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BOOK REVIEW

"Organizations and Social Networking: Utilizing Social Media to Engage Consumers"

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Introduction

The book aims at building communities, fostering new ways of collaborating, and guiding these efforts to using Social Media to expand Organizational Capabilities and indulging customer in the organization. The ethnographical insights used for social networking is exemplary in the book. The book identifies opportunities and challenges of the New Age E-Enterprise and emergent social software platforms within companies or between companies and their partners or customers in the era of globalization, innovation and brand-customer centricity, creating models, which can be implemented in their own enterprises.

The book rationally covers and precisely explains core disciplines topics from Consumer Behavior, Consumer Decision Making, Strategic Marketing, Brand Building , Entrepreneurial Setup, Market Research, Online Market Research and Customer Relationship Management.

The authors have done a good academic job in finding measures of accessing risky community collaboration into measurable business value in the highly changing collaborative organization.

The book is aimed at all those who are fascinated about research in social network and collaborative organizations. It aims to aid the marketing strategist emphasizing the use of social media in consumer communication and particular emphasis on the consumer motivation for buying and adopting social media.

Organization of the Book

The book Social Networks and Organizations provides a detailed introduction to major concepts in the area of organizational social networks. The strength of the book lies in the wonderful synthesis of exhaustive and diverse burgeoning literature with the enormous potential of research approach that still lies untapped in the area of organizations and social network.

The book intelligently has been engraved to be equally valuable for individuals, organizations and society as a whole. It provides new prologues and new perceptions to use social media to those familiar with network analysis and to the beginners with same ease.

This context is extremely timely for developing economies where social networking is rapidly spreading, has huge potential and scope for organizations willing to change their communication strategy. The book through online marketing intelligence helps in identifying useful models for customer motivations and aspirations for using social media.

The book is divided in 6 Sections with 18 chapters. Chapter 1 contributes to research on social media and online communities by describing user behavior and motivations related to the user-created services and gratification in involvement. This introductory chapter provides a back ground and comprehends the concepts pertaining to the new knowledge economy, approaches on

organizational and modern customer based relationship being followed by organization in creating interest as an opening chapter. Chapter 2 provides analysis and strategic framework on usage of social media in prevention campaigns to help positively transform consumer behavior through Transformative Consumer Research. It indicates the delicate balancing act on how much access to give to other users for entities (individual and organization) who are trying to achieve the simultaneous goals of reaching out, being inclusive, and retaining control of their messaging.

Chapter 3 empirically explains how stable psychological characteristics like users' personality define the usage pattern of social media by a consumer. Chapter 4 includes topics like real measure of effectiveness on social networking sites, user motivation, adoption and usage pattern. It also includes topics on Cognitive Usage Motivations and how to translate them into effective business strategy. Chapter 5 differentiates about impulse and planned purchase strategies on social sites. It also deliberates that Second Life stores should try to make the purchasing process as simple and convenient as possible.

Section 3 is based on social networking with social media and includes Chapter 6, chapter 7 and chapter 8 which contribute on consumer involvement on social networking. Chapter 6 discusses significant consumer attribute who contribute to consumer generated media like global innovativeness, electronic innovativeness and consumer involvement. Chapter 7 provides insights that can help practitioners leverage the power of blogs as a form of marketing communication and the threats attached with the loosely affiliated blogs with the company which are not under their direct control. The chapter also illustrates how sense of intimacy is developed using "Social Penetration Theory". Chapter 8 comprehends the user's behavior intention and attitude towards using the website. The authors also add the potential factors about community which influence user's behavior on video sharing websites and indicate that community satisfaction, content satisfaction, and system satisfaction have significant positive impact on consumer.

In Section 4 on Social Marketing, Chapter 9 aims to evaluate and compare the Web 2.0 applications as marketing tools. In this context, blogs, micro-blogs, collaborative projects (wikis and social bookmarking), content communities, social networking sites, and virtual worlds have been examined.

Chapter 10 presents the concept of "two-sided" markets and shows how they can be integrated into the larger e-business framework formed by social media and social networks benefiting all three partners (consumers, platform, and vendors) in social medium. Chapter 11 states important conclusions that company size is not important but that the level of adoption social media marketing is related to the organizational maturity in the areas of management attitudes, employee empowerment, access to Internet technologies, and technological infrastructure. The chapter also proposes a future research agenda including cross-cultural studies for better understanding the global business attitudes in this area and underlines the need for development of benchmarks and metrics necessary for better assessing the value of social media marketing.

Section 5 on Customer Relationship Management with Social Media includes chapter 12, 13 and 14. Chapter 12 aims to evaluate the communication channels based on social media used by businesses and consumers, showing successful and non-successful cases in the communication process and suggesting trends of usage of these channels more efficiently. It also showcases how companies make mistakes in the process of communication with their consumers through social media.

The purpose of Chapter 13 elaborates on the social effects of customer networks and the possibility to use data from these networks for Social CRM. The foundations of social contagion in networks, relationship between social effects and Social CRM performance measures, ways of data acquisition & data integration and implementation are discussed in the chapter. Chapter 14 discusses about the integration of traditional CRM systems with new social networking technologies available on the Web, such as Twitter, blogs, and communities, showing a set of the best practices on the use of these technologies to improve business relationships with customers. The chapter presents a set of best practices with guidance on how social networking technologies can help companies squeeze and improve the relationship with their customers.

Organizations and Social Technologies are discussed in Section 6. Chapter 15 presents a

framework to help morphing organizations plan the business transformation needed to embed social media technologies within their e-business service provision. Business and technological maturity models are analyzed and a set of maturity measures for e-business is proposed. Dimensions of business transformation and critical success factors for adopting social media technologies are also discussed in the chapter. Chapter 16 appropriately talks about Globalization, Digitization, Customer Organizations in simple language.

Chapter 17 elucidates how negotiations between software agents and humans (hybrid negotiation), can make electronic business efficient and intelligent. It mentions that it save time, effort and other valuable resources by replacing the human in electronic business activities and many other domains. Chapter 18 speaks about how organization may make use of social networking sites, highlighting how the consumer is not only gaining the power of voice, but also the power of production.

The book is highly recommended as its conceptual underpinning, integration, coverage of issue, managerial relevance, timelines, global applicability and conciseness makes it exceptional in its domain.

Its analytical approach, multidimensional perspective, relevance & comprehensive and balanced coverage makes the book most awaited for Marketing Strategy designer, Public policy makers, Researchers, Academicians, Entrepreneurs (with meager budgets), NGOs and Managers of prevention campaigns.