

THE CONCEPT OF A CORPORATE MARKETING SYSTEM AND ITS IMPACT ON BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Paradigm shifts in communication forced many organizations to abandon their command and control structures. Empowered consumers using social media actively do not perceive value in traditional communication pathways. Organizational challenges arise in marketing, where traditional functions get replaced by a broader, holistic understanding of marketing systems facing new key roles on an organization-wide level. Marketers are driven into internal/external network management, knowledge and data management and cross-organizational team managers. Based on a profound literature review, the research model of a corporate marketing system has been developed and its impact on marketing and business performance has been empirically investigated.

Keywords: Corporate marketing, business performance, organizational transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The field of marketing is based on a very simple invention of humankind: the trade. The act of exchanging goods between two individuals is the fundamental operation for the emergence of a market and the development of marketing (Layton 2011). Even though the origin is a simple one, its conceptualization, especially in a scientific approach, is far more difficult. The reason for this is the dynamic, genuine role of marketing as a practical discipline. In most social sciences, the dichotomy between theory and reality in marketing science lead to a philosophical discussion about the value of theories and concepts extracted from practical experience and expertise. But for expertise it is not only “knowing how”, Ryle (1959) stated, “knowing that” is at least as important for successful problem-solving. Extensive knowledge of the field is necessary to know what the possibilities are and which solution to choose only after this it is the know-how that is of importance. Even though marketing lacks universal laws, academic division has it's right to exist because the normative models such as the marketing mix frameworks, like the four P's from McCarthy (1981), Kotler's product life cycle (1994), strategic portfolio management from Porter (1980) or Ansoff's competitive strategy (1965) can improve the problem solving capability of managers by contributing the basic knowledge, the “know that”. Some scholars critically reflect the validity, reliability and universality of this marketing conceptualization as they try to make universal statements about marketing related phenomena and cannot be scientifically established (Brown 1993).

Hackley (1999) mentions the existence of many generic, descriptive models of buyer behaviour, advertising communication and product conceptualization. Within this discussion, Brown (1993) emphasizes that academic marketers maintain the existence of that external reality. Further on, that these models deliver theoretical foundations and may show a high relevance of application in marketing practice and allow imperfect attempts to make universal statements. From an academic point of view, the heuristic power of such models is uncertain but still an important question within the managerial school of marketing, the most powerful school within academic marketing (Sheth, Gardener and Garrett 1988). Consequently, many theoretical foundations have their origin in the abstraction of expert practice or broad

generalizing assumptions, which deliver conceptual frameworks but miss a scientific confrontation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The fast growing importance of internet-based networking and social media applications has led to a paradigm shift in communication, in which empowered consumers use media for transmitting messages to and from other consumers as well as for exchanging messages with other consumers. The intention when using the internet is not merely consumption anymore but rather communication and interaction, as the growing popularity of social media demonstrates (Henderson and Bowley 2010; Coulter and Roggeveen 2012). The new media types and inherent new communication possibilities are transforming marketing organizations and even traditional business models. Similarly, customers are changing their habits and engagement with brands and media. Striking challenges arise for the company management that now have to focus on building longstanding and stable customer relationships instead of only inducing customers to buy a product. This happens, when corporate marketing, which traditionally is selfish and focused on corporate interests, puts people back in the center of marketing and communication considerations and emphasizes the necessity of a new marketing understanding (Dibb and Carrigan 2013; Singer 2006). In that context, the so-called information or data society forces companies to adapt their management processes systematically. Since the value of social contacts is increasing, the systematic extraction and organization-wide distribution of customer knowledge and information shows a high relevance for companies in the face of the social media paradigm. (Gibbert, Leibold and Probst 2002; Kane, Robinson-Combre and Berge 2010). Building collective intelligence that reflects the changing needs of customers is a basis for customer engagement, which adds active cooperation with the customer to assess their needs and entails a co-creation of value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004). Intangible assets like trust, image and culture are gaining value in this new economy, hence become an organization's strategic asset, and have a future impact on business performance (Rihai-Belkaoui 2003).

Marketing needs to be sensitive to changes in the external environment as well as to modifications within the organization and operation (Moradi, Aghaie and Hosseini 2013). It is necessary to constantly monitor the market to be able to adapt marketing strategies to the changes the market experiences. As the market is transforming from consumption to interaction (Malthouse and Hofacker 2010) generating higher relevance and value for the consumer in a converse argument, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing on a corporate level.

A deeper understanding requires a differentiation of the marketing terminus and leads inevitably to the overarching question: what is marketing? Is it a management science? Is it a social discipline? Piercy and Cravens (1995) claim a distinction between marketing as a philosophy or culture and marketing as a set of management activities. This implicates a new understanding of marketing beside its definition as a function – namely, to understand customer needs and wants aside from an exploiting marketing monopoly (Thomas 2006). Hence, marketing is seen as an organizational philosophy and strategic necessity that also deals with intra-organizational relationships and networks.

An organization, once it is aware of the ongoing paradigm shifts in communications, must be able to influence the organizational climate. It is a challenge to create an environment where others contribute innovative ideas and then to instantly develop or enhance a corresponding

product or service. To make this happen, fast decision-making processes and empowered intra-organizational relationships are required (Tikkanen and Parvinen, 2006).

Changes in the economic environment have made knowledge an indispensable asset of any company. Especially for marketing, data and information from and about customers is essential to achieve effective interactive strategies. Customers that take part in a campaign and contribute their own contents not only show a higher engagement level, but also represent a source for data and information that can be used to improve the relationship (Malthouse et al. 2013). In this way, knowledge that is highly relevant for every-day situations as well as for visionary strategic decisions can be created. Developing or adapting existing structures is necessary for the success of knowledge management initiatives. Therefore, organizational structures and corporate culture require managerial commitment to change, as traditional hierarchical structures limit the knowledge transfer performance (Walczak 2005). The knowledge management strategy should thus comply and slot in with the organizational strategy in order to promote a company's goal attainment. The knowledge management strategy implicates how to identify and work with the necessary and relevant knowledge in line with the organizational strategy (Sandhawalia and Dalcher 2011).

Various management decisions can be based on knowledge acquired from customers, markets and consumers. For individualized marketing, knowledge management is a requirement as only organized and available data and knowledge can be deployed for developing marketing strategies (Shaw et al. 2001).

Marketing fundamentals have been undergoing a controversial discussion within the scientific community. The theoretical foundations and conceptual frameworks logically coherently relate to the contemporary economic, organizational and technological zeitgeist. Ever since, researchers as well as marketing practitioners have been facing forces of change to compete with. Hence, the sacred temples that define marketing need to be discussed critically accounting for the major directional changes the world is experiencing (Singer 2006).

From an organizational perspective, the changing role of marketers is not only a functional issue. The impact of social media and the coherent paradigm changes in communication require companies to show a new managerial commitment to a non-trivial, cultural and organizational transformation (Rossi 2011). The underlying comprehension of a marketing system follows the foundations of Layton (2011), who constitutes marketing systems as social matrix frameworks with exchange logics, flows and roles, networks and governance. This systematic view is a consequent alignment of different processes, networks and value chains of business environments. Following this line of thought, marketing can be seen as a complex structure of processes and set of values rather than a managerial function or a line-up of normative models. The conversion of the system pertains to all levels of an organization.

Although marketing was broadly regarded a practical discipline in the past, scholars are now observing a shift from opinion-driven to data-driven decision making. Hence, marketing is now perceived as an organization-wide process and marketing managers have become supporters, integrators and coordinators with an increased set of responsibilities throughout the organization (Gök and Hacıoglu 2010). Paying tribute to all above-mentioned theories, the conceptualization of a corporate marketing system is based on aspects of corporate

culture, social media usage and knowledge management and aims for improved business performance.

METHODOLOGY

Especially for the field of marketing research, Churchill (1979) suggests the use of multi-item measures to investigate behavioral relationships in marketing practice to achieve high reliability and validity. One main issue in marketing research is the widely varying definitions, which is why it is of utmost importance to exactly define the conceptual research construct and its variables. New measurement items are determined on basis of a thorough literature review and a subsequent integration of sample data experiences. Primary research, as shown in table 1-1, was executed from July to November 2015, applying the two indicated research methods. Qualitative research was carried out prior to quantitative research in order to critically reflect upon the conceptual framework.

Table 1-1: Primary Research Framework

1. Qualitative Research	
Purpose:	Exploration, validation and justification of the proposed research model.
Instrument:	Problem-based interview
Participants:	Adequate sample of selected marketing executives across industry sectors in Austria
Data collection:	Personal interviews
Data analysis:	Interview protocol (summarized) with remarks on validity
2. Quantitative Research	
Purpose:	Confirmation (or falsification) of the proposed research model.
Instrument:	Structured questionnaire featuring closed questions
Participants:	Random sample of persons in charge of marketing or responsible marketing managers across industry sectors in Austria
Data collection:	Online survey
Data analysis:	Statistical analysis including descriptive and multivariate data analyses
3. Triangulation	
4. Results	

Source: Author's illustration

The purpose of qualitative research was to explore, validate and justify the hypothesized research model by interviewing marketing experts from different industries in Austria. Their answers and processed results influenced and developed the quantitative research items, which had originated from a profound deduction of theories and conceptual frameworks. The findings of the expert interviews therefore validated the hypothesized research model and justified the aspired quantitative survey with slight adaptations due to the findings accumulated in qualitative research.

Based on observations from those industries that highly commit in social media usage, experts across all industry sectors were selected. Experts, 10 in total, qualified for the sample by their current position, by being the primary marketing decision maker and by having a profound background in the addressed topics. Further, experts needed to be honorable players in their industries. All problem-based interviews were conducted personally in a face-to-face setting and were audio recorded. After completion, the files were summarized and validity

remarks checked. The interview guideline consisted of 8 open questions. All collected data was treated strictly confidentially and evaluation was carried out anonymously. With regard to the hypothesized research model, answers led to a critical reflection and slight adaption of the hypothesized research model. Subsequently, the quantitative research instrument and online questionnaire were finalized. Triangulation considered findings of qualitative and quantitative research, delivering results and implications from many standpoints and critically reflecting on previous studies and conceptual frameworks in the context of the research topic. The following table summarizes various research aspects related to the underlying dimensionality of a corporate marketing system and its impact on marketing and business performance. Further, it quotes the addressed hypotheses, independent, and dependent variables as well as gives information on the corresponding analysis method.

Table 1-2: Operationalization of Research Aspects, Hypotheses and Analysis

Research Aspect	Hypotheses	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Analysis Method
Dimensionality of a corporate marketing system	H1, H1a-H1c	Corporate Culture, Social Media Usage, Knowledge Management	-	Principal Components Analysis
Impact of a corporate marketing system on marketing performance	H2, H2a-H4a	Corporate Culture, Social Media Usage, Knowledge Management	Marketing Performance	Multiple linear regression analysis
Impact of a corporate marketing system on business performance	H3, H2b-H4b	Corporate Culture, Social Media Usage, Knowledge Management	Business Performance	Multiple linear regression analysis
Promotion of a corporate marketing system	H5	Marketing Performance	Business Performance	Simple linear regression analysis
Promotion of marketing performance dimensionality	H6	Corporate Culture, Social Media Usage, Knowledge Management	Business Performance	Correlation analysis
Small, medium-sized or large companies and corporate marketing system integration	H7	Corporate Culture, Social Media Usage, Knowledge Management	Company Size	ANOVA post-hoc testing and descriptive statistics
Industry sector and corporate marketing system integration	H8	Corporate Culture, Social Media Usage, Knowledge Management	Industry Sector	ANOVA post-hoc testing and descriptive statistics

Source: Author's illustration

In order to address the research questions, a suitable number of companies from business, trade and industry in Austria were approached. Subsequently, participants were sampled across eligible companies excluding micro companies in order to minimize confounding factors. A search of industry-wide databases of those persons in charge of corporate marketing at the selected companies yielded potential respondents. The interview partners each represented one of the four predominant business models defined according to the three criteria, (1) number of employees, (2) annual turnover and (3) independence. While “number of employees” is generally considered to be the main criterion to classify a venture, “annual turnover” illustrates the impact of a company on the market and its performance. “Independence” can be viewed as an important criterion to distinguish those small and medium-sized companies that are affiliated to large corporate groups from those that are not. The collected sample excludes small to medium-sized companies, which cannot be considered independent in line with the above mention criterion as well as micro-companies, whose annual turnover is lower than 2 million Euros and that employs less than 10 persons. Accordingly, from a total number of 426,364 companies all of which operate in business, trade and industry in Austria 31,460 companies were eligible for further processing.

Table 1-3: Development of the Quantitative Research Sample

General population*	Number of companies within industrial economy in Austria	426,364
Relevant population*	Number of companies without <u>micro</u> companies	31,460
Accessible population	Industry-wide database of persons in charge of corporate marketing = potential respondents	5,875
Adjusted sample	Persons in charge of corporate marketing representing 4,679 different companies	4,679
Usable sample	4,231 delivered emails	4,231
Response rate		5.51 % (\cong 0.74 % of the relevant population)
Final sample size		233

*Number of companies as issued by the Austrian Economic Chambers (2014)

Source: Author's illustration

After sampling the outlined 31,460 companies, an accessible sample size of 5,875 potential respondents was drawn from an industry-wide database of persons in charge of marketing. It was assumed, that these potential respondents represented management as well as non-management levels of the respective companies. Next, the database was electronically screened for multiple e-mail suffix parameters – i.e. entries with two or more identical email @suffixes were reduced into just one single entry within the database. As a result, 4,697 individual email addresses remained representing 4,697 different companies as indicated by email @suffix. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent out to all selected potential questionnaire respondents via e-mail. 4,231 successfully delivered e-mails, resulted in 233 (5.51%) fully answered questionnaires that were received back, which, in turn, make up for 0.74 % of the relevant population.

Figure 1-1 illustrates the finalized research model and provides hypotheses references. It also outlines the dependent and independent variables.

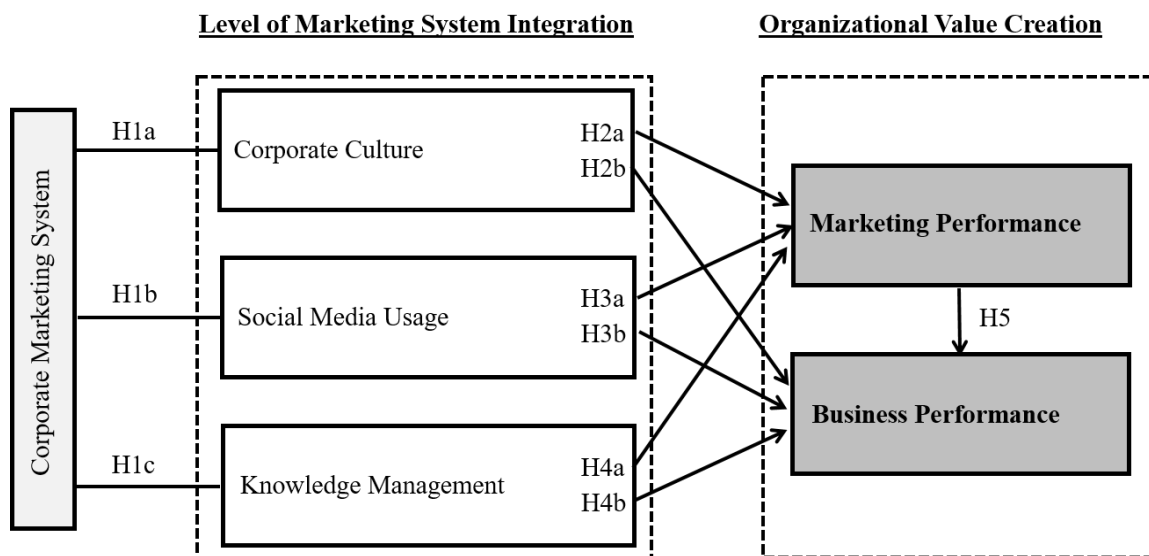


Figure 1-1: Conceptualized Research Model related to the Impact of a Corporate Marketing System on Marketing and Business performance

Source: Author's illustration

RESULTS

The subsequent main results have been derived from primary research and enhance existing theories related to a corporate marketing system and its impact on marketing and business performance. Hence, they represent a valuable contribution to the academic discourse of the research topic:

- It is verified that a corporate marketing system is determined by aspects of corporate culture, social media usage and knowledge management and that these variables represent a significant contribution to marketing and business performance.
- Marketing performance is positively related to business performance and enhances organizational value creation.
- In this context, social media usage and knowledge management have been identified as strong predictors for marketing performance and corporate culture for business performance.
- Interdependencies within the construct of a corporate marketing system and its influence on business performance appeared. Hence, a holistic approach of organizational integration seems appropriate.
- Corporate marketing system integration enhances business performance regardless of company size, indicated by number of employees and annual turnover.
- There are differences of corporate marketing integration caused by industrial sectors, especially for business-to-business, retail and service/tourism industries.

These main results strongly indicate that there is indeed an impact of a corporate marketing system on marketing and business performance throughout industry sectors and company classifications. The following sections go in detail.

Dimensionality of a Corporate Marketing System

In order to investigate the dimensionality of a corporate marketing system within small to large sized companies a principal components analysis has been assessed, in order to explore

patterns in the collected data (Brown 2009; Fabrigar et al., 1999). Principal components analyses was performed with Varimax rotation in 6 iterations and a Kaiser normalization. This was done based on the 233 sample elements and for 30 measurement items, basically assigned to the independent variables corporate culture, social media usage and knowledge management. Factorability and correlation of the samples was considered appropriate based upon the values of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity which showed values of 0.863 and $p < 0.001$, respectively. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal reliability of a questionnaire. The analysis of the model exhibited values ranging from 0.811 (social media usage), 0.845 (knowledge management) to 0.866 (corporate culture). This can be considered as indicative for high internal consistency of the measurement scales. Only components showing Eigenvalues above 2.0 have been accepted and items with factor loadings > 0.5 have been included. Eight main components have been extracted, but only three have been considered for further investigation, as the others showed Eigenvalues only slightly > 1 . Consequently, three main components were defaulted. These three main components were explaining 46.8 % of the variation. In detail, knowledge management explains 16.8 %, corporate culture 16.2 % and social media usage 13.8 % of the construct.

The underlying research construct of a corporate marketing system has been operationalized by corporate culture, social media usage and knowledge management. Firstly, corporate culture can be approached from different angles. The basic foundation is probably the recognition of knowledge as an organizational asset which refers to the attitude of a company and its top-management towards the evaluation of intangible goods. Once there is a positive approach, managerial commitment can create a cultural climate that enhances information exchange and the fostering of ideas throughout the organization. This can happen on a voluntary basis in everyday situations but nevertheless, defined corporate procedures and proper technological infrastructures, like common knowledge platforms, further enhance exchange of ideas and information and contributes to a cultural understanding of a corporate marketing system. As research results did show, the consequent training of all employees for knowledge exchange and dedicated time schedules in daily operations are strong cultural factors and need to be considered in relating managerial frameworks.

Secondly, the usage of social media requires a professional engagement by all employees, across managerial and functional levels, as they represent a very important source for external opinions, market insights and the allocation of potential target groups. Further, social media deliver inspirational information that can lead to the development of new products and services or just to improvements in many areas of a company. Hence, information derived from social media dynamically captures sentiments and intentions from the external business environment that can directly be addressed to strategic decision-making and daily operations. Research results did show that the training of all employees for proper usage of social media is necessary to fortify the potentials of a corporate marketing system.

Thirdly, within the underlying research construct, knowledge management addresses structural and behavioral necessities of a systematic marketing understanding. The strategic foundation is an intensified focusing on customer needs and wants and an organizational setting that puts customer insights in the center of every organizational consideration. This is coherent with the above mentioned possibilities of social media, that allow new approaches towards customer-centric business models. But this possibilities need to be applied on an organization-wide level and flat hierarchies with short decision pathways strongly support this approach. Further, the dynamics of the external business environment needs to be

reflected in organizational work processes. For people to catch up with these requirements, inter-divisional co-working and multifunctional teams contribute to the generation of new ideas, shared knowledge and the development of intellectual capital, which can be generated, processed and stored on virtual platforms. Thus, and for the use of real-life application in daily business, shared insights and experiences overwind departmental and functional borders and create a dynamic environment for constantly learning organizations, facing the organizational challenges of the data society and for the purpose to impact marketing and business performance in a digitalized world.

Influencing factors of Marketing Performance

Based upon the factor analysis the impact of the independent variables corporate culture, social media usage and knowledge management on the dependent variable marketing performance was determined. In order to calculate the factor scores the items of each dimension as resulted from the factor analysis were averaged. Corporate culture consisted of seven items, social media usage of eight and knowledge management of eleven items. The following regression analysis was performed to test the null-hypothesis (no relationship between independent and dependent variables). The F-test resulted in 57.3 ($p=0.000$), thus rejecting the null-hypothesis and indicating relationships between independent and dependent variables. Further on, considering the Durbin-Watson value of 1.9 no auto-correlation was detected, meaning that the residuals are uncorrelated. Results show, that 42.9% of the total variance in marketing performance is explained by the independent variables knowledge management and social media usage.

The beta values figured out, that social media usage appears to be the best predictor for marketing performance ($\beta=0.530$), followed by knowledge management ($\beta=0.239$). However, there was no relationship found between corporate culture and marketing performance.

Influencing factors of Business Performance

In analogy to the estimation of relationships between the independent variables corporate culture, social media usage and knowledge management on the dependent variable marketing performance a similar analysis for the dependent variable business performance was performed. Factor scores of the items of each dimension (corporate culture: 7 items; social media usage: 8 items; knowledge management: 11 items) were calculated based upon the results from the factor analysis. Regression analysis to test the null-hypothesis (no relationship between independent and dependent variables) yielded an F-value of 7.5 ($p=0.000$), thus rejecting the null-hypothesis and indicating relationships between independent and dependent variables. Like in case of marketing performance the Durbin-Watson value of 1.9 suggested no auto-correlation among the residuals. Considering the beta values, corporate culture appears to be the best predictor for business performance ($\beta=0.228$), followed by knowledge management ($\beta=0.239$).

However, no significant relationships were found between both knowledge management and social media usage and the dependent variable business performance. Hence, the total variance of 9.0% in business performance is explained by just one independent variable, namely corporate culture.

Testing the influence of independent variables social media usage, corporate culture and knowledge management on the dependent variables marketing and business performance a multiple regression analysis was performed.

Summarized, there are significant positive relationships between the independent and dependent variables. However, considering the beta values, the impact of the single independent variables on either marketing or business performance, are not consistent. While social media usage has an influence on marketing performance ($p=0.000$), this effect cannot be observed when it comes to business performance. The same is true in case of knowledge management, where an impact on marketing performance is detectable ($p=0.000$), while the impact on business performance is weak but not statistically significant ($p=0.087$). Corporate culture is the only dimension having an influence on business performance ($p=0.002$). Consequently, combining the results, hypotheses H3a, H4a and H2b could have been confirmed while H2a, H3b and H4b had to be rejected.

While the dimensions knowledge management, corporate culture and social media usage showed an impact on both dependent variables, marketing performance and business performance, a correlation of the latter two variables appeared to be likely. Performing a simple linear regression analysis between the independent variable marketing performance and the dependent variable business performance identified a significant positive relationship between the two variables ($F\text{-value}=5.3$ at $p=0.022$) explaining 2.3 % of the total variance ($b=0.23$; $t=2.3$; $p=0.022^*$).

Correlation of Single Dimensions with Business Performance

Because a corporate marketing system seems to have an influence on business performance, the single dimensions of marketing performance were checked for correlations to business performance and for inter-correlations. After performing a Pearson correlation analysis, significant positive correlations between knowledge management and corporate culture and business performance ($R\text{-values}$ are 0.227 and 0.279 at $p=0.000$, respectively) could have been observed, while in case of social media usage there was no correlation detectable. Inter-correlations among the dimensions of marketing performance were seen between corporate culture and knowledge management ($R=0.503$, $p=0.000$), corporate culture and social media usage ($R=0.343$, $p=0.000$) and social media usage and knowledge management ($R=0.452$, $p=0.000$).

Because the size of a company could have an influence on corporate marketing system integration, the three dimensions of marketing performance, knowledge management, corporate culture and social media usage were tested. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for group differences were performed, regarding the two main criteria for the classification of a company and the impact of a company on the market and its performance, which is (1) annual turnover and (2) number of employees, respectively. In both analyses there were no significant group differences detectable, suggesting no effects of company size, regarding marketing performance.

Because the industry sectors in which the respondent's companies resided in could exhibit specific issues, regarding the corporate marketing system integration, an ANOVA with a Games-Howell post-hoc-testing was applied. Significant differences between the groups could point towards diverging characteristics among the sectors business to business (B2B), business to consumer (B2C), retail, services including tourism and other. The results of the

ANOVA showed differences in corporate culture ($p=0.09$) and social media usage ($p=0.015$). Post-hoc-testing specified these results as being mainly caused due to (1) the differences between retail and services including tourism ($p=0.020$) for the corporate marketing system dimension corporate culture and (2) the differences between B2B and retail versus services including tourism (p -values are 0.045 and 0.014, respectively) for the dimension social media usage.

CONCLUSIONS

Companies of all industry sectors are exposed to the paradigm changes of digital communication landscapes and the eminent importance of new economies for business. The so-called information, respectively data society, forces companies to adopt their management procedures systematically to the evolution of internet-based networking. Considering that roughly one third of earth's entire population is connected to the usage of social media, one cannot ignore the implications of this fact for marketing systems. Since the value of social contacts is increasing, the systematic extraction and distribution of customer knowledge, respectively information shows a high relevance for all companies. However, apart from the common notion that the usage of social media is of high value as a marketing tool, there is confusion of how to achieve a well-suited application of this instrument into organizational structures. Hence, managerial challenges arise on an organization-wide level and especially the application of social media and web 2.0 is an important occasion for organizational change.

Thinking outside the box is necessary and hardened organizational structures need to be questioned when organizations face these challenges caused by strong external factors and a fundamentally changing environment. An absolute customer-centric approach and dialogue-orientated procedures are necessary for organizations to adopt their strategies but also their internal structures, hierarchy levels, functions and work- and information-flows to the web 2.0 challenge. Dynamic work processes should allow multifunctional teams to constantly exchange ideas and information, derived either from professional engagement in social media or from individuals within the organization. There should be no functional, structural nor technological borders to understand the organization as a dynamic and permanently learning construct. Management must consider time management issues and an open atmosphere for their employees and encourage instant and dynamic information exchange through specified procedures.

Regardless of the fact, that marketing is often considered to be a practical discipline with a vast spectrum of specification, the possibilities of a new marketing understanding address many organizational challenges for development, which ultimately result in business metrics like competitiveness, growth and sustainability. The changes in a holistic conceptualization of marketing meet the development of the information technology, from its beginning to current state and give many hints for organization-wide implementation. The rise and growing importance of the internet, coherent digital communication landscapes and social media shows some enormous impact on organizations and marketing practice. With an increasing amount and accessibility to data, information and knowledge, an organization-wide adjustment can be a crucial factor for future competitiveness. Especially marketers, which are traditionally at the front of consumer communication, can strengthen their position and jump out departmental borders by becoming knowledge ambassadors and central managers of external and internal networks and thus, become drivers of organizational change and renewal.

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