

# Social network Facebook analysis and its potential use in marketing mix

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## Abstract

The article is aimed at the analysis of the potential use of the biggest social network on the Slovak market, Facebook, its position in the marketing mix of a company as it is the most famous network all over the world. In the article, there are presented the theoretical background of this issue and its fundamentals. Next of it there are also showed the results of performed survey and the resulting conclusions and recommendations. In connection with them there is mentioned the research methodology used. Findings reflect the current status of the potential use of Facebook in marketing communications of companies while there is a presumption that the results can be generalized also to the neighboring countries.

**Key words,** Facebook, marketing mix, social network.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Communication through the social networks is nowadays considered to be a routine technique. This fact allows the transfer of marketing activities into this new environment. Tools immediately became fully accepted in the marketing mix. The most famous and used platform of such kind of communication is with no doubt the social network Facebook. For marketers, Facebook is incredible marketing tool while this network has 618 million daily users in average. Based on this fact it is positioned on the second place in visit rate overall the internet. Facebook presents an advertising channel that has multiple advantages in case of promotion which are difficult to achieve with the use of other channels.

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## 2. MARKETING

The term is frequently used nowadays, especially in the economy, where it is often linked to achieving the prosperity of companies. We are faced with many opinions relating to the meaning of the term marketing and so the definition is not uniform. Therefore, we can find the great amount of existing explanations through the professional literature or business. (Zamazalová et al. 2010).

Yet many authors share the same meaning of definition that marketing is an operative or managerial activity, that is oriented on a market and a customer. Authorized marketing institute defines the term as follows: "Marketing is a managerial process that is responsible for searching, receiving and satisfying the customers needs in the way, that creates profit." (Dubinská et al. 2000, p.7) We can come across this definition in most of the times withing the common literature. Since this definition describes its own process, it still not interpret the wider meaning of the marketing. (Dubinská et al., 2000)

### 2.1 Marketing communication

It is considered to be one of the most influencing factors for the success of marketing strategy of a company. In the present, there is a great competition in the market and, therefore, is the proper use of marketing communication essential. It is one of the most important and most visible components of the marketing mix. It is all the way of managing the communication that is used by a company to attract, address and maintain the customer. It is a targeted form of information creation designed for market in the way acceptable for target segment. (Boučková 2003)

Its main goal is, therefore, to influence future behavior and decision making of the communication receivers. It is necessary to respect several principles in sake of the greatest effectivity of the communication. First it is important to focus on the form of final message that is received by the target audience. Also, we need to take into account the marketing plan and it is vital to tune both planning processes. (Králiček, Král 2011)

### 2.2 Internet marketing

The simplest way to describe internet marketing is defining it as an application of internet and related digital technologies in connection with the traditional form of communication in order to achieve marketing goals. These digital technologies consist of internet media like web sites and emails and other digital media like wireless or mobile forms. In praxis, it consists of using of websites in connection with on-line promotional techniques (Chaffey et al. 2009).

It is often called e-marketing, web-marketing or on-line marketing. Therefore, we can understand it as the sum of all activities on the internet. On-line marketing is expanding this term with marketing activities through the mobile phone and other related devices like tablet or smartphone. (Bačík, Fedorko 2014)

### 2.3 Virál marketing

Viral marketing is a special form that is spontaneously spreading among the customers. The content or the information of a viral message is so much interesting that it is spread on its own from one customer to another. It can take the form of a picture, video, audio or text or even multimedia form. It is spread through the internet. In its core definition, it is divided into passive and active form. Passive does not influence customer behavior while active does it directly. (Dorčák, Pollák 2010)

### **3. SOCIAL NETWORKS**

This term is defined as a web-based service that allows individuals to create public or partially public profile in limited system, to set the list of other users with which they share connections and to see and scroll the whole list of connections, either own or those created by other users of the system. Type and name of such connection can vary based on particular network. (Boyd, Ellison 2007)

Through the social networks, we can connect and communicate with friends easily and in a cheap way, mostly completely free of charge. Social networks as Facebook, Twitter or MySpace offer incredibly rich communication, pictures, audios, videos, in which users are interested and can share them (Ryan 2011).

It became generally accepted marketing tool really fast. In this space, correctly positioned advertisement can be more effective as ever before. Some organizations or companies with a great amount of customers have their own sub-sites on those networks. They maintain contact with customers, make them aware of the news and perform targeted marketing, that is as easy to do as never before. Social networks significantly changed weak web sites into dynamic system, that can evolve. (Pollák 2013)

#### **3.1 Facebook**

For marketing Facebook is a really effective tool. Especially thanks to the fact that the user fill in the great amount of valuable personal information which are offered to advertisers for better campaign focus. It is also a great way of sharing a viral content. Another amazing opportunity is in connections itself. Every user has 130 other connections in average which means 130 new potential opportunities for brand marketing, brand perception support and creation of new advertising links. As it is in case of other marketing methods, even social networks need to be used in the way which prioritize communication before promotion. (Treadaway, Smith 2011)

### **4. ANALYSIS FINDINGS**

The main goal of this article was to analyze the use of social network Facebook, to find out how users react on advertising on Facebook and to what extent they are influenced. Except those findings, there are also mentioned general indicators related to this social network.

The research had been performed with the use of on-line interviewing within the period of several weeks. Research sample consists of almost 200 respondents. The majority of them were females and the average age appeared in the interval from 20 to 25 years. Majority also completed or actually study at the university level of education. Questions consisted of demographical segmentation, behavior on Facebook related and advertising perception related.

Based on performed analysis it is clear that respondents dedicate significant time to the internet. Almost 66 % of them stated it to be 4 to 6 hours every day. Besides that it is also confirmed that the daily interact on the Facebook social network to the extent of 97 % of them, 52 % stated 3 to 5 hours to spend on Facebook. As shown on the following chart, number of connections is significantly high.

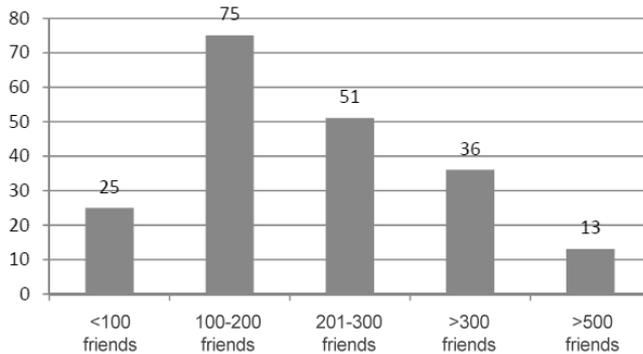


Chart 1: Nubmer of connections on social network  
Source: own elaboration

When focusing on advertisement effectivity on Facebook, it has been shown that the attention paid to those on the right side of the user interface is mostly average. We can say that users notice them but not all the time. 55 % of them stated "Occasionally" while answer "Really often" showed only in 10 % of them. Relating to the purchase based on those advertisements, we can see the following chart that the majority 68 % did not buy anything solely thanks to them.

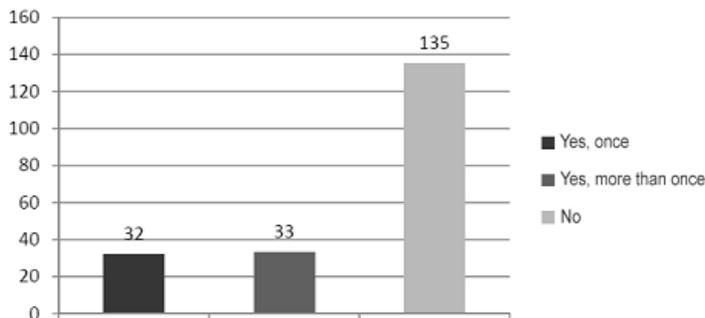


Chart 2: Product purchase based on advertisement  
Source: own elaboration

Questions related to the marketing promotion in case of building a good name and loyalty of the customer to the brand or product proved that all respondents are subscribed to several company sites. They also tend to subscribe based on previous subscription of their connections. But it is not conditional for customers to be active. The greatest group of 35 % rarely enter discussions on those sites. Nevertheless, there is a mutual relation between a product and its Facebook site as you can see on the following chart. If consumers have a positive experience with a product, they search for it on the social network really often and support it with their recommendation.

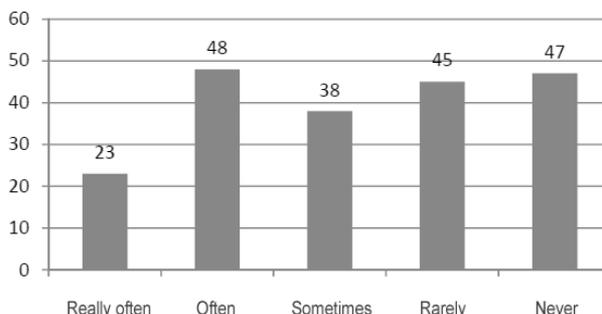


Chart 3: Experience with the product and recommendation on Facebook  
Source: own elaboration

According to the results, users are influenced in their decision making mediumly when seeing an advertisement on the Facebook. A little more effective is a recommendation from their connections. This is supported by the fact, that 41 % of them notice any advertisement only occasionally and when they do, they are not interested every time. But there is the gap in consumer prevention of advertisements on Facebook. Only small group of them really use advertisement blocking so the opportunity to use it effectively lasts. It is still for a fact that advertising on Facebook is still more effective in comparison to other methods, especially in case of younger generation.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the performed research it has been proven that in our conditions Facebook is clearly the most popular social network. People spend tons of time on it and they have hundreds of connections. The positive trend of social network sites has been proven as well, they are capable of significant support for the brand. Opportunities for further research emerge with the focus on other generations that could show different results since this research covers mainly young people. Direct purchase of product promoted on Facebook is not rated great, but it is still an interesting ratio that needs to be taken into account. Users seek the advice among their connections that already have experience with the product and share their thought on Facebook. Therefore companies should pay attention when creating their own Facebook site, they need to communicate actively with potential customers. Results also showed preference for partial engagement of consumers through the use of "like" and "comment". They are fond of expressing themselves to that extent.

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