing field, both in business and academics. To be able to correct unsuccessful strategies companies should measure them in, otherwise it will be hard to manage them (Aracıoğlu, 2013). Communication is another important strategic factor, which can have an impact on consumer awareness, attitudes and decision-making. Due to the fierce competition in the food industry, communication and differentiation is becoming more important than ever in determining how successful competitive actors are (Verbeke, 2008).

Most marketers are aware of online reviews and other sources of peer-to-peer information. But many of them still neglect this information and continue marketing the same way they did a decade ago. Simonson & Rosen (2014) believe that many companies need to change their marketing strategies to account for the growing power affecting future customers based on the



opinions of existing customers. It is important to understand the influence mix, consumers are typically affected by three factors: prior preference, information from marketers and input from other people. The more consumers' trusts one source, the lower the impacts are from the other sources. In recent years input from other people has become more important. A firm needs to understand how much opinion matters for the consumer regarding their product in order to build a strategy (Simonson & Rosen, 2014).

### 3.2 The social media octopus

Research shows that half the world uses social media to keep in touch with their surrounding world. Only half of the world's brands take advantage of this, the rest fail. Social media have different meaning for different people. It can be used within areas such as marketing, public relations, customer service and crisis management (Savar, 2013). Social media affect many different business practices, as illustrated in Figure 3.



*Figure 3: The social media octopus (adopted from Savar, 2013:22).*

The figure above shows areas that can be affected by social media. Interactive social media platforms have changed the marketing landscape where consumers are now expected to be an active part in the media process. Social media cannot replace traditional media but rather help expand media choices in order to capture and engage consumers (Hanna *et al.*, 2011). It is a complex system, which means that divisions that formerly worked separately now have to learn how to work together (Savar, 2013). In order to be a better listener to consumer reactions on social media channels, all parts of the organisation need to work more harmoniously than before, the speed of social media demands it. This is not new information but due to the fast activity on social media, the brand can suffer a quick death if corporations are not following the activities (Qualman, 2011). Consumers do not care about who in the company gives them information, all that matter is that it reaches them when they want it and that it is accurate (Savar, 2013). Social media makes it possible to move consumers from awareness to engagement and consideration to loyalty and advocacy (Hanna *et al.*, 2011).

As consumers increasingly are turning to social media for recommendations, marketer's need to makes sure that their brands are available in order to be of consideration for the consumer

(Qualman, 2011). By encouraging post-purchase consumers to make recommendations, good or bad, on social media, marketers can make sure that the viral success is watered. Even a brand page liked by 500,000 on Facebook is rather useless if the people, who “liked” it never return to the page to comment, share or post anything. This is a reason for Facebook to track active users, which makes it easier for marketers to understand whether or not the brand page is useful (*ibid.*). During the US election in 2012 the tweet “Four More Years” was the most retweeted post ever and a symbol of the year when social media became an important part of politics (Savar, 2013:31).

### 3.3 Relationship marketing

Relationships with consumers, employees, suppliers, distributors, dealers and retailers are one of the most valued assets in a company (Kotler, 2003). Relationships decide the future of the firm and are often more important than the physical assets of the firm (*ibid.*). If a relation is damaged, the company needs to act fast in order to repair it. Traditional marketing did not consider relationship and relationship building. The company was viewed as an independent actor that if needed would switch suppliers in order to gain advantage. Furthermore companies assumed that customers stayed loyal and put more energy in getting new customers than keeping the old ones. Relationship marketing has led companies to understand the importance of relationships and contributed to a movement from competition and conflict to mutual interdependence and cooperation. It recognises how all actors can work together in order to create satisfaction for the consumer (Kotler, 2003). Typical for relationship marketing is that it focuses on partners and customers rather than the products, more energy is put into keeping old customers than getting new, teams work cross-functional instead of on department-level and it is more important to listen and learn than to talk.

In order to sustain success in the marketplace, more and more companies are trying to build long-term meaningful relationships with their customers. This relationship can create consumer champions who goes beyond being loyal, these consumers enthusiastically promote the company and its products to others (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2003:76). This kind of consumer to business (**C2B**) relationship is hard to achieve if marketers do not have precise understanding of what actions consumers respond favourably to (*ibid.*). Today businesses can get more information than ever before through social media about their consumers. They are now able to measure user activity, age, sex, education, hobbies interests and so on. It is important that companies understand that C2B relationships need to be cultivated; one way of doing that is through social media. If you succeed, you might have a relationship that lasts a lifetime (Qualman, 2011). Some of the strongest C2B relationships are based on consumers’ identification with the companies that help them fulfil one or more main self-definitional needs (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2003:77).

Certain companies in today’s society, which is heavily influenced by corporations and consumerism, offer attractive and meaningful social identities to consumers that help them satisfy essential self-definitional needs (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2003:76). Qualman (2011) means that consumers want to have a relationship and even help promoting them when they can. All that companies have to do in order to succeed is to be honest, transparent, listen, and react. Every company will not accomplish this, but the ones that can are likely to win (*ibid.*).

### 3.4 Social media – A part of corporate communication

There are many reasons to connect social media with corporate communication strategy. Social media is characterized by “easy searching, open participation, a minimal publishing threshold, dialogue, community, networking, and the rapid broad spread of information and other content via a wide range of feedback and linking systems” (Aula, 2010:44). To be able to manage and plan social media, it is necessary to understand the channels. Therefore it is important that marketers understand how marketing efforts affect the users of social media to reach the desired outcome (Peters *et al.*, 2013).

Consumers are increasingly using social media to get reviews and recommendations (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011). Social media have a great potential for marketers to develop the brand of their products, by using Word-of-Mouth (**WOM**) in a low-cost way. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (**eWOM**) is any statement made by possible, actual or former customers about a product or a company and is available to a multitude of people and institutions via Internet (See-To & Ho, 2013). In order to exploit the possibilities of social media, companies need to develop experiences that deliver something of value to the customer, either in terms of time, attention, endorsement or data (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011). Social media holds enormous potential for companies to get closer to their customers. But using social media as a tool to manage customer relations rises new challenges in customer relationship management (**CRM**). CRM strategies work with the aim of creating the most value from a customer relationship over the lifetime of the relationship. By the use of social media, it is no longer the companies who control the relationships, but the consumers.

#### 3.4.1 Brand reputation management

Brands are valued assets for companies; managers try to create strong brands by narrating compelling brand stories (Gensler *et al.*, 2013). A good brand reputation can lead to cost advantages as the need for marketing lessens and consumer willingness to pay increases. The reputation and relationship of a brand towards its stakeholders is a function of the history of marketing and customer services among other things (Duncan & Moriarity, 1998). The traditional understanding of brand management is built on information processing theories of consumer behaviour and recognizes the brand as a firm-owned and controlled asset that can be built in consumers' minds through cautiously organized marketing activities (Gensler *et al.*, 2013:243). Brand identity is under control of the brand manager who selects attributes, benefits and attitudes that should be communicated to consumers through marketing activities like brand stories through advertisement. This view has the advantage of giving brand managers clear guidelines and a sense of control and has dominated brand management practice the past decades (Holt, 2004:21). Instead of thinking of consumers as controllable they should be regarded as co-creators of the brand meaning. Brand managers are no longer the sole authors of brand stories as assumed in traditional brand management (*ibid.*).

A good reputation is hard to build but easy to loose. Therefore it is important to never underestimate the power of customer reviews (Kotler, 2003). Reviews make it possible for companies to make improvements in areas where they might have been losing customers before (Kotler, 2003). Corporate image can be defined as the public's latest beliefs of a company while corporate reputation is about value judgements of and organisations trustworthiness, quality, and reliability over time (Berthon *et al.*, 2008:29).

Reputation cannot be changed rapidly but needs to be nurtured over time. In order to bridge the image and reputation of a corporation, brand management can be used. By creating

coordinating and monitoring interactions between the organisation and its stakeholders the corporation can make sure that their beliefs about the brand are consistent (Berthon, 2008). However, the number of communication channels available makes it difficult for corporations to control what communication affecting them is written and distributed (Argenti, 2006).

It would be a mistake to regard social media as just another traditional marketing channel. Businesses do not really have choice if they should engage in social media or not, the choice is rather how well they do it. Even if a company is not active on social media, it is likely that their brands are being discussed on different pages and forums; the community is doing social media even if the company does not want to (Qualman, 2011). The nature of social media as dynamic, ubiquitous, and often real time has changed the settings for brand management (Gensler *et al.*, 2013). In the social media environment, consumers, instead of marketers are in control. They have become key authors of brand stories (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). To succeed on a long-term basis it is important that managers understand that social media marketing means entering a world of relationships with consumers (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). Advertising on social media is developing into being less about campaigns and more focused on on-going conversations. Social media has furthermore led to a development of marketing philosophies (Qualman, 2011) table 5 below describes the main differences between past and present characteristics of marketing philosophies.

*Table 5: The philosophies of marketers past and present (Qualman, 2011:129-130)*

<b>Past Marketers Philosophy</b>	<b>Present/Future Marketer's Philosophy</b>
It is all about the sex and sizzle of the message and brand.	Product orientation built on internal communication..
Good marketers can sell anything.	Listen to what consumers want.
Tell the consumer what he/she wants.	Take up the motto: Fail forward, fail fast, fail better.
Develop products and messaging "in-house" and then disperse them to the public.	Customers market better, develop products with their help.

The differences illustrated in table 5 above show that present marketing are more about creating an interactive relationship with the consumer rather than working to persuade them with one-way marketing.

Albeit managers realize the importance of reputation risk, organisations continue to neglect reputation risk management strategies (Aula, 2010). Reputation risk might not only affect the organisations reputation, but the whole industries. Engaging in social media and encouraging interactive stakeholder participation, can lead to great opportunities but also great risks. Two way communication approaches are risky as they can raise stakeholders expectations, and if they are not met, the organisation risks losing its reputation (*ibid.*).

An example of a twitter campaign that backfired is McDonalds #McDStories which aimed at giving costumers a platform to share positive stories about the farmers who produce their ingredients. The first tweet said, "when u make something w/pride people can taste it. McD potato supplier #McDStories" (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013:747). But soon it got out of hand as tweeters started to hashtag #McDStories about food poisoning, labour conditions and animal welfare. In a couple of hours the company withdrew the campaign. This shows how quickly corporate communication via social media can backfire and lead to an explosive campaign of negative eWOM (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013).

### 3.4.2 Strategies for quantifying social media efforts

Users of social media marketing should try to measure their activities since all social media channels might not be effective for them (Kumar & Rani, 2014). Instead of focusing on marketing investment and calculating returns in terms of customer response, managers ought to start by regarding consumer motivators to use social media. After that they can measure social media investments made by consumers as they engage with the corporations brands. Consumer behaviour and engagement can be measured when they interact on the corporation's social media channels. Consumer investments include; the number of visits and time spent. More active engagements are comments on posts, Facebook updates, and Twitter pages about the brand. These investments can then be used to analyse marketing outcomes as changes in awareness levels or WOM increases over time. Figure 4 describes the advantages and disadvantages of measuring social media efforts (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

*The dead end:* The marketer has little ability to measure the social media efforts and believes that the efforts are not working. Managers find themselves in this position if they use the strategy of “throw it on the wall and see what sticks”. In this scenario the manager has little insight in what to do. The outcome is usually that the manager gives up on social media efforts or continues with random efforts with unknown effect (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

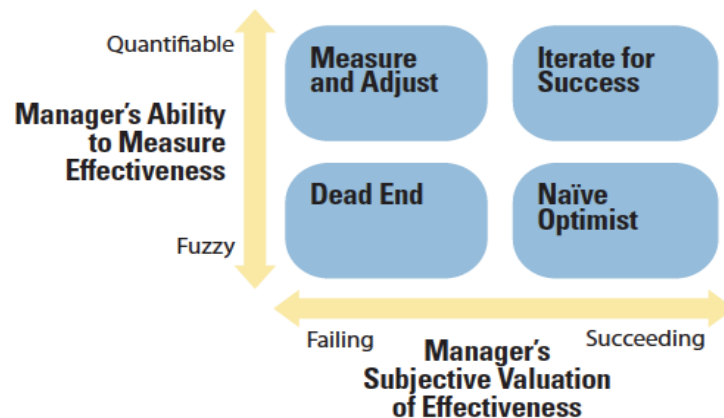


Figure 4: Strategic options for social media measurement (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010:47).

*Measure and adjust:* In this scenario the marketer has a pretty good ability to quantify the efforts but feels that they are failing. Even though the marketer is not succeeding there are probably some good clues about what is going wrong. This means that the manager can adjust the social media strategy to make it more successful (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

*Iterate for success:* Now the marketer has reasonable ability to measure the efforts and the picture that the effort are successful. Since the components are measured there is a possibility to improve the efforts strategically. It is hard but worth the effort (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

*Naïve optimist:* The marketer has a limited ability to measure to efforts but believe that they are successful. Most marketers start here. They believe social media are worth the effort but not sure how to measure them (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

Figure 4 illustrates the importance of understanding what type of strategy that is taken regarding social media. Otherwise the manager might end up with an engagement that does not benefit anyone.

### 3.5 Social customer relationship management

CRM refers to how a company handles the relationships with costumers through channels like corporate web pages and call centres (Baird & Parasnis 2, 2011). Social media has changed the traditional way of doing that since consumers are empowered and influential on their social networks (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). If consumers spread negative information of a company on social media, it can damage their reputation. But, social media can also offer companies the opportunity to listen and interact with their consumers and possibly encourage them to become advocates and ambassadors of their products. The challenge is to find these opportunities, make use of them and avoid getting into any pitfalls (*ibid.*).

Applying CRM means that companies use tools and tactics to get the most possible information about their customers, so that they can satisfy their wishes. By being present on social media, companies can get information that was not possible to get through traditional media (Langer, 2014). Social customer relationship management (**SCRM**) does not replace CRM but can contribute with valuable insights. If brands can identify high value customers, who have a lot of influence, they can target engagement activities (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). Table 6 illustrates the main differences between traditional CRM and SCRM.

*Table 6: Differences between traditional CRM and Social CRM (adopted from Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011:28)*

<b>Traditional CRM</b>	<b>Social CRM</b>
Internal operations in order to manage customer relations through traditional channels. The aim is to derive optimum value from customer relationship during its lifetime.	The ability of a company to meet the personal agendas of its customers while at the same time meeting its business objectives. Customer engagement instead of customer management.

SCRM is a business strategy useful to get closer to customers. Social media can benefit all sectors when it is combined with CRM (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). It is about increasing customer insight and engagement. It affects the customer lifecycle value in acquisition, retention and value development. By delivering insights about customer attitudes and behaviour, social media can help companies to put the consumer in the centre (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). A survey conducted by Baird & Parasnis 1 (2011:33) on 1 056 consumers, showed that about 55% of them do not interact with brands on social networks. However, a sample of the 45% that did interact with the brand in social media, 66% stressed the necessity that companies are honest and transparent in their communication. Content can be designed to engage consumers by being, entertaining, informative, and educative or provide insight in the business. If companies communicate in a relevant way with interactive consumers, they might be converted to win sales and even advocacy (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011).

Consumers, who do not feel passionate about a brand, are less likely to interact with it (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011). But a recommendation or review from a trustworthy person could make a difference (*ibid.*). User generated content (**UGC**) and eWOM have greater effect on consumer's perception of brand equity and brand attitude than firm generated content, however, firm generated content do affect the perception of brand attitudes (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2014:14). Companies can use this information as a motive to engage consumers emotionally to share content with other users (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011). It is important to encourage consumers to generate content that is positive for the corporation and its products. Therefore it can be valuable to provide information and content that motivates consumers to engage in social media campaigns. Some benefits of that are nurturing brand loyalty and reducing service costs through peer-to-peer solutions for product problems (*ibid.*).

Malthouse *et al* (2013) suggest a descriptive framework in order to understand the different conditions of CRM with social media in the picture, see figure 5. The social CRM house shows how traditional CRM activities like acquisition (relationship initiation); maintenance (retention) and termination are affected by customer engagement made possible by social media. It combines general management with combinations of engagement and CRM processes.



Figure 5: The social consumer relationship management house (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013:272).

Interaction between the three components and the level of engagement is indicated by a “1”. A company can develop its social CRM strategy, item 2, by conceptualizing item 1. The authors assume that social CRM is built on insights achieved by analysing great quantities of data available on social media “3 and 4”. Item 3 consist of raw material and item 4 presents the processed raw material. Weather the strategy is successful or not depends on the people possessing the house, the employees (item 5). Finally it is important to find ways to measure the performance of each component (item 6). Within each element, there are outfalls, which need to be addressed. The level of engagement in figure 5 is either high or low. This classification of engagement is made since scholars do not agree on the definition of consumer engagement, but they do agree that there are different levels of engagement that range on a scale from low to high (Malthouse, 2013:272). High, meaning that consumers actively possess the role of the brand in their lives or participate in various types of co-creating like, writing reviews or creating videos of the product. Low engagement refers to consumers that either passively consumes information or giving basic forms of feedback as “like” on Facebook (*ibid*).

Social media makes it possible for companies to engage on a personal level; this is important but also very difficult to do, especially for firms that have not had one-by-one relationships before. Moreover it is hard to get consumer to engage in valuable interactions and the competition on getting consumers attention is fierce. Therefore it is essential that companies learn what type of SCRM that can lead to customer engagement (Henning-Thurau *et al.*, 2013). Even low engagement customers can spread the brand; by pressing “like”, the brand meaning might be transferred to a large circle of friends (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). High engagement consumers who for example post a video, does not automatically lead to big effects on others. An example is Pepsi max’s “Crash the Superbowl” competition in 2011. Consumers were invited to share videos of why they loved Pepsi Max, the winners got a cash price and consumers were highly engaged, however, non-winning contributions did not achieve many views. Malthouse *et al* (2013) claim that companies should work on their social

CRM strategy based on the level of engagement consumers are likely to show and the CRM objectives that the company want to reach. Different approaches for the CRM objectives can be valued on the basis of consumer engagement. A consumers position on the higher or lower end of engagement, will affect how the user consume and co-create the brand (*ibid.*).

### *3.5.1 Reaching CRM objectives – differences between lower and higher engagement*

Many companies that begin with social media upload advertising on YouTube and run promotions on Facebook. This has advantages since companies can build on the basic processes that they are used to from planning traditional marketing activities. It is less risky than higher involvement, but does not use the full potential of interactive social media (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). Henning-Thurau *et al* (2013) means that celebrities like Ashton Kutcher are popular on social media because of the shared private perspectives. What would be the equivalent for a CRM manager (Henning- Thurau *et al*, 2013)? An observation made by Sohn, (2014:146) concluded that users of social media sometimes share information that is valuable for ourselves and sometimes information they think is valuable for others. However, before sharing information, consumers tend to evaluate if it will be beneficial, harmful or merely a waste of time for them (Sohn, 2014).

Consumers that merely consume information, or only press “like” or “share” company content are considered to have a low engagement. Despite this low engagement act, the actions can help companies build awareness of a product or company since it is spread through the users social networks (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). Consumers tend to put higher trust in WOM than in corporate advertisement (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). Since consumers “talk” to each other more than ever it is important to take this in regards. Monitoring the buzz and intervening when it is appropriate can give many benefits both in B2B and B2C communication. It leads to a better understanding of consumers, which enhances to possibility of changing strategies in a way that is beneficial to attract and retain customers (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). In order too keep customers; companies can use strategies in social media. Brand pages have been shown efficient in affecting brand evaluations among “likers”. It is especially important to maintain customers in business where it is hard to identify the end consumer, such as fast-moving consumer goods (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013).

In highly engaged customer populations, it is no longer possible to separate acquisition and maintenance. In higher engagement, the company does not have full control over messages and information that are posted by users. Low-level engaged customers might only share company approved material, while high engaged customers can chose to post independent material in forms of reviews or reveal corporate promotions only targeted at small audiences. The inability to separate acquisition and maintenance is one of the largest differences between traditional and social CRM (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013).

Either the company or the consumer can initiate the termination of a relationship. If a consumer decides to end it, social media can be beneficial to understand why this happened. In such cases it is possible to spot customers who are likely to terminate, which can be useful in developing models to predict churn. This can help companies to target possible churning customers in special retention campaigns so that a ripple effect in the customer’s social network is avoided (Malthouse *et al*, 2013). A company might end a relationship because the consumer is not profitable or have a negative impact on employees. Social media can also help companies decide whom not to end a relationship with, for example persons that have a desirable social network. It is more challenging to end a relationship with a customer that has a higher level of engagement. Termination might lead to negative eWOM, which might lead



to a ripple effect (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013).

Figure 6, shows how strategic activities can lead to a more strategic use of social media. The figure is used to analyse the empirical data in chapter six. In order to use social media in an effective way, there is a need to become more strategic. Flinck (2011) developed an empirically grounded framework based on a CRM framework from (Payne & Frow, 2005). To build a strategy requires a look at processes from the firms perspective, the author found five core processes, namely, strategy development, implementation, value co-creation, performance assessment and information management see figure 6.

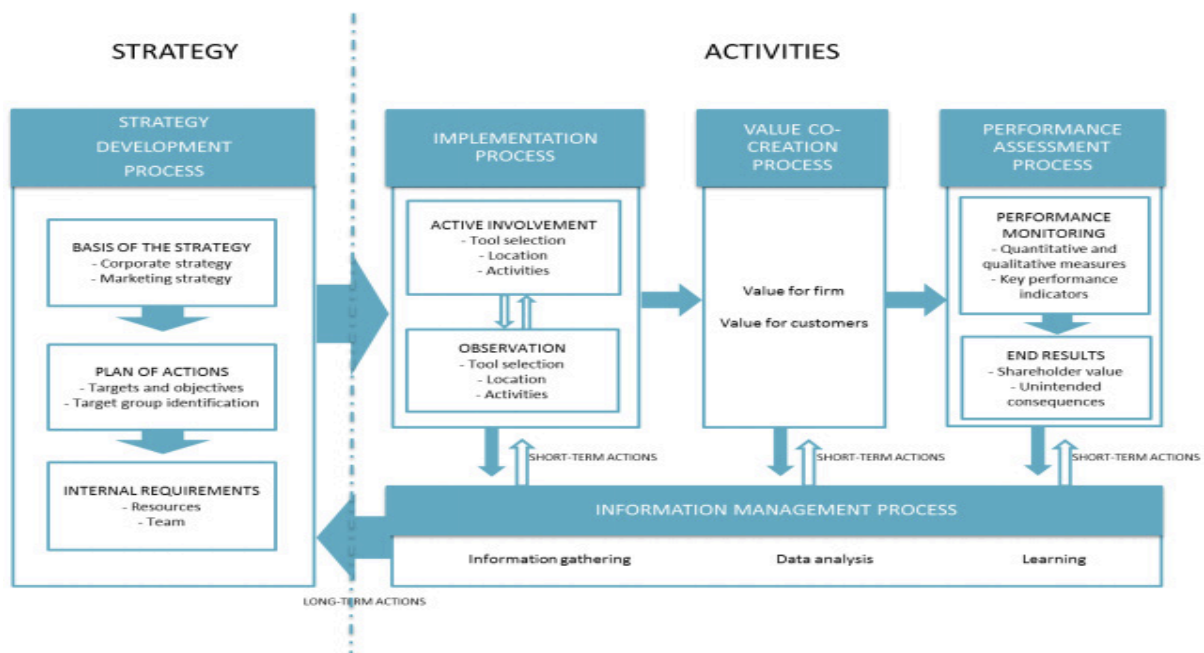


Figure 6: Framework for the process engaged in creating a strategy for social media marketing (Flinck, 2011:79).

Figure 6 shows a framework of the social media planning process that can be utilised in order to explain how strategic use of social media can be accomplished. Social media planning should start with a development of a strategy suitable for the preconditions of the company. The general marketing strategy should be taken into consideration so that social media operates in line with it. Furthermore it is important to be aware of the target group in social media so that it can be analysed in order to create the most efficient social media efforts (Keitzman *et al.*, 2011). Companies also need to be aware of how much resource certain activities will demand and thereafter make a decision on where to engage. Resources cannot only be counted in time and money, but also people. There might be a need for people with different skills from different units depending on the actions and targets (Flinck, 2011).

In the implementation process, companies can choose active involvement or merely observation. No matter what activity is chosen it is important to identify what is attractive to the target consumer and in what location it is to be given (Keitzman *et al.*, 2011). Value-co creation is important in order to get consumers to engage (Peters *et al.*, 2013). There is a need to understand that social media is about co-creation of value for both consumers and companies. Measuring social media is still rather uncommon (See-To & Ho, 2013). However it is important in order to be able to strategically plan your actions on social media. In the following chapter a description of corporate communication and social media will be given in order to provide knowledge necessary to follow the empirical results.

## 4 Background for the empirical study

This chapter describes the empirical background, starting wide with corporate communication and social media. After that social media and the importance of understanding it is explained.

### 4.1 Corporate communication

Communication has always been critical in marketing. “When properly done, communication is the integrative element that helps tear down functional silos internally while closing the distance between the company, its customers, and other stakeholders” (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998:3). Corporate communication (CC) is a function within the organisation that manages corporate reputation and image (Bochenek & Blili, 2013). Furthermore it is a way of creating value, mitigating crises and protecting corporate assets. Corporations have never faced as high level of public reservation as today. Actions arranged by stakeholders such as NGO’s or even consumers may lead to boycotts and protests that have a big impact on company’s bottom line, reputation and image. From being a voluntary activity, CC is now a core managerial concern as well as function (*ibid.*). Internal and external stakeholders expect to have unrestricted access to corporate information as well as demanding them to be held accountable for choices they make. Due to development of new communication technologies, companies have to be more transparent than ever (Christensen, 2002). New IT applications have opened up several opportunities for CC; social media are the most obvious incarnation of this trend. “If well-managed, they can create concrete market opportunities and open the company to new groups of customers (Regeer & Larkin, 2005). If ignored or miss-managed, social media can become a threat which may lead to a communicational crisis” (Bochenek & Blili, 2013:149). The authors refer to this paradigm as communicational schizophrenia. Social media channels offer the opportunity of spreading information instantly, but it is a complex tool for communicators and marketers. The challenges regarding social media in combination with a need for professional crisis- and reputation management move CC to a strategic level (*ibid.*). CC affects the brand essence and thus creates value for an enterprise in both marketing and market value stages. Furthermore it helps companies to define their objectives and strategies of market building. Due to the complex environment of CC, managers need to be provided tools in order to shape strategic practices (*ibid.*).

During the last thirty years, growing attentions has been directed to how to best communicate risk and benefits connected to food. Effective communication demands an understanding of the target audiences needs and management of information addressed to the audience (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013). There is however no guarantee that the targeted audience will take in the information provided (Verbeke, 2005). Effective strategic communication drives revenue, profit, customer loyalty, brand value, and other important factors necessary to reach business success. It is though hard to quantify the effects of CC on business success (Argenti, 2006).

### 4.2 Social media

As long as the conversation is beneficial for both parties, social media may contribute to build trust and loyalty between consumers and company (Gillin, 2007). Gillin stresses the importance of social media as he states: “Conventional marketing wisdom has long held that a dissatisfied customer tells ten people. But that is out of date. In the new age of social media, he or she has the tools to tell 10 million” (Gillin, 2007:4). This means that consumers have

more power to affect companies through the digital word-of-mouth today than in the times of conventional marketing.

According to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010: 61) "Social Media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content". In this definition there are many types of social media channels; social networking sites, blogs, and content communities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). User generated content (UGC) is material that is made when consumers communicate with each other online and outside the professional sphere. It is in form of tweets, Facebook updates, and videos on YouTube as well as consumer reviews of products and advertisements (Smith *et al.*, 2012). Web 2.0 has, unlike the static web pages of its precursor Web 1.0, interactive social media platforms allowing consumers to co-create brand stories as active players (Labrecque, 2014). Social media has changed the way people connect, communicate and collaborate with each other. Marketers have recognized this as an opportunity to improve the connections with customers. The direct connection social media provides is ideal to create brand communities creating relationships and achieving a better understanding of consumers demand. In order to succeed with usage of social media, it is important to understand the environment of it. Otherwise it can backfire and lead to reputational damage, reduced stock prices and even revenue loss (Labrecque, 2014).

There are diverse channels of social media in formats like, micro blogs, social networks, and content communities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Besides personal profiles, social network sites allow companies to set up brand pages, which is similar to a brand community online. Here it is easy to connect with loyal consumers and brand followers. The pages can furthermore deliver impressions to friends of the followers on their personal pages (Muk & Chung 2014). It is clear that social media have given companies new opportunities to promote their brand, products and service. Social media changes over time as users generate the content; it is also evolving with new technologies. Focus lays on the people not only the products. It is built on the concept of a natural authentic discussion between people about subjects that they are interested in (Kumar & Rani, 2014; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Table 7 summarizes the differences between traditional media and social media. Traditional media is based on one-way communication while social media encourages interaction and discussion. Social media offers a more accessible source of information for activists and customers than traditional media. Stakeholders and NGOs have earlier been offered a small amount of free coverage in traditional media; social media offers a free platform with full control over content (except for UGC). The network effect of social media can quickly spread information and the two-way communication allow costumers to better measure and evaluate how authentic the information is (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013).

*Table 7: Main differences between traditional media and social media (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013:752)*

Traditional media	Social media
Hierarchical	Non-hierarchical, "horizontalism"
Elite controlled and owned	Not gate keepers – NGO and consumers access
Static or slow moving	Rapid response, dynamic
Costly	Free or low financial cost
Commercial speech	Relationship and trust
Uni-directional communication	Interaction and conversation between corporation and stakeholders
Channel specific	Based on networks ad hoc and shifting
Formal fact checking regulation	Fewer controls, but broad monitoring

Social media increases the information available for consumers and other stakeholders; this makes it easier for them to find out if the company is communicating the truth or if there is another story behind it (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013). Social media is unique in the way that users that have none or little connection with the information supplier can spread messages. In appendix 5, a description and indication of resources required for different social media channels ranked from dissemination to engagement.

It is important to make the material on social media entertaining in order to get consumers to spread it further. Involved social media users make the information spread much faster throughout the social media community. However, as always regarding marketing, it is challenging to get the consumer to purchase and not only be involved (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013). Social media provides an important source of information for companies looking for feedback and suggestions of improvements. Furthermore it can help the communicator to keep track of the general public feeling regarding a current food issue, in order to develop the next communicative step (Verbekke, 2005).

#### *4.2.1 Understanding social media*

To be able to manage social media it is important to understand how it works and what motivates users to engage in it (Peters *et al.*, 2013). The overall idea of social media is to participate, interact, share and collaborate, not straightforward advertising and selling (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). According to Seraj (2012) the motivational structure for user to engage in social media communities is the co-creation of value, social value from network activities, and cultural value.

On the one hand, it is crucial to choose the right medium to be active in, to reach the targeted consumers. On the other hand, companies should be active in all mediums where their consumers are. This is a dilemma since the key to creating relationships in social media is to be active. Companies should therefore think about how many channels they have time, resources and knowledge to handle (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). In order to get users to engage, posts should be interesting. In order to find out what that is, it is important to listen to what consumers want to hear, talk about, what they think is fascinating, amusing and valuable. By doing this, it is possible to shape posts in an attractive way (Kaplan & Haenlinen; Peters *et al.*, 2013). The content that is posted should always be fresh so that it can engage consumers in discussions and encourage them to share it (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). De Vries *et al* (2012) found that vividness and interactivity of brand posts are important in order to engage consumers. Furthermore it has been found that positive content is more shared than negative (Gensler *et al.*, 2013). According to Kaplan & Haenlinen (2010) companies gain if they keep their social media channels unprofessional. If an unprofessional tone is held, it is more likely to lead to forgiving users if a mistake should occur. Furthermore it can lead to more open discussions and valuable feedback.

## 5 The empirical study

This chapter starts by presenting the observation made on the different companies brand channels on social media. The first observation shows how the activity on the social channels have changed over time, while the second one is an observation of the content on the pages during a period of two weeks. Lastly the results of the email interviews are presented.

### 5.1 Social media usage observation

The first social media observation made was followed by an observation on the same parameters about two months later. This was done in order to get a view of how active the companies had been during that time. See table 8 for a description of how the activities between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April have affected number of likes etc.

*Table 8: Summarized effect of activities on the different corporate social media channels in the period of 11<sup>th</sup> of February to 1<sup>st</sup> of April*

	Svenskt Kött	Svensk Fågel	Scan	Hälsingetintan	Ejmunds	Guldfågel	Bjärefågel
<b>Facebook</b>							
Likes	780	195	721	30	17	56	109
Talking About	-229	-12	-1187	-121	-79	36	315
Were here	1	0	0	0	1	16	0
<b>Instagram</b>							
Followers	50	41	63	10	6	0	0
Uploads	12	9	16	0	3	0	0
Hashtags	221	554		6	7*/4*	6*/18*	9
<b>Twitter</b>							
Followers	229	0	62	5	41	0	0
Tweets	359	0	70	0	50	0	0
<b>Youtube</b>							
Followers	5	14	0	0	0	5	0
Viewed	4747	79556	0	0	27	2996	0

(7\*Ejmunds / 4\*Ejmundsgård, 6\*Guldfågel / 18\*Guldfågeln)

The table illustrates how much activity there have been on the corporate social media channels during two months, it also shows what effect it has had in terms of increased likes, followers etc. Facebook likes have increased at all company's brand pages. Talking about is the only parameter that has gone down. Talking about is a measurement to see who has linked to the corporate brand page that day; therefore it can vary a lot depending on other factors in social media and society. When looking at Instagram it is clear that the three biggest actors are the most active and has increased their number of followers most as well as the number of hashtags. Except for Scan which is hard to search for hashtags due to the name. Regarding Twitter it is obvious that only three of the actors use their twitter account actively. The same goes for YouTube.

### 5.2 Svenskt Kött

The trade organisation, Svenskt Kött started the engagement on social media with a goal to create a dialogue with consumers. It started with Facebook, Twitter and then YouTube since those channels felt most useful to the organisation. Svenskt Kött has begun to work with Instagram with a focus on continued dialogue. The focus of their social media work is not to drive traffic to the website, instead Qvarford & Elsmark (pers. com., 2014) mean: "We are happy to spread other people's posts and are not as focused on driving traffic to our website

because we realize that engagement often becomes smaller when it comes to our own articles”.

In the future, Svenskt Kött would like to develop video sharing on sites like YouTube and Vimeo. Svenskt Kött has four employees of which two are very interested in social media. Therefore they have divided the work between them. One person manages Facebook and the other person is responsible for Twitter and to some part, Instagram. The employees have developed their knowledge in Instagram usage through training offered by the web agency that is working for Svenskt Kött. Furthermore the organisation is a part of a network within the green industry. The participants of the network meet once a month and have a group on Facebook where they can discuss and help each other with social media questions.

Social media has affected the organisation since it has developed contact with actors that have led to collaborative work. “Among other things, we developed a Swedish meat-labelling in restaurants because of a question on Twitter” (pers. com., Qvarford & Elsmark, 2014). Another example is their blog where chef Fredrik Anderson and the Tweeter and eco farmer Adam Arnesson are guest writers at the moment. Svenskt Kött does not really have customer relationships, but they have users of their label. The users receive information from Svenskt Kött via social media. Social media is also used to spread brand users statuses etc. If there are any complaints or questions on Svenskt Kött they are responded to or referred to someone that can answer.

#### 5.2.1 Facebook

The majority of users that like Svenskt Kött are in the age group 25-34 and live in the area of Stockholm (www, Facebook 1, 2014). Between the 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April, the number of likes increased with 780 which is a 20 % increase. During the time observed there were a lot of media attention towards Danish pig production. Therefore it is not odd that this subject is reoccurring on this Facebook page as well. For a description see table 9 below.

The posts on Svenskt Kött’s Facebook page are dominated by information about Swedish pig production and what it is like compared to other countries, especially Denmark. Most of the posts are characterised as “information” and “promotion” and that is because they communicate educative information and at the same time they promote the label “Svenskt kött” and Swedish meat production. A few posts were also rather political, they were referring to election year, and that it is important to think about Swedish agriculture when voting. There was information about how use of antibiotics in animal production has led to antibiotic resistant bacteria. The last political post was about one of the Swedish parties that want to invest in Swedish meat production by strategic public procurement decision.

During the time of observation there was not much interactivity in the comment field, however, it seems as if Svenskt Kött give response to comments that are in line with their own views by liking them. If specific questions were raised, Svenskt Kött responded them.

*Table 9: Observation of brand posts on Svenskt Kött's Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2014-03-07	Link to TV4: a chef promotes Swedish pig meat	Entertaining Promotion	46	1	2	0
2014-03-07	Shared "Nyhlén Hugossons" photo: Good example of the label	Encouraging Laudatory	36	0	0	0
2014-03-07	Link to a blog	Entertaining	25	0	0	0
2014-03-07	Shared link via "korvfestivalen"	Curiosity	6	0	0	0
2014-03-10	Link to news about Svenskt Kött in wholesales	Laudatory Information	74	1	1	0
2014-03-10	Shared link via LRF: Election year	Politics Information	44	0	2	0
2014-03-11	"Our most popular dishes"	Entertaining	18	2	4	2
2014-03-12	Shared "Bonde på köpet's" photo: Meat fraud	Information Promotion	74	0	2	0
2014-03-13	Shared "Bonde på köpet's" photo: Antibiotic-resistant bacteria's	Information Promotion Politics	132	0	0	0
2014-03-13	Link to news about Swedish meat and public procurement	Information Politics	35	1	0	0
2014-03-13	Shared "bonde på köpet's" photo: Info about "Svenskt Kött"	Information Promotion	27	0	1	0
2014-03-13	Link to news about pigtails in Denmark	Information Promotion	111	22	11	0
2014-03-14	Link to news about pigtails in Denmark	Information Promotion	49	19	11	0
2014-03-14	Link to news about pig promotion	"live update" Information	127	14	4	1
2014-03-14	Shared "Bonde på köpets" Photo: Danish pigtail	Information Promotion	158	1	2	0
2014-03-18	Link to blog about Swedish animal welfare compared with other countries	Information Education	79	3	1	0
2013-03-19	Shared Link (Bonde på Köpet) to a competition on "bonde på köpet"	Promotion Information	15	0	0	0
2013-03-21	Shared status (Grisupproret) Keep looking for Swedish pig...	Information Promotion	35	0	2	0

### 5.2.2 Instagram

Svenskt Kött did not post anything on Instagram in March. During the period between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April Svenskt Kött have uploaded 12 pictures on Instagram and increased their number of followers with 50 users which is a 27 % increase. The number of hashtags have also increased but with 221.

### 5.2.3 Twitter

Svenskt Kött are a frequent user of Twitter, since the first check up in February they have increased their followers with 229 persons (10 %) and tweeted 359 times. Between 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of March they tweeted, 95 times of which 45 were retweets and 50 their own tweets. Of their own tweets 35 were answers where other twitter users were @ed and the remaining 14 was information regarding the label and Swedish production, one tweet encouraged the tweeters to join a competition in cooperation with "En bonde på köpet".

### 5.2.4 Youtube

During the two weeks that were observed Svenskt Kött did not post anything new on YouTube. However they have managed to get 4 747 more views on the videos posted on their YouTube channel, which is a 10 % increase. At the same time the YouTube followers have

only increased with 5 persons. Since the first date of observation 11<sup>th</sup> of February until 1<sup>st</sup> of April they have linked to their YouTube page twice.

### 5.3 Svensk Fågel

The trade organisation, Svensk Fågel, has been present on Facebook since 2012. Since then, the number of channels on social media has expanded in order to reach a larger part of the targeted segment. To find suitable social media channels, Svensk Fågel have explored different alternatives and then developed their presence on the channels when they were ready. The goal of social media usage is to: “Create a relationship and dialogue with consumers who are interested in Swedish poultry” (pers. com., Donis, 2014).

Every year the results of their efforts are measured through a consumer panel where the level of awareness and knowledge of Svensk Fågel is investigated. These measurements are used in the long-term activities of evaluating new forms of social media and making sure they reach their target segment. On the short term Svensk Fågel works with projects on social media and monitor the efforts. Development of competence within the area of social media is bought externally from consultants. Svensk Fågel mean that their business is not affected by social media, it is merely a channel to inform and reach consumers. Facebook and YouTube are the most important social media channels for Svensk Fågel since their target groups are present there. User generated posts are published as long as they do not contain false or misleading information. All posts that are genuine and require an answer are answered (pers. com., Donis, 2014).

#### 5.3.1 Facebook

The biggest user group liking Svensk Fågel are in the age between 25-44 years old and live in the Stockholm area (www, Facebook 2, 2014). Between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April, the number of likes increased with 195, which is 17 %. The observation of their posts on Facebook between the 7<sup>th</sup> of March and 21<sup>st</sup> of March is illustrated in table 10 below.

*Table 10: Observation of brand posts on Svensk Fågels Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2014-03-13	Information about Instagram competition	Promotion Engaging	9	1	0	0
2014-03-13	Video commercial	Information Entertainment	1217	224	56	4
2014-03-21	Link to the news that covered the event	Information opinion	28	1	1	0
2014-03-21	Link to news article	Information	21	2	1	0

The First post was about an Instagram competition, encouraging users to visit their Instagram account. The second post was a video commercial explaining what “Gula pippin” stands for. This update got many likes and comments. Some of the comments were questions to Svensk Fågel and they answered four comments. The different commentators sometimes answer each others questions and it is clear that some users are advocates for Swedish chicken, some do not care and some dislike chicken production over all. The last two posts are “live updates” of what Svensk Fågel have been working with, in this case it is pictures of an event where they offered tastings of Swedish chicken dishes and informed of the risks with imported chicken. Both of the posts link to something, the first to a news clip and the second to an article on the subject.



### 5.3.2 Instagram

Svensk Fågel posted five pictures under the name of “gulapippin” on Instagram in March. They have mainly posted pictures of a yellow bird, probably since that symbol is their label. They have also posted information about a hashtag competition, tag #gulapippin; the pictures are also published on their webpage “gulapippin.se”. The hashtag campaign has resulted in a massive raise in the hashtag #gulapippin which has gone up 554 (923 %) times between February 11<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> of April. The number of followers has increased with 41, this is a 57% increase.

### 5.3.3 Twitter

Svensk Fågel does not have Twitter but if “Svensk Fågel” or “Gula pippin” is searched for, a number of results come up. The CEO of Svensk Fågel has Twitter but she does not communicate the opinions of the organisation on the account. Being present on Twitter does though make it possible for the CEO to follow debates relevant for Svensk Fågel.

### 5.3.4 YouTube

Svensk Fågel has posted five videos on YouTube since February. The videos are similar, with a human sized chicken trying to make consumers aware of the brand “Gula pippin “ in grocery stores. Since February the views on YouTube have increased with 79 556 (32 %) and the number of subscribers have increased with 14 users. The most popular video is the one that was posted on Facebook and linked to YouTube.

## 5.4 Scan

Scan started the engagement on social media 2009 with the Scan blog. This was done in order to quickly reach out and encourage dialogue with consumers and other stakeholders. Shortly after the initiation of the blog, the pig crisis came when animal rights alliance entered the Swedish farms. The blog was used extensively during that time and has since been central to quickly give Scan’s picture of various events. During this time Scan also started a Twitter account. The account has been used to build relationships with stakeholders and support other channels. According to Nordlund-Othén, (pers. com., 2014) Scan “strive to be a transparent company and encourage dialogue with stakeholders such as opinion leaders, journalists, bloggers, customers, consumers, etc.” another goal with social media is to nurture customer relations and communication. Since 2009 other social media channels have been added, today Facebook is the most important. “In Facebook we want to talk to our consumers and build the brand. We talk about Swedish meat, spread knowledge about meat, new products and other news on the brand Scan” (pers. com., Nordlund-Othén, 2014). Scan also post information about seasonal campaigns that run concurrently in the stores. In the recent months Facebook has been used in some emergencies in order to reach out in several channels at the same time. Instagram is the latest addition to social media and at the moment it is mostly a tool to support Facebook but are increasing as a communication tool as well.

Scan does not measure social media efforts overall but focus on individual campaigns. Since the start of social media use in Scan, the number of campaigns has increased. The employees working with social media in Scan develop their skills through training. They are also members of a network with other companies in the green industry. The members meet once a month and have a Facebook group where they discuss matters connected to social media. Social media is important for both marketing and communication, however it is only a part of the big picture of Scan. Scan believe that they reach out to their target audience, but maybe not to the extent that they would like to.

Out of Scan's social media channels Facebook is the most important since it has the biggest number of followers as well as the greatest number of users. But, "it is a very controlled channel where the diffusion of posts are controlled by Facebook. You also have little opportunity to interact in conversations that take place between users" (pers. com., Nordlund-Othén, 2014). Regarding user-generated posts, Scan tries to respond to them as quick as possible if they are reasonably groomed and not repeating, if necessary they will refer to a contact within the company. Scan do not censor or delete negative comments as long as they fulfil the criteria mentioned above.

#### 5.4.1 Facebook

Among the users that like Scan, the biggest group are 35-54 years old and live in the area of Stockholm (www, Facebook 3, 2014). The brand page of Scan goes under the name "Vi som älskar Svenskt kött". Between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April the number of likes increased with 721, which is about 8 %. During the two observed weeks Scan posted eight times on Facebook, see table 11.

*Table 11: Observation of brand posts on Scan's Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2014-03-07	YouTube link	Entertainment	65	0	1	0
2014-03-10	Change of cover picture	Branding	438	15	4	0
2014-03-11	Presentation of the winners of an Instagram competition	Entertainment Promotion	72	0	3	0
2014-03-12	Pre launch of product	Promotion	98	6	2	0
2014-03-18	"Maybe this truck, will come to your house with pigmeat?"	Promotion	585	25	41	2
2014-03-19	Presentation of winners in a competition on sausage	Promotion Entertainment	83	1	4	0
2014-03-20	Post of the "sausage memories"	Promotion Relationship	108	6	4	1
2013-03-21	Link to information about Scan	Promotion	68	1	0	0

The posts uploaded by Scan were mostly promotional of their brand or some of their products. The first post was a link to a video where a famous Swedish actress talks about Swedish canola pig with a butcher. However it was not linked to Scans YouTube page but Årets Kock's. The second post was a change of cover picture, which did receive a great number of likes, while the third presented a link to winners of an Instagram competition. The fourth presented a new product and after that there was information about a car that drives around in Sweden sampling the Swedish canola pig. This post got a lot of attention, both likewise and comment wise. Furthermore they presented the winner of a sausage competition and the last post was about their sandwich products. If there was a question in the comment field it was answered by Scan. Otherwise there was no response.

#### 5.4.2 Instagram

Scan1899 posted three times on Instagram during two weeks. The first post referred to a new sausage that will be launched soon. The second one refers to a sampling of Swedish canola pig that is given out by a truck driving around in Sweden. That post got more attention than the other posts in comments and likes. The last one is a post of consumers best sausage memories that they encouraged people to send in. During the time of observation there was an on-going Instagram competition where users should take their best picture of canola pig and tag it with #ÅKrapsgris. Scan's followers on Instagram increased with 63 (33 %) users the period of 11<sup>th</sup> of February to 1<sup>st</sup> of March. It is hard to evaluate the hashtag "Scan" since it is a word used for many things, therefore that number cannot be relied upon. There is no good hashtag for Scan itself.

#### 5.4.3 Twitter

Since the first observation of Scan, 11<sup>th</sup> of February, the followers have increased with 5 %, which are 62 persons while posting 70 times on Twitter. Scan posted 10 times on Twitter in the period of 7<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of March. Five of the tweets were replies to other Twitter users regarding their products, three were information regarding their campaigns, which were also linked to their Instagram account, and two posts were retweets. Due to the name Scan it is hard to find relevant hashtags since many things go under the name scan.

### 5.5 Hälsingestintan

Hälsingestintan have been active on social media for five years, their engagement started on Facebook. Facebook was chosen since it is the biggest channel and “everyone” has it. It is an easy way to create direct contact with customers and users of the brand page. The social media channels have developed, and today Hälsingestintan have an Instagram account, YouTube channel and a Twitter account. “Instagram is very effective. A picture says more than a thousand words. Through Instagram we can communicate the added values of our products in a simple way” (pers. com., Stegs, 2014).

The YouTube channel is still in the starting phase and Hälsingestintan are looking at how it can be utilized in the best way. Initially, there was no goal with social media, except being present. During the years, the presence has increased and the goal of the organisation is to make Hälsingestintan the natural choice for consumers buying meat. According to Stegs (pers. com., 2014) social media has an important role in building the brand. The goal on Facebook is to reach 10 000 likes by January 2015. Facebook is the most used channel and Hälsingestintan try to upload at least four times a week. The posts are varied but since photos and videos have showed to be efficient Stegs (pers. com., 2014) says: “We try to upload a video or photo every week since they give better results regarding popularity and interaction”.

So far there has not been any training of the staff managing social media. But there are plans for training in the future. Due to social media, the company has more interactive relationships with customers today than before. Hälsingestintan mean that they do and they do not reach their customers through social media. They reach end consumers that shop in the retail stores, but the retail stores, that are the biggest buyers of Hälsingestintans products, are not reached through social media. Facebook and Instagram are of greatest importance for Hälsingestintan due to their many users and the possibility to use them for marketing. Hälsingestintan try to respond user comments as soon as possible.

#### 5.5.1 Facebook

Hälsingestintan has two pages on Facebook, one corporate and one for their new meat shop. The corporate brand page was not updated in March, but the other page was updated four times during two weeks. The corporate page is mostly liked by users between 35-54 years old in the area of Stockholm (www, Facebook 4, 2014). The posts does only inform of different offers and campaigns in the shop. The number of likes increased with 30 between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April, this is an increase of 0,8 %. In order to be able to observe some kind of posts from the brand page of Hälsingestintan five posts of different character were chosen, see table 12. The table shows five different types of posts. The picture of a calf and its mother got a lot of attention and was shared many times. According to Hälsingestintan it is a picture of their animals walking outside at current time, early spring, which also is the calving

season. The next post did also get quite a lot of attention; it was an invitation to a meat test in Hälsingestintan new meat shop.

*Table 12: Observation of brand posts on Hälsingestintans Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2014-04-07	Picture of calf and cow	"liveupdate"	976	26	15	1
2014-02-12	Invitation to a meat test in their shop	Information Education	130	14	6	0
2014-02-04	Promotion of their meat shop	Promotion	30	0	0	0
2014-01-26	Video of a heifer and its stockwoman	"liveupdate" Cute	167	1	11	2
2014-01-15	Question to consumers	Invitation to interaction	72	0	68	0

The third post spreads information and a link to the Facebook page of their meat shop, encouraging users to like it in order to get the latest promotions and information. It received the least engagement of the observed posts. The fourth post was a video of heifer and its stockwoman. It got many likes and comments including questions answered by Hälsingestintan. The last post was a question regarding what attributes the users found important in a meat product except for taste and price. This post engaged many users to comment and like.

#### 5.5.2 Instagram, Twitter and Youtube

Hälsingestintan has not updated any pictures on Instagram during the two week or since the first observation beginning of February. Nevertheless the number of "Hälsingestintan" hashtags has increased with six in the period of February-March. The number of followers has increased with 10, which is an increase of 7 %. The Twitter and YouTube account has remained inactive. Despite that, the Twitter account has 5 new followers, which is an increase of 4 % but nothing has happened on YouTube.

### 5.6 Ejmunds

Ejmunds have been active in social media since 2010. Through the corporate website they have always informed of what is happening at the farm. Ejmunds head of marketing stated: "When Facebook and Twitter grew it seemed obvious to use these tools to convey the farm's history and what was going on within the company. It became easier to get information out to many and it meant that many felt involved in the daily work on the farm" (pers. com., Norman, 2014). Ejmunds chose to be active in the channels that they thought were "the great channels" as well as the ones that seemed enjoyable to be active in.

Ejmunds started the website with the goal to inform about happenings on the farm. "We noticed that people thought that it was a nice touch to hear about the harvest, sowing, if we build something etc." (pers. com., Norman, 2014). As Facebook grew and many of the employees at Ejmunds had a Facebook account themselves, they decided to start a brand page. It was a good way to quickly reach many consumers and most importantly, an inexpensive way to advertise. The goal was to continue to inform about the farm but also share recipes, answer questions and inform about products. Twitter was the next step for Ejmunds who decided to start an account because it was a channel that enabled exchange of information with other companies. Furthermore it is a quick way to communicate and does not require that much time. The goal with twitter was also to answer questions and follow debates in relevant subjects. Instagram is the newest social media channel for Ejmunds and also the least important from an advertising point of view. Regarding social media goals

Ejmunds mean that: “We never had a goal to have so and so many followers. But in hindsight, it is obvious that we want as many people as possible to follow us”(pers. com., Norman, 2014).

The goal has changed, as competition gets more intense. The goal now is to get more followers by having an interesting page. Ejmunds work on short term is to update their social media channels and on long term to increase the number of followers and follow new trends. Ejmunds are self-taught in how to handle social media. They do what they feel like and have time to. Updates of social media accounts are rarely done during office hours, rather at leisure time. It is not only employees that update the account, but also family at Ejmunds gård. Social media makes it possible to reach costumers quickly, but not all of them. However social media is considered to be important in reaching business goals. Facebook and Twitter are equally important to Ejmunds, while Instagram is the least important channel. Facebook helps Ejmunds to connect with end consumers and sometimes shops and restaurants, while Twitter creates relationships with other corporations.

Ejmunds read and respond to user comment as quickly as they can. “It is motivating to get feedback from customers and social media is a way to find out what customers think of our products” (pers. com., Norman, 2014). Both negative and positive comments are great feedback according to Ejmunds “...negative feedback is never fun, but fortunately it does not happen so often” (pers. com., Norman, 2014). If it happens though, Ejmunds are pleased that unsatisfied customers take the time to inform Ejmunds about it. In that way they can respond to it and reflect whether or not there is room for improvements. Ejmunds never delete posts that are negative.

#### 5.6.1 Facebook

Ejmunds group of followers are mainly within the age 25-34 years old and the most popular area is Visby at Gotland, which is where they have their farm (www, Facebook 5, 2014). Between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April the number of likes increased with 17, which is a 2 % increase. Ejmunds posted five times during the two monitored weeks, see the description in table 13 below.

*Table 13: Observation of brand posts on Ejmunds Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2013-03-09	Picture of heifer and baby	“live update”	63	1	0	0
2014-03-13	Picture of a dog at the farm	“live update”	43	0	1	0
2014-03-13	Picture of prime rib	Inspiration	102	0	4	2
2014-03-14	Link to Norwegian video	Entertaining	7	2	0	0
2014-03-17	Link to article about farming	Entertaining Information	13	1	5	0

The first two updates are pictures from the farm, showing the follower what is happening at the moment. The first one is a five-month baby visiting the heifers in the spring sun. It got a rather good response with 63 likes and one share. The other live update was a dog, assumed to belong to somebody at the farm, taking a dip in a puddle. The third post is a picture of a nice looking piece of prime rib presented with a text that indicates that it will be cooked in a chilli the same night. This post was the most popular during the two weeks. There were one user that asked for a recipe and Ejmunds answered that question with a link to a recipe just ten minutes after. They also suggested other pieces of beef that were appropriate to use when cooking chilli. The last post links to an article about farming in the old days. Even though Ejmunds only gave a response to one of the posts they have “liked” all comments that have been posted.

### 5.6.2 Instagram

Ejmunds posted two times in March, on the same day. The first picture shows a well-marbled piece of meat. The second picture is of a dog taking a swim in the sunshine at the farm. The posts can be categorised as entertaining, informative, and relationship creating. None of the posts have any text explaining what the picture is showing. However the pictures are commented by a few hashtags that gives the pictures a little bit of context. The pictures got 11 and 14 likes, but no comments. When looking at the number of Ejmunds/Ejmundsgård hashtags between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April it is noted that they have increased with eight respectively four. The number of followers has increased with 6, which is an 11% increase.

### 5.6.3 Twitter

In the period between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April, Ejmunds tweeted 50 times and their followers increased with 41, which is an increase of 4%. During the two weeks that were monitored they tweeted 15 times. Some of the Tweets were recognisable from their Facebook page. They linked to the same story of old fashioned farming as on the Facebook page. The music video with the Norwegian farmers was also tweeted. Otherwise there were retweets regarding the recent scandal of illegal Danish pig meat, the meat fraud scandal with buffalo, and consumer's increased willingness to pay for meat produced in Sweden. These subjects were also reoccurring on the social medias of Svenskt Kött, which were furthermore retweeted twice during the two weeks. Ejmunds produced five own tweets of which two were "live updates" of everyday life at Ejmunds.

## 5.7 Guldfågeln

Guldfågeln have been active on Social media for three years. Guldfågel made the estimation that Facebook was the channel best suited for them to engage in. The company also have an account on YouTube, but it is not as active and mainly serves as a channel where television advertisements videos are published. Facebook was chosen since it is a medium where it is possible to inspire through recipes, show products and interact with consumers in the same medium. Guldfågeln does not have a goal with social media usage but have started to develop guidelines. They try to post at least three times a week with the goal to inspire consumers with a blend of different recipes. On how Guldfågel are working with everyday social media, Grindestam, (pers. com., 2014) says "There is only one person in the company who are working in this area and that person is self-taught". However, there is a plan to put more resources into social media, but right now that is not possible. Guldfågel think that they reach their target group to some extent by using Facebook. Guldfågeln read all consumer interactions on the Facebook page and answer comments that require it. If complaints or reclamation questions come up they try to refer to their consumer service and not take it on their Facebook page. Guldfågeln just finished a competition on Instagram, even though they are not active there, but it might be a channel to expand to (pers. com., Grindestam, 2014). The Instagram competition was to hashtag a picture of the worst lunchbox and hashtag it with #tristlunch. The number of #tristlunch hashtags are 104 but about 60 of them were hashtagged within the timeframe for the competition.

### 5.7.1 Facebook

Guldfågeln's main group of users are between 35-54 years old and they are most popular in Kalmar län, which might have with their location on Öland to do (www, Facebook 6, 2014).

Guldfågeln got 56 new likes between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April, that is an increase of 2,6 %. They posted 13 times during the two weeks; the posts are described in table 15 below.

*Table 14: Observation of brand posts on Guldfågeln's Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2014-03-07	Information of demo location	Promotion	8	1	0	0
2014-03-10	Recipe	Information, "live"	14	0	0	0
2014-03-10	Information of demo location	Promotion	13	0	0	0
2014-03-11	Information of demo location	Promotion	7	0	0	0
2014-03-13	Recipe	Information Promotion	12	0	0	0
2014-03-14	Information of demo location	Promotion	7	0	0	0
2014-03-18	Recipe	Information Promotion	2	0	0	0
2014-03-20	Info of coming competition	Pre-launch	12	0	0	0
2014-03-20	Test of new products	Promotion, "live"	42	1	2	0
2014-03-20	Test of new products	Promotion, "live"	22	0	0	0
2014-03-21	Link to "gula pippin"	Promotion	6	0	0	0

### 5.7.2 Instagram and Twitter

Guldfågeln does not have Twitter or Instagram but it is still possible to be mentioned in those channels if other users are hashtagging their name. In the case of Guldfågeln the most common hashtags are "Guldfågel" or "Guldfågeln". Since the first observation in February the number of hashtags have increased with six on "Guldfågel" and 18 on "Guldfågeln". When looking at hashtags on Guldfågeln on twitter it is mainly the Guldfågeln arena that shows up.

### 5.7.3 YouTube

The number of views of Guldfågeln's videos has increased with 2996 between 11<sup>th</sup> of February and 1<sup>st</sup> of April, this is an increase of 161 %. Furthermore the number of subscribers of their videos has increased with five users. There are two videos that were uploaded in the beginning of 2014; it is the commercials that are being played at television at the moment. Those two videos stand for the majority of the views. When looking at statistics for the views on the other videos it is observed that the views of them have also increased since the two videos were launched in the beginning of 2014.

## 5.8 Bjärefågel

Bjärefågel has been active on Facebook since May 2013. The Facebook account was started as a complement to the new website and it is currently the only social media channel that is used by Bjärefågel. Facebook is the best option since Bjärefågel want to be able to post pictures and texts integrated. Channels where only text or only pictures are posted are not of interest for Bjärefågel today. The goal of being present on Facebook is to increase dialogue and create a better relationship with consumers while strengthening the brand (pers. com., Andersson, 2014).

The company are trying to attract users to Facebook that have a genuine interest in Bjärefågel. As of April 14<sup>th</sup> 2014 Bjärefågel had 1729 likes (pers. com., Andersson, 2014). The goal is to reach at least 2000 likes by the end of 2014. Bjärefågel use the statistics provided by Facebook to measure their performance, but the most important goal for them is to have an open dialogue with users and to answer their questions in a transparent and honest way. Bjärefågel answer all questions coming from users showing an honest interest in Bjärefågel, no matter if they are consumers of Bjärefågel's products or not. It has been

noticed that the answers Bjärefågel give to user comments, raises interest and reflections for many, even the ones that do not eat their products or are vegetarians.

Bjärefågel ”likes” all posts that are positive and answers the ones that require it. People who are merely on the mission to destroy and accuse Bjärefågel on false grounds are blocked and their posts are deleted. It has happened that users have uploaded movies of chickens that are poorly treated in production and claimed that Bjärefågel have the same type of production. These types of posts are deleted and a discussion with the people behind it has seemed like a waste of time, since their only mission has been sabotage. However, if users upload negative pictures related to chicken production with an honest question to Bjärefågel, it will be answered. Bjärefågel have a goal to post four times a week. All posts should have pictures and they focus on: Information about production, recipes with the product Bjärekyckling, beautiful nature pictures of Bjäre and information of the store in Lund’s saluhall, i.e. today’s lunch or happenings. Bjärefågel will continue to work accordingly with this strategy throughout 2014, after that, it will be evaluated to see if there is a need to change approach.

### 5.8.1 Facebook

The most popular age group among their followers are 35-54 years old and they are most popular in Båstad in Skåne (www, Facebook 7, 2014). Bjärefågel got 109 new likes between 11th of February and 1st of April, an increase of 6,7 %. Bjärefågel posted seven times on Facebook during the two weeks that were observed, see table 15 for a description of them.

*Table 15: Observation of brand posts on Bjärefågel’s Facebook page*

Date	Post	Character	Like	Share	Comment	Response
2014-03-10	Lunch	Promotion	29	0	0	0
2014-03-11	Lunch	Promotion	20	0	0	0
2014-03-14	Picture of Bjärehalvön	“live update”	49	0	0	0
2014-03-13	Link article with recipes and info	Promotion Inspiration	7	1	0	0
2014-03-18	Picture and info of their chicken	Education Promotion	215	25	22	9
2014-03-19	Picture and info about Bjärefågel being served at airplane	Promotion Fun fact	46	2	3	2
2014-03-19	Lunch	Promotion	25	1	0	0

The first, second and last post all inform users of what lunch will be served in their restaurant in Lund. The posts all show a picture of the food and likes range between 20 and 29. The third post was a picture of Bjärehalvön and what it looks like the 12<sup>th</sup> of March. They also informed about the product, which resulted in as many as 241 likes and many comments on which they responded to all that had a question in it. Furthermore they followed up the responses and the comments were almost like a discussion. The comments without questions were responded on with a “like”. Other posts referred to information that Bjärefågel would be served on the flight between Ängelholm and Stockholm as well as a link to an article about Bjärefågel.

### 5.8.2 Instagram, Twitter and YouTube

Bjärefågel does not have an account on Instagram, Twitter or YouTube. On Instagram, however, the number of pictures with the hashtag “Bjärefågel” has increased with nine. The majority of the pictures are beautiful food pictures while one is of a child reading an information brochure about Bjärefågel’s production. If “Bjärefågel” is searched on Twitter it is not found and the same goes for YouTube.



## 6 Analysis

This chapter seeks to develop insight in how Swedish actors in the meat and poultry sector use social media as a communication tool by analysing the empirical findings, guided by the theoretical frameworks, introduced in chapter three. The chapter begins with a reminder of social media as a part of corporate communication strategy with focus on the case companies. After that it offers a model that combines Malthouse's *et al* (2013) SCRM framework and Flinck's (2011) descriptive model of strategic processes in implementing strategic use of social media. The analysis follows the structure of the combined model in order to make it easier to comprehend as well as explain.

### 6.1 Case companies use of Social media

According to Nag (2007) strategic management is used to create value for customers, shareholders and society. Strategy is important to sustain competitive advantages and differentiate (Porter, 1996). It is vital to get a unique position on the market and to do that a strategy is needed. In the food industry, competition is fierce, therefore communication and differentiation is more important than ever (Verbeke, 2008.).

Understanding of SCRM is important in order to understand how CRM can be handled in times when importance of social media increases (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). According to (Boheneck & Blili, 2013) social media has made it possible for companies to interact with their consumers in an easy way. These interactions can develop intangible assets like reputation and image (*ibid.*) The companies in this project had somewhat similar goals with their usage of social media. The most common goal was to create an interactive dialogue and relationship with consumers, other goals were to spread information, make it easy for consumers to be a part of the company, quickly reach out, inspire, strengthen the brand and reach existing and potential consumers. The focus on customer relationships held by the companies in this project shows the possible benefits of understanding SCRM. Some companies had specific goals, like how many likes they wanted to reach at a specific time. However, the interviewees did not respond that they had a specific strategy to reach this goal, other than to continue as they did. The two figures presented in chapter three (figure 5 and figure 6) can both be useful in analysing strategic development of social media in order to reach the company goals with social media mentioned above. In figure 6, different processes in the development of social media strategy are described. A modified version of figure 6 is available in appendix 6, this model is built on Flinck's (2011) model but it has been modified to better explain the strategies of the case companies. Furthermore some parts of SCRM has been integrated in the model to understand how social media strategy can connect consumers closer to the companies.

#### 6.1.1 Strategy development process

Social media is a tool useful for two-way communication, it has properties like: "easy searching, open participation, a minimal publishing threshold, dialogue, community, networking, and the rapid broad spread of information and other content via a wide range of feedback and linking systems" (Aula, 2010:44). Growing use of social media has consequences for how consumers behave, share and interact in everyday situations, where food related decision making is an important part (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013). Communication is a strategically important factor. It can create consumer awareness, attitudes and decision-making. Consumers are putting more trust in eWOM and letting other consumer opinions

affect their purchasing behaviour. Simonson and Rosen (2014) believe that many companies will have to change their marketing strategies in order to account for this. The literature points out the importance of incorporating social media into the IMC (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). None of the companies in this project mentioned anything about a strategy for social media. In this case I have interpreted their strategies as tacit knowledge. Since most of them are uploading continuously they are assumed to have some kind of strategy. Some of the companies stated that they are engaged in social media in order to reach their target group quickly, all companies meant that they thought they reached them to a certain point, but that it could be more efficient. However, Nordlund-Othén (pers. com., 2014) said that Scan run promotions on social media concurrently with promotions in the stores. This is a more thought through strategy as the company reaches the consumer from different angles at the same time. Scan was furthermore the only actor that trained their social media managers regularly. In the other companies it seemed as if social media were handed over to someone that expressed an interest for it. Svenskt Kött had two persons working on social media. They had developed their skills on Instagram by the help from a web agency but otherwise they were self-taught. Self-taught, is a reoccurring phrase from the participants in this project, maybe due to what Savar (2013) mean: that managers tend to underestimate the role social media has on business. This becomes clear in some of the cases in this project.

One example of lacking resources is in the poultry companies in this project. Bjärefågel has been active on social media almost a year while Guldfågel has been active three years. Guldfågeln have a larger turnover and organisation. However there is only one person working with social media in Guldfågeln and that person is self-taught, neither are there any specific goals with engaging in social media, which makes it hard to build a strategy. Bjärefågel also have one person responsible, but that organisation is a lot smaller. Bjärefågel started their Facebook engagement at the same time as they launched their new website. They had a goal and a purpose with their Facebook page, today, they almost have as many likes as Guldfågeln has on their page. The segment they attract might affect their differing success on social media. On the one hand, Bjärefågel might have more engaged consumers, since they are in the premium segment. On the other hand, Guldfågeln could probably be bigger on social media since they have been active more years than Bjärefågel and have a bigger group of consumers.

The character of Guldfågeln's strategy of engagement on social medias could be interpreted as a "throw it on the wall and see what sticks". This, due to their lack of goal with social media engagement and that they did not measure, or observe events that could help them to develop their presence on social media. This state can lead the social media manager to the "dead end", meaning that the manager has little ability to measure the efforts and is not sure if they are working (Kumar & Rani, 2014). The outcome is often that the manager gives up or continues with random efforts that have an unknown effect (*ibid.*). Guldfågeln stated that they were working on guidelines for social media and that might lead to an insight that, perhaps this area deserves more resources.

In companies like Hälsingestintan and Ejmunds, social media channels are managed with the goals to reach out and create dialogue. In Ejmunds case, different persons on the farm handles the channels, often outside of office hours. This has the benefit of actually being genuine, it does not merely have to send the signal that it is. Hälsingestintans channels are also handled by a member of the family, but the channels are many and not updated on a regular basis. This leads to the next step in the figure, which is the implementation process.

### 6.1.2 Implementation process

Relationships are important intangible assets for firms and they can decide what the future will look like (Porter, 1996). The key to creating relationships in social media is to be active (Ang, 2011). By looking at the result of the observation it is clear that the actors with frequent activity have gotten more attention in form of hashtags, likes, shares and comments than the inactive companies. It is important to take a stand in social media, to be active or to be an observer (Qualman, 2011). The choice should go hand in hand with what your target group are looking for. When a company has started an engagement, it might give them a bad reputation if they do not engage in social media. They could get a question or be motive of a debate on a channel. If they are there to observe, it is possible to affect the outcome. But if they are present in the channel and still do not participate, it can be interpreted as arrogant. Social media affects every part of the business whether the company is engaged or not (Savar, 2013; Qualman, 2011). It is a complex system and since it affects many parts of the organisation there may be a need for separate divisions to cooperate (Savar, 2013).

The question, whether or not social media affect the business everyday activities, were interpreted rather differently by the case companies. Some meant that it did not affect them at all, while others meant that it affected their ability to reach business goals. However it is pointed out by Savar (2013) that social media does affect the business and Qualman (2011) means that it will even affect actors that are not active on social media. As eWOM are playing an increasingly important role when consumers make purchasing decisions (Duan *et al.*, 2008), it is important for companies to realise what social media means to development and spread of eWOM. Through social media, consumers can interact with companies, each other and other stakeholders; this means that they can affect the brand without any corporate interference (Mangolds & Faulds, 2009). Social media does affect the business, even if it is recognised by managers or not. Therefore it might be clever to take social media more seriously and actively observe what types of discussion about the brand are occurring on Internet.

### 6.1.3 Value co-creation process

The largest company in this project is Scan. Social media is very important to them since they control campaigns through those channels and are able to reach out to many consumers, for promotional or crisis reasons. The size of Scan also reflects their professionalism in handling social media. They are continuously updating their channels and being interactive when needed. The staff handling social media in Scan get training, something that was not given continuously in any other company. Something that might be hard as a big actor in social media is to make the posts feel genuine and honest. This is the backbone of social media (Qualman, 2011). Scans posts are mainly promotional and they seem to be quite edited before they end up on the feed. This could be due to their size and the number of people handling the social media channels. It is important that the tone of the channel stays the same; otherwise it can give a fake signal to consumers (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). Therefore it is probably more necessary for big organisations to train social media managers, in order to create a personal and not corporate feeling on social media. Their goal is to be transparent and encourage dialogue, which they to some extent do. The posts that get most attention are the type that might benefit the user. Social media channels serve another important mean for Scan, which is to reach out in times of crisis. No other company mentioned this as an important function of social media, but it would probably be an important communication tool for them as well.

Engagement in social media can lead to great opportunities but also great risks (Aula, 2010). Social media can also be referred to as “conversation marketing” where the actors get mutual benefits from interaction (Mangolds & Faulds, 2009). In the case of Svenskt Kött social media has affected the business by leading to new collaborations and the development of a label that restaurants can use. Kaplan & Haenlinen (2010) mean that companies should try to blend in with their users and keep the tone of their social media “normal”. If that is done, they might get more understanding users if a mistake occurs as well as receive constructive feedback. One of the posts on Hälsingestintan showed the possible benefits. As they asked what added values consumers expect from their products, they got great response with constructive feedback. According to See-To and Ho (2013) this type of interaction means that consumers and company was involved to create value, unique for the customer and sustainable for the company

The engagement within the trade associations is a bit different than in the companies. The trade associations do not really have customers, rather members that are users of their brands. Ottman (2011) means that social media does not just have to be about communication the benefits of a brand but also to engage and educate consumers in matters that are important for them. Communicating added values can lead to positive eWOM which, makes it easier for consumers to make educated purchasing decisions (See-To & Ho, 2013). This becomes clear in the case of Svenskt Kött and Svensk Fågel. Their brands tell us where the products are from, but it is important for consumers to know why Swedish production is better than any other. Therefore their communication can be categorized as educational rather than promotional. Since Svenskt Kött and Svensk Fågel communicate information regarding Swedish produce their posts are also sometimes shared on the corporate social media channels.

Bjärefågel answers all types of questions as long as they do not intend to sabotage. They have noticed that their answers raise interest and reflections. Even with people who do not eat meat or their products. According to Kaplan and Haenlinen (2010) and Peters *et al.*, (2013) it is important that posts are interesting for users, if they are to engage. In this case it is clear that Bjärefågels Facebook posts have managed to create engagement and by that, spread knowledge and awareness of Bjärefågels products and production. If the comments do not need an answer, Bjärefågel responds by liking the comment. Svenskt Kött responds comments regarding Swedish meat production they are also active in sharing, either users statuses or links which can be appreciated in social media. Hälsingestintan mean that they have a more interactive relationship with customers today than before. They respond to all questions. However they are not regularly active, the frequencies of posts vary in all of their social media channels.

In all cases, two-way communication can be risky as stakeholder expectations rise and if they are not met, the organisation risk loosing its reputation (Aula, 2010). This dilemma could become a danger in cases where the companies start an activity on a social media channel but then lets it die off. If stakeholders are directing a post to the specific company, who are not active, this information can go on and on. It could for example be a question about animal welfare from an activist, when that person does not get an answer, he or she might see it as an opportunity to spread that the company does not want to answer “difficult” questions. If the company is not active on that medium, information can travel fast before it gets to an end. This can damage the company’s reputation.

It is good to encourage consumers to generate content that is good for the company. To do this it is wise to upload content that motivates consumers to engage (Baird & Parasnis 2, 2011). Hälsingestintan have several social media channels, however they are only regularly active on Facebook. On Facebook they have a goal to update four times a week, but in this observation there were no updates during the two weeks in March. If they are to reach their goal on 10 000 likes by January 2015 it is probably wise to make sure that the page is updated on a regular basis. That way it will get a bigger spread since users have more chances to share material that they like. Hälsingestintan also mention that Instagram is an important channel since a picture says more than a thousand words. However, their Instagram uploads does not follow any pattern; there were 15 posts on 59 weeks. This lessens the possibility to hashtag new pictures and get users attracted to follow them.

Ejmunds appreciate all type of feedback, negative and positive. They see it as a chance to become even better and as an inspiration in developing products. Interaction is what they aim for with their engagement in social media. This is what social media is about according to (Qualman, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010; Peters *et al.*, 2013). Even if Ejmunds do not always write a response, they like the comments. This gives the user a sign of appreciation that the company has taken time to read the comment and after that liked it. Even small types of interactions, can maintain and nurture a relationship (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). Monitoring the buzz and intervening when appropriate can lead to a better understanding of consumers, this enables the development of strategies useful to attract and maintain customers (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). The companies in this project have all stated that they monitor their social media channels, but only Ejmunds, Bjärefågel and Hälsingestintan expressed that they identified specific posts that were beneficial in terms of getting attention and engagement. Ejmunds found that their website visitors appreciated the live updates from the farm, therefore those kinds of updates are frequently reoccurring in their social media channels as well. Social media can be a tool to humanise the company (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). By including consumers in the everyday life, it is possible to create a relationship and humanise the company. It furthermore gets the consumer closer to the farmer and can develop consumer understanding and awareness of production methods.

#### *6.1.4 Performance assessment process*

In order to find out what social media channels are actually being effective, it is good to try to measure them (Kumar & Rani, 2014). Many of the case companies in this project fall under the category of “naïve optimist” regarding their social media usage. They have a limited ability to measure but believe that they are successful. Most marketers start here (*ibid.*). However some of the companies, like Scan, Svenskt Kött and Svensk Fågel have some kind of measurements. Scan measures specific campaigns, Svenskt Kött and Svensk Fågel measure awareness. This is not specific measurement that can show how much of the result is thanks to social media, but it can give an indication. Therefore they are categorized within the group of “iterate for success” where you have a reasonable good ability to measure and believe to be successful. However since no company has a specific way to measure their overall efforts on social media, they are a blend of naïve optimists and iterate for success. Some of the companies perform indirect measurements when they evaluate their activities by observing how posts are reacted to, this affects what they chose to post. This type of performance measurement is important in order to be able to adjust unsuccessful strategies (Aracıoğlu, 2013). Initially it is not useful to merely focus on investments and calculation but start by regarding consumer motivators to use social media, measure how they invest in the brand page by commenting, liking or sharing (Kumar & Rani, 2014).

The indirect measurements led to that some of the companies drew the conclusion that posts containing videos or pictures got better response (on Facebook). Therefore they worked to upload at least one of these every week. Svenskt Kött found that linking to their own website did not get much response. Therefore they rather linked or shared users of Svenskt Kött's statuses on their page. This has the advantage of improving the relationship with the label users and raise awareness of different types of users of the label to consumers. By sharing other users statuses and linking to other users information, it might appear as if the information is trustworthier than if it only came from the organisation. By linking and sharing, companies are creating eWOM themselves but without the information being totally firm generated. This could be beneficial since UGC and eWOM have a greater effect on consumer's perception than firm generated content (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2014).

Guldfågeln answer all interactions that request it. Other than that they do not really interact by liking encouraging posts. Their updates on Facebook are mostly promotional and the majority is about what store their products are demoed in that day. Those uploads do not encourage to dialogue or interactivity. Since that type of posts get similar attention every time, it might be a good idea to think about what the goal with the page is. There is more potential to bring from social media activity than pushing information. Furthermore, if that information is not shared, liked or commented, the probability is big that the information will only reach the ones that have liked the brand page.

#### *6.1.5 Information management process*

SCRM builds on companies creating an understanding of consumers through the information available on social media (Matlhouse *et al.*, 2013). The same goes for the process of implementing and managing social media in companies. Social media is building on interactivity and relationships. Therefore it is important to integrate SCRM thinking in every step of the processes regarding social media. The common misunderstanding of the effect social media can have on business has led managers to underestimate the resources needed. To take advantage of the full potential of social media, information management is an important part. But to be able to do this efficiently managers will need guidance, training and more resources. By being observant and gather information, data and continuously learn from social media engagement it is possible to create an understanding of customers (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). This understanding is important in creating a strategy based on learning and development, which is of crucial according to Porter (1996).

Consumers seem to want information that can help them derive more pleasure from food (Verbeke, 2008). Emotion-messages are specifically important since they make the consumer get a feeling of control (Ottman, 2011). In the case of meat, the country of origin can be interpreted as an emotion-laden message, posts regarding differences between Danish and Swedish animal production got a lot of attention. Perhaps it is like Ottman (2011) means, this type of information gives consumers a sense of control.

It is hard for consumers to know what kind of quality attributes a products has, this can decrease their willingness to pay (Wikström, 2010). Social interaction is important in generating trust (MacNeil, 1980) therefore there is a need for clear communication in order to establish trust between the company and the consumer. Trust is hard to get, but easy to loose. All of the participating companies can gain on increasing transparency and include the consumer more in the company. To create sustainable relationships in social media it is better to be too transparent than the possibility of being accused of being dishonest.

## 7 Discussion

First of all this study has tried to explain social media usage in the Swedish meat and poultry industry. This has been done in order to develop an understanding of how social media can help connect the farmer closer to the consumer. The theoretical framework has led to a development of the analysis where insights regarding social media engagement in the Swedish industry have been developed. The discussion is structured accordingly with the research questions. The discussion below is meant to increase understanding of connections between theory and empirics thus decreasing the gap between academia and industry.

### 7.1 How can companies plan for challenges and opportunities within the use of social media?

The biggest challenge with social media is to find the opportunities and make use of them without getting into any pitfalls (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). First of all it is important that managers understand the conditions of social media and what it has led to in relation to C2B relations. Social media has led to a change of power. Consumers have more and more power when it comes to the reputation. Companies do no longer control the relationship. It is more a combination of value co-creation for both actors that build on interactivity (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011). In order to succeed in social media, users need to be motivated to engage with the brand; otherwise the brand page has no purpose. Therefore it is crucial that posts are interesting to consumers. They should engage them, which will motivate them to share, interact and like thus creating a ripple effect in their social networks and spreading the brand. In this project, some actors mentioned that they had observed certain characters of posts that got more attention than others. That observation helped them develop an understanding of what to post. By doing this, the company has listened to what consumers want and thereafter developed a strategy for what type of content that should be published

The challenges in social media are many, and a crisis can strike fast and lead to reputational damage. Therefore it is important to be active and observe the buzz. Never see consumers as controllable, rather co-creators of the brand meaning (Holt, 2004). This can be hard, especially if the company is not used to having one-to-one relationships with consumers (Henning-Thurau *et al.*, 2013). By keeping the tone on Social media unprofessional, users become more forgiving if a mistake should occur. They might even give useful feedback on how to handle the situation next time a mistake occurs (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). Svenskt Kött developed a label suitable for restaurants due to a suggestion they got on Twitter. Hälsingestantan have asked their followers what they values they want when buying their products. This way of using social media can be very beneficial. Companies might not have thought about factors that the consumers have. It can also be suspected that if one consumer has the opinion, there might more people thinking the same way.

Communication with consumers can be a challenge and an opportunity. If ignored or worse, censored it can lead to a ripple effect of negative eWOM (Bochnenek & Blili, 2013). If it is responded to and even taken into consideration it can lead to development of the business and increased engagement with consumers who are feeling that they can make a difference (Regester & Larkin, 2005). This dilemma is referred to as communicational schizophrenia and is important to be aware of. In order to avoid pitfalls regarding social media it is important to be honest and transparent. If a difficult question from a consumer comes via a social media channel, companies will probably gain from answering as fast and honest as possible. If

misleading information gets communicated it might spread fast and develop into a bad rumour and suspicion. But if such situations are handled in a transparent way, guiding the consumer through the steps in the company, it can instead lead to a positive reputation and increased trustworthiness. If transparency is going to be an issue for a company, it will be hard to interact in the authentic manner that is necessary in social media. Businesses tend to believe that consumers are interested in feeling connected to the brand. But consumers are mainly interested if it benefits them in some way. Consumers are not homogenous; they have different values and engagement in the brand. Brand advertisement targets the whole market while SCRM enables brands to develop personal communication. Hanna *et al* (2011) furthermore mean that social media can move consumers from awareness to engagement and eventually to advocacy. The person or group managing social media cannot have knowledge of everything in the company and might not be able to answer all questions. Therefore it is important that departments work more together and help each other listen to consumers (Qualman 2011; Savar, 2013).

If one actor in the industry handles a crisis poorly, it can affect the whole industry instead of just that company (Aula, 2010). Among the cases two actors were involved in cooperation within the green industries in Sweden. They had meetings every month and a discussion group on Facebook. This is a great way to learn from each other regarding matters like, how to handle crisis situations. It might thus be useful if the industry supports one another due to the possible consequences if a crisis happens to one actor in the industry. In order to be able react fast if something that can damage the reputation occurs, it is important that every actor has a plan. If a plan is missing it can lead to poor miscommunication as a company may be under a lot of external and internal pressure due to a crisis.

## 7.2 What kind of communication strategies is expected in the use of social media?

First of all, it is important to have a strategy regarding social media. Social media does not replace traditional media but still stands for an important tool for communication in society today. Companies engaging in social media should think about how they are perceived on social media (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). Social media is to enter a world of relationships and advertising on social media is less about campaigns and more about on-going conversations (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). It is not good enough to simply transfer all marketing activities from traditional media, to social media. Social media is more personal thus it is necessary that companies take on a personal, rather than a professional tone.

Companies have to start spending more time listening to consumers and less time spending countless hours on creating the next award-winning but no consumer getting 30 second television commercial (Qualman, 2011). This statement indicates difference between social media and traditional media, two-way communication or one-way communication. By listening to consumers it is easier to understand what they like, and what kind of brand personality they want to follow and interact with. Interaction and activity is key in relationship building in real life; the same goes for social media (Qualman, 2011). A brand personality that would be attractive to engage in would therefore be active and post information that is relevant for its target group. Whether the brand is taking on a personality of a humoristic, intelligent or informative character, it is important to give and take in the viral relationships that come out of social media engagement.



Major changes in the environment require a new strategy. However, an evaluation of the trade-offs, and a system of activities that will give sustainable advantages should be done first (Aracıoğlu, 2013). Major environment changes can be entering a new social media channel. The channels are different environments that attract different characters. For this reason it is good to evaluate channels that companies plan to enter. Every channel should have its own strategy since they are completely different contexts to act in.

Inputs from other people become more and more important in consumer decision-making (Simon & Rosen, 2014). Therefore it can be good to encourage consumers to review the products as well as motivate them to create their own brand stories. UGC is trustworthier than firm generated content and thus it can have a better ability to create a good reputation. Social media is the playground of the consumers and if companies do not follow the rules and listen to consumers their presence on social media can backfire. If products are pushed to consumer and their brand page consist of promotions, consumers can get annoyed.

If consumers do not feel passionate about a brand, they are not likely to interact with it (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011). In the fast moving consumer goods business it can be hard to create a passion among consumers for the brand. In this business it is especially important to focus on retaining customers due to fierce competition (Woodcock *et al.*, 2011). If social media or traditional media is observed today, there is daily information regarding issues in the food industry. Consumers are asking for more clear labels, no additives, no antibiotics and so on. This engagement has perhaps led food choices to a more engaging part of everyday consumption. This can be good for Swedish actors who have a better possibility of creating interactive social media channels if consumers are passionate about what eat.

### 7.3 How can social media help companies to work with customer relationship management?

Companies that use social media to provide an infrastructure for valuable customer activities are more likely to be successful than the ones trying to manage customers. Therefore it is important to understand what customers' value, to be able to build a beneficial SCRM strategy (Baird & Parasnis 1, 2011).

By posting material that gives the user some kind of value it is possible to create motives for them to engage (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013). Understanding what type of material engages users can be hard. By keeping the tone personal and listening to users, companies can interpret what consumers want to see on the page (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). Social media can help companies create a relationship with consumers that are more personal and long-term than traditional media can (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). To do this, it is important to be active and not merely move the marketing strategy from traditional media to social media. The observation made of the social media channels in this project did not provide any clear social media personalities but was more used as tools to reach out with information. Some companies have understood what type of content that engages consumers and post that. But to create a relationship it might be useful to have a more clear personality and not merely represent the brand itself. But before taking such measures it is vital that companies take a step back and think about who and what they want to be perceived as.

## 8 Conclusion

Social media is a rather new tool for companies to use for communication and marketing. It is common that managers underestimate the power of the mediums and do not allocate enough time or resources into the area. Companies trying to use social media face a complex environment, where opportunities quickly can turn into reputational damage. In order to use the full potential of social media it is important to think about what type of personality the brand should communicate. Furthermore it is vital that the channels are active, transparent, honest and interactive. Communication is no longer voluntary, but a must for companies being scrutinized from every corner of society. The Swedish meat and poultry industry are facing high competition from imported products that are sold at a lower price. At the same time the consumption of meat and poultry have increased in Sweden the last ten years while Swedish production have decreased. If consumer's willingness to pay is to increase it is important that they are aware of the added values that Swedish products have. Otherwise it might be hard to change the pattern of decreasing production. Therefore the objective of this study is to investigate how social media can connect the farmer to the consumer. It translates to an academic ambition to enhance the understanding of using social media. The aim of this project is to *"explain possible improvements in strategies for communication in social media in the Swedish meat and poultry industry"*.

To develop a successful presence on social media is hard and it demands skills. By entering the world of social media companies also enter a world of relationships, on the premises of the consumer. The power balance is shifted and the consumer has more power than in traditional media. It is important to understand that social media is interactive and in order to reach success companies need to participate in interaction when suitable. There are many different types of social media channels and as a company, it is important to evaluate what channels to be present in and what strategies that are suitable for them.

In the Swedish meat and poultry industry as in other industries, some managers tend to underestimate the meaning of social media. This can mean that the area does not get sufficient attention or resources. The result can lead to social media channels that are not evaluated thus nobody can really know if it has any meaning for the company. This might lead to a difficulty of motivating an increased allocation of resources to that area. It could create a vicious circle resulting in rather useless social media channels that exists due to the idea that "everybody should be present".

There are some parameters that are reoccurring within many of the companies. Four of the companies were self-taught regarding social media. It is important to make sure that persons managing social media know how to do it. Not merely how to upload posts, but when they should be uploaded, what kind of posts that is beneficial and so on. By making sure that the managers gets support it is possible to develop skills in social media, and make use of the full potential it has in relationship building, communication and marketing.

The empirical result shows that none of the actors have been active more than five years. Social media is furthermore a changing area, new channels are invented often and at the same time the channels can increase or decrease in users. This demands a flexible mind of the social media manager. It is also important that the company is observant on what is happening on the channels. This can help them predict trends, avoid churn and get a better understanding for what consumers want from them in social media.

The biggest actor in this study was the only one that had regular activities in all their channels. In the other cases, activities seemed to be prioritized based on the assumed importance of the channel. However it is better to evaluate what channels the company should engage in and work out strategies or guidelines before entering the channel. As mentioned above, entering social media is entering a world of relationships. It is wise to take care of those relationships from the start instead of coming and going.

## 8.1 General conclusions

General conclusions regarding improving social media strategy in the case companies are:

- Develop a strategy for all social media channels.
- Develop a strategy in preparation for a crisis on social media.
- Be active on a regular basis.
- Listen to and learn from user opinions.
- Be interactive and do not only respond to negative comments.
- Be honest, transparent, and personal.
- Be prepared when entering a social media channel.

Companies that have not been prepared when entering a social media channel can learn along the way and have many possibilities of improving their presence in social media. Research within the social media area is growing and it can be wise of responsible managers to follow the progress in this area.

## 8.2 Data quality and recommendations for future research

This study explains social media use in seven Swedish companies in the meat and poultry industry. There are no similar studies made in Sweden thus this project contributes to the academia and can lay as a ground for further research. Since the scope of this project is a master thesis it was not possible to explore more cases. It would probably have been beneficial to interview more persons within each company in order to get a broader view of social media. However the persons interviewed were the ones able to answer specific questions on how social media is managed which was wished for in this project.

In the future I believe it would be beneficial to build a study on several single case studies built on identical methods. This could allow for more individual analysis in each case, this data could then be useful to deeper analyse characteristics of social media use in the Swedish meat and poultry industry.

Since this study does not focus on consumer behaviour, it would be an interesting theme for future research in social media. For example it would interesting to develop an understanding of what motivates consumers to interact with brands in the food business. Furthermore it would be interesting to understand how consumers can be motivated to create their own brand stories. Another suggestion for further research would be to observe one of the biggest social media channels in the food industry, especially in a time of crisis. It would be interesting with a content analysis of consumer company interactions on social media.

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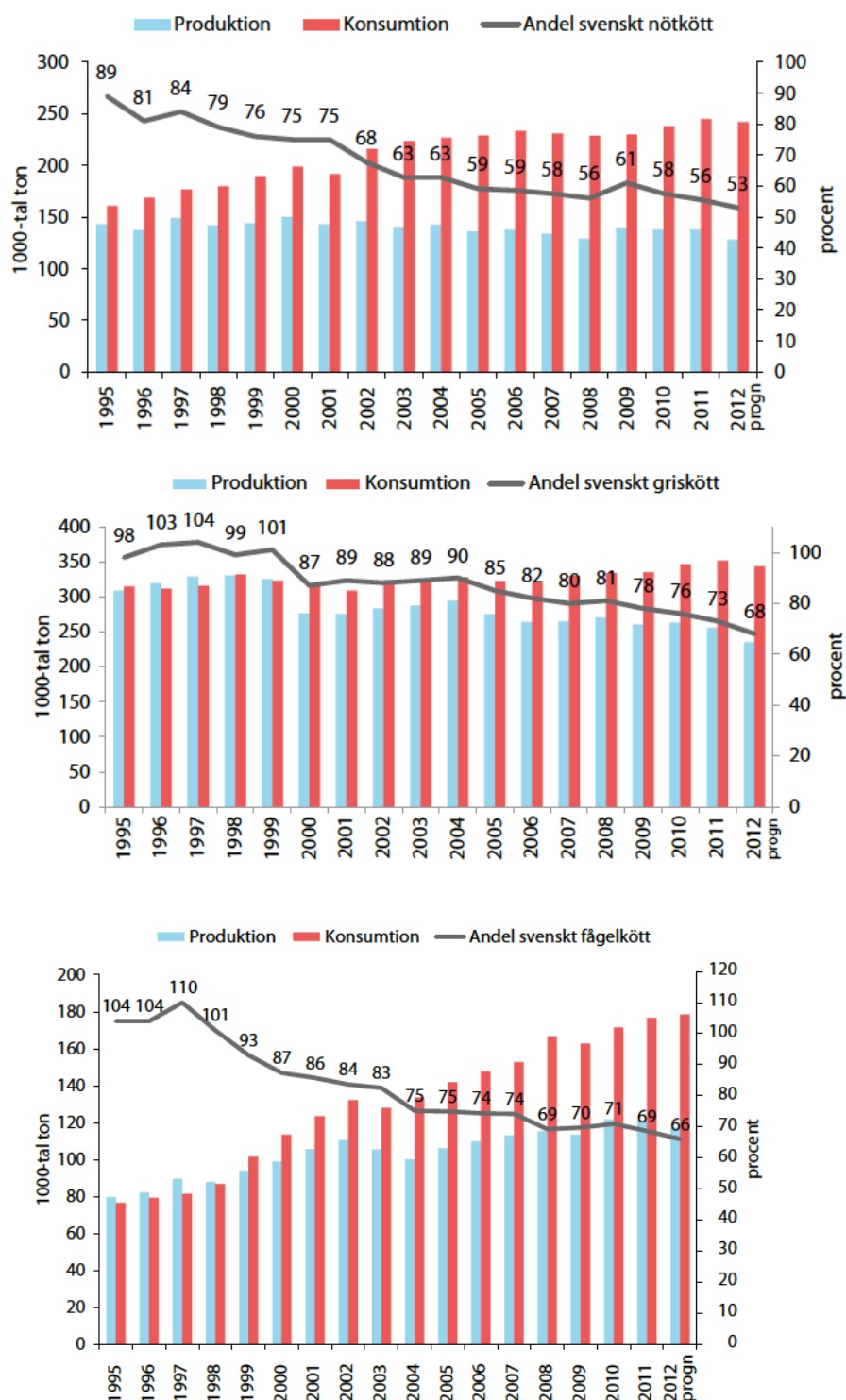
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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Historical consumption and production of meat and poultry in Sweden.



The graphs show a declining Swedish production of beef, pig and poultry and an increased consumption. The red colour stands for consumption, the blue for production and the grey line shows how big part of the consumed meat that is Swedish (JBV, 2013:8-9).

## Appendix 2: A description of the social media channels, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Twitter.

### Facebook

Mark Zuckerberg at Harvard University founded Facebook in 2004. It was designed to make it easier for alumni's to keep in contact (Kumar & Rani, 2014:423). Facebook has approximately 1,3 billion monthly active users and every 20 minutes one million links are shared (Statisticbrain, 2014; Champoux *et al.*, 2012). It is the largest social networking site today and also has the most useful features for marketers (Kumar & Rani, 2014). To do product pushing in the social sphere of Facebook is not a good idea. Visitors are looking for entertainment, knowledge, and interesting conversations therefore it is important for companies to be as "human" as possible (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010; Champoux *et al.*, 2012). Interaction is of crucial importance when it comes to IText environment, especially regarding negative feedback (Lillqvist & Louhiala-Salminen, 2014). Nevertheless it is important to participate in discussions beyond the negative ones (Kaplan & Haenlinen, 2010). The use of censorship on Facebook is possible for companies, but it can lead to consumers getting negative impressions that may hurt the credibility of the information available on the page (Lillqvist & Louhiala-Salminen, 2014).

### Twitter

Twitter was launched in 2006 and is a micro-blogging application that allows users to write real-time messages no longer than 140 characters (Lovejoy *et al.*, 2012). It is the largest micro blogging site on Internet. Twitter is recognised by communicators to have the ability of reaching many stakeholders. Twitter gives organisations a way to interact directly with the public. The potentially contingent interactive messages of Twitter can assist organisations in communication with other users than merely their followers (Saffer *et al.*, 2012). The majority of corporate Twitter users mainly use the channel to communicate one way. However it can be useful to develop into a two-way communication since it can lead to an improvement of relationships (Saffer *et al.*, 2012: 214). According to Kumar & Rani (2014:423) most companies should be on Twitter since it is easy, cost-effective and demands little investment of time while it quickly can increase buzz, sales, and consumer insights.

### YouTube

YouTube was founded in 2005 (YouTube 3, 2014) and is a content community where users can share videos that are available to everyone. Users create their own channel where they can upload videos, companies can use this to create viral marketing that can be linked to all their other social media channels and websites (Kumar & Rani, 2014).

### Instagram

Instagram was launched 2010, it is a picture sharing application used by 150 million people who are pressing like 1,2 billion times a day (Instagram 3, 2014). Instagram is used by 25% of the fortune 500 have Instagram accounts (Thenextweb, 2013). Users create a free account and can then choose to follow other users. The pictures that the users share will turn up on the follower's homepage and they can like or comment the uploaded photos. Users can hashtag photos, which means that they are categorized. This means that anybody with an account can search for a hashtag and all the pictures that are public will show up under that specific word. There is an increase in effectiveness in when up to five hashtags are used, after that the efficiency drops off. It is important that companies optimize their content for discovery and think of what phrases consumers will look for. Therefore it is crucial that companies understand that Instagram not only is a visual blog but a discovery platform (Thenextweb, 2013). It is not only important what you post but also how and what you hashtag in order to

make it easier for potential customers to discover the company and its products. Hashtags also play an important role in visualizing the picture consumers have of the companies as they hashtag their brands.

## Appendix 3: Details of the chosen companies social media channels.

2014-02-11	Svenskt Kött	Svensk Fågel	Scan	Hälsingetintan	Ejmunds	Guldfågel	Bjärefågel
<b>Facebook</b>							
Vi som älskar svensk kött							
Likes	3875	1128	22004	3507	820	2088	1610
Talking About	423	80	1765	123	98	29	57
Were here	89	11	16	0	147	351	8
<b>Instagram</b>							
Scan 1899							
Followers	180	72	187	137	52	0	0
Uploads	21	20	64	14	75	0	0
Hashtags	465	60	68184*	93	88*/101*	44*/256*	24
<b>Twitter</b>							
Scan AB							
Followers	2187	0	1275	17	962	0	0
Tweets	3599	0	3980	4	1820	0	0
<b>Youtube</b>							
Vi som älskar svensk kött							
Followers	105	13	0	0	1	1	0
Viewed	47 338	243113	0	2	805	1858	0
SM icon on webpage	yes	yes	yes	yes, FB,Blogg	yes, FB	yes	yes
*Ejmunds/Ejmundsgard							
*Guldfågel/Guldfågeln							

2014-04-01	Svenskt Kött	Svensk Fågel	Scan	Hälsingetintan	Ejmunds	Guldfågel	Bjärefågel
<b>Facebook</b>							
Vi som älskar svensk kött							
Likes	4655	1323	22 725	3537	837	2144	1719
Talking About	194	68	578	2	19	65	372
Were here	90	11	16	0	148	367	8
<b>Instagram</b>							
Gula pippin Scan 1899							
Followers	230	113	250	147	58	0	0
Uploads	33	29	80	14	78	0	0
Hashtags	686	614	No good # possibility	99	95*/105*	50*/274*	33
<b>Twitter</b>							
Scan AB							
Followers	2416	0	1337	22	1003	0	0
Tweets	3958	0	4050	4	1870	0	0
<b>Youtube</b>							
Vi som älskar svensk kött							
Followers	110	27	0	0	1	6	0
Viewed	52 085	322 669	0	2	832	4854	0
SM icon on webpage	yes	yes	yes	yes, FB,Blogg	yes, FB	yes	yes
*Ejmunds/Ejmundsgard							
*Guldfågel/Guldfågeln							

This result observation was made at two different occasions, the 11<sup>th</sup> of February and the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2014. The results were gathered from the different corporate social media channels.



## Appendix 4: The interview guide.

### Studie Sociala medier

Målet för studien är att undersöka användningen av sociala medier inom företag som arbetar med svenska kött- och fågelprodukter. Idag är svenska konsumenter längre än någonsin ifrån primärproducenten, många förstår inte vad det är för skillnad på svenska produkter och importerade. Av den anledningen är det ofta priset som styr och konsumenten ställer heller inte frågan gällande ursprung på restauranger. Det finns begränsningar i hur mycket som kan förmedlas på en förpackning. Är det för mycket information om mervärden etc. kan det bara innebära att konsumenten inte ser det, eller tycker att det är för krångligt. Sociala medier däremot är en kanal som kan användas för att skapa en relation med och informera konsumenterna om produktion, tillagning mm.

Jag är intresserad av att veta hur ert företag tänker kring sociala medier.

Så fort jag har sammanställt min studie kommer jag att skicka ut den till Dig via mail och hoppas på att den på något sätt kan vara till användning för er!  
Stort tack för ert deltagande!

#### **Implementering av sociala medier:**

Hur länge har ni varit aktiva inom sociala medier?

Vad fick er att starta ett engagemang på sociala medier?

Hur valde ni kanaler?

Om flera: berätta gärna i vilken ordning ni antog er dem och målen med de olika forumen?

Hade ni ett mål med sociala medier?

Vad var det målet/målen?

Om ni hade ett mål: hur tänkte ni mäta detta?

#### **Sociala medier i vardagen:**

Har målet förändrats sedan ni började använda sociala medier?

Om det har förändrats, hur?

Hur arbetar ni med sociala medier idag?

På kort sikt?

På lång sikt?

Hur fungerar utvecklandet av kompetens inom sociala medier?

Påverkas verksamheten på något sätt av att ni använder sociala medier?

Upplever ni att ni når ut till önskade målgrupper via sociala medier?

Upplever ni att sociala medier är viktigt för att uppnå era mål?

Vilken typ av social media kanal tycker ni är viktigast?

Varför?

Hur hanteras den information som användare publicerar på era sociala media kanaler?

Planerarna ni att utvidga antalet kanaler, i så och fall vilka? Och av vilken anledning?

Hur hanteras kundrelationer via sociala medier?

Hur hanteras positiv- och negativ feedback från kunder via sociala medier?

Jag summerar svaren och återkommer till Dig. Om jag har missuppfattat något eller om Du vill lägga till något går det bra att justera i summeringen. Om jag skulle behöva ett klargörande, är det då okej om jag kontaktar Dig igen?

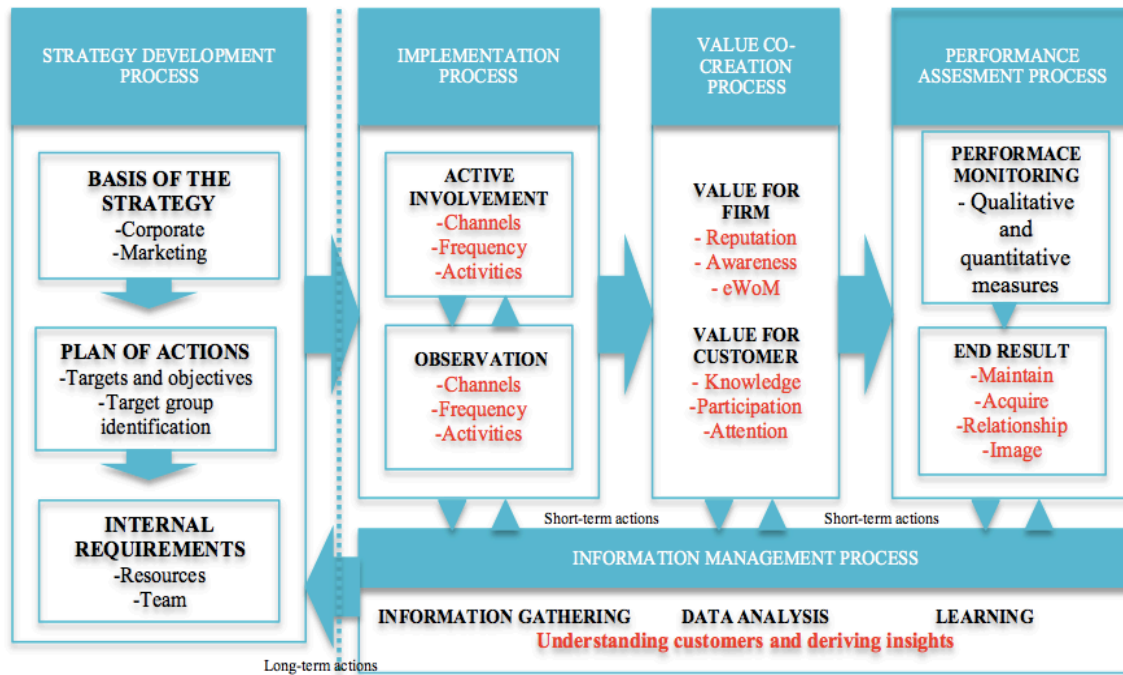
Stort tack för Din medverkan!

## Appendix 5: Description of social media channels in terms of resources, dissemination and engagement.

	Tool	Description	Time and staff effort	Cost
Dissemination ↓ ↓ ↓	RSS feeds	Real Simple Syndication: a file that contains frequently updated information such as news headlines or blog posts; can be subscribed to using field readers or aggregators	Low	Low
	Image, podcast and video sharing	Sharing of pictures, video or web-based audio or video content on user-generated sites that allow storage, retrieval and commenting on the uploaded content	Low	Low
	Microblogs	Form of blogging that allows users to write brief text updates (usually up to 140 characters) and to publish this information so that a network of followers can view and comment on the information	Medium	Low
	Blogs	Information (text and/or visual) posted on a regularly updated website and displayed in reverse chronological order	Medium	Medium
Engagement	Social networks	Online communities that allow users to connect, interact and exchange information with those who share interests and/or activities	High	Low

The figure shows a description and indication of resources required for different social media channels ranked from dissemination to engagement (Rutsaert *et al.*, 2013:87).

## Appendix 6: Modified version of figure 6.



This is a modified version of Flinck's (2011) model. Factors regarding SCRM have been incorporated in the model. The modified parts are taken from Malthouse *et al* (2013) SCRM house and it is marked red.