Relationship Marketing on Social Medias

A case study of Instagram

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Abstract

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Title:	Relationship Marketing on Social Medias – a case study of Instagram
Keyword:	Relationship Marketing, Social Media, Instagram
Background:	Relationship Marketing has during the last decades received a lot of attention. The approach enables companies to develop and improve beneficial interactions with their customers, which leads to increased profits and additional value for the customers. Due to the growing trend of the Internet and social medias companies need to adjust their Relationship Marketing to fit into this new digital era.
Purpose:	To explore the customers perception and expectations on relationships with companies on social media.
Research Question:	What motivates consumers to participate in a relationship with companies on social media?
Methodology:	The research takes on a qualitative approach with a case study design. The chosen data collection method is semi-structured interviews.
Conclusion:	The main findings are that customers' perception of a company-customer relationship is that it should be personal and consists of a two-way communication, where both the company and customers are a part of the value creation process. The main expectations are that companies should post inspirational pictures, updates and news, discounts/offerings and pictures containing products and information. Instagram is not seen as a suitable platform for communication but rather as a strong supplement to a company's' other marketing channels. Due to the prominent expectation of inspiration on Instagram companies should take a stance in this and lean more towards becoming an inspirational account of their own products and services.

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1. Introduction

This chapter is emphasizing on presenting a broad background regarding Relationship Marketing and Social Media. It is followed by a discussion regarding the problematic aspects of the subjects and ends with the purpose of the research and the research question.

1.1 Background

Relationship Marketing is the behaviors and actions taken by businesses in order to develop and improve beneficial interactions with their consumers (Vieira et al., 2014). It is defined as an approach to develop long-term relationships with customers of the organization to gain profits but also to contribute to strengthen the awareness of the brand, increase an understanding of the consumers needs and provide them with additional value (Williams and Chinn, 2010).

Relationship marketing emerged as an opponent towards the traditional marketing theories. In the early 1990s a paradigm shift took place which lead to a shift from transactional marketing towards relationship marketing (Bojei and Abu, 2014). The marketers during this time started to realize that it was more profitable to build long-lasting relationships with their customers than to have one-time transactions and they understood that it was more costly to constantly serve new customers instead of serving one loyal (Bojei and Abu, 2014).

This was the starting point for Relationship Marketing and it has since then received an increasingly amount of attention until present days (Bojei and Abu, 2014; Williams and Chinn, 2010). It does not only enable the company to improve their competitive advantage but they can also increase their market opportunities and achieve high customer-retention rates (Narteh et al., 2013).

When there is a personal exchange instead of a market exchange the customers gain more value from it, in terms of information, opinions and insights. This in turn can create strong bonds, loyalty and feelings of obligation (Egan, 2004).

Relationship Marketing consists of several important cornerstones, where loyalty is seen as the most important one and also the main objective a company wishes to achieve by using Relationship Marketing (Mende et al., 2013). In order for a company

to create loyalty among their customer base other important factors such as satisfaction, trust, commitment and creation of value for their customers need to be achieved (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

In today's society there is a significant difference in the way people communicate compared to how they communicated in the past centuries (Christodoulides, 2008). This is due to the ability for people to easily get access to the Internet and the opportunity to get instant contact with others. This new digital era has created a change in marketing in the way that it now is the consumers that have the biggest power online and companies cannot affect their consumers as easily as they used to in this environment (Christodoulides, 2008).

Companies need to take this into consideration and they need to plan for how to adapt to this new way of communication by their customers. It is of crucial importance that companies find new ways to create relationships and they need to take new media channels, like the growing trends of social medias on the Internet, into consideration (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012).

The term social media describes platforms of digital communication that appears in the electronic environment, which possesses social characteristics, such as virtual communities, social networks, blogs, wikis etc. (Vernuccio, 2014). It has a participative and collaborative nature where the audience is assumed to be a part of the process and co-creator of the content, which are the main difference between social media and other traditional marketing channels (Evans, 2012). Another important difference from traditional media is that users on social medias are able to interact with each other and share information, opinions, knowledge and interests (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012), in contrast to traditional media where the companies create the content for their customers to receive (Evans, 2012). However, this can be beneficial for the company since they get access to an extensive amount of useful information from their customers, that previously would have been hard to get access to (Nunan and Yenicioglu, 2013).

Social medias are emerging and it is a trend that, thanks to new technologies, is constantly developing (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012). It has also become an increasingly important tool for companies when communicating with their consumers.

Reports have shown that social networks and blogs are the prime platforms when it comes to online destinations and in 2011 social networks accounted for 19% of the time spent online globally (Vernuccio, 2014).

Due to this growing trend and use of the social media, companies need to keep up with the development and make use of the social medias in their communication with their customers (Vernuccio, 2014).

1.2 Problem discussion

Despite the widespread use of social media among consumers there is an ongoing debate regarding this new phenomenon and if it should be used as a marketing tool or not (Laroche et al., 2013). The reasons behind the debate is that the new digital era and social medias have changed the way companies and consumers interact, but also the way consumers interact with each other (Hipperson, 2010; Quinton, 2013). This has lead to that companies today are facing difficulties in managing their customer relationships according to Hipperson (2010).

Kodish and Pettegrew (2008) suggest that Relationship Marketing is the most suitable strategy to use in this new environment of social medias. They claim that the impacts of marketing messages have decreased, customers' expectations and expertise have risen and the competition between firms has reached an intense level never seen on the market before. In turn this has lead to increased efforts in trying to retain the existing customer base since it is more cost effective than acquiring new customers, stressing the relevance of Relationship Marketing (Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008).

This new environment has resulted in that many authors have suggested that the previous concepts of Relationship Marketing and communication between companies and consumers needs to be adjusted to the new digital era (Shin et al., 2015; Christodoulides, 2008; Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012; Laroche et al., 2013; Quinton, 2013).

The proponents of a new and adjusted concept argue that the power over information, that previously was held by the brands, have now shifted to the empowered, passionate consumers that are active on the internet (Quinton, 2013; Kucuk, 2009). It has provided the consumers with the feeling of being less dependent on companies since they easily can turn to other like-minded users and share their knowledge. Now

consumers have the freedom and control over choosing their relationships with different companies in a greater extent than before the Internet (Kucuk, 2009; Hipperson, 2010; Christodoulides, 2008). This is forcing companies to rethink their relationship management with consumers (Quinton, 2013; Kucuk, 2009), and the struggle for companies lies in how to understand and interact with their audience on social medias in order to build relationships (Hipperson, 2010).

The effectiveness and strength of creating relationships on social medias and through brand communities have although been debated (Nunan & Yenicioglu, 2013). Past mistakes have been made by marketers to believe that interaction on social medias is equal to physical "real world" interactions. It has been suggested that interactions online often are anonymous and transient as well as lacking the richness of face-to-face communication, making this interaction less reliable. Due to this, the relationship created between customers and companies on social medias is seen as weaker than if it was created offline (Nunan & Yenicioglu, 2013).
There is also a questioning regarding to which extent consumers are willing to engage and interact with brands online. "Liking" a brand post or profile on social medias is sometimes seen as equal to a physical world brand preference, but studies have showed that the barriers for "liking" something is very low (Nunan & Yenicioglu, 2013; Fournier and Avery, 2011).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) on the other hand, argues that social media is of great importance for companies and their marketing strategies, they claim that companies who not participate in this will soon be forgotten. In contrast to this, Fournier and Avery (2011) state that companies are not always welcome among users on social media. This environment was created to link users together and to foster socialization and communication, not to sell products, leading to users ignoring marketing activities on social medias (Fournier and Avery, 2011; Zhu and Chen, 2015).

Research within the area of Relationship Marketing on social medias has been conducted, although not in any broad sense (Davis et al., 2014). The research conducted in the field of customer-company relationship on social medias have often had a primary focus on one of the following areas; the role of the company (e.g. McCarthy et al., 2014; Shin et al., 2015), Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

(e.g. Choudhury and Harrigan, 2014; Trainor, 2012; Malthouse et al., 2013; Trainor et al., 2014), the relationship building within online communities (e.g. Laroche et al., 2013; Luo et al., 2015) or customer engagement (Sashi, 2012).

This has resulted in that the consumers' perceptions and expectations of the relationship building process on social medias often have been overlooked and seldom taken into consideration in previous Relationship Marketing literature (Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008). Although, there are researchers who have taken a stance in customers perception of relationships, such as Hudson et al., (2015), however, their research did not yield any information about how the consumers perceived the relationship nor their expectations of it. One research that have taken the consumers perception into consideration in a qualitative way is the one made by Davis et. al., (2014), which examined motives for consuming brands in social media communities. However, Davis et al., (2014) concludes that more exploratory research within the field is needed to extend the literature of brand relationships in social medias.

In order to further investigate the use of social medias as a Relationship Marketing tool it is essential to learn the consumers' view of the phenomena (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012) as well as their willingness to communicate and engage with companies through social medias (Nunan & Yenicioglu, 2013; Fournier and Avery, 2011). Marketers need to be aware of social media users expectations in order to create efficient marketing on the social web (Zhu and Chen, 2015).

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the customers' perception and expectations on relationships with companies on social media.

1.4 Research question

What motivates consumers to participate in a relationship with companies on social media?

2. Theoretical chapter

This chapter will present the theoretical framework from which the empirical material derived. The presented concepts are Relationship Marketing on Social Medias, The Main Objectives of Relationship Marketing on Social Medias, Value-Creation within Relationships, Emotions, The Communication Process within Relationships and The Five Sources Model.

2.1 Relationship marketing on social media

Ever since the emergence of the concept, Relationship Marketing has received much attention and has been applied by many marketers. The concept of Relationship Marketing is highly relevant in present days and due to the fast development of technology and the growth of social media the marketers must also be able to manage their Relationship Marketing in the online environment (Jung et al., 2013).

Research about how companies should manage relationships on social media is still in an embryonic state (Jung et al., 2013) and the existing literature about Relationship Marketing on social media focus on how companies behave and make use of the social networks, but also the management of negative feedback from their consumers (Soonkwan and Wang, 2009).

The traditional way of creating relationships differs from the way relationships are built in the viral world. Since the concept is quite new and unexplored it provides the companies with new features and abilities to reach out to their customers (Jung et al., 2013).

On social medias customers are able to develop a commonality with companies, which creates a deeper level of commitment. When companies make use of social medias in their relationship management it also removes geographical boundaries that otherwise can arise between the customers and the companies. These new possibilities enable the companies to deepen the relationship with their customers and allows for maintaining connections, it also provides the customers with the ability to give direct, valuable feedback, which the company can benefit from (Jung et al., 2013).

When companies undertake social medias in order to create relationships, one crucial activity is to observe the consumers behavior on the social networks (Chung and Buhalis, 2008). If a company manages to do this in a proper way they can manage to understand and predict the behavior of the consumers. By doing so they can identify and separate different interaction types within the social media and then customize their content to make it suitable for their target group. If a company succeeds with this it can create loyalty and customer retention, which are two important corner stones in Relationship Marketing (Chung and Buhalis, 2008).

Customized marketing is nowadays overtaking the mass marketing that previously has been used by many companies. One reason for the increased use of customized marketing is that if customers receive marketing messages that are appropriate for them it can generate a stronger connection between the customer and the company (Jung et al., 2013).

When a company operates on social medias they need to know that consumers have different expectations in an online environment than in the offline environment and due to the co-production of content the companies do no longer have total control over their brand (Jung et al., 2013).

One reason for this is according to Jung et al., (2013) the ability for consumers to easily spread information about the company to other users of social media. This can be both beneficial and unfavorable for the company since they have no control over what is being said (Jung et al., 2013).

What the company can do in order to minimize the danger of negative content about the brand is to respond to negative comments, interact with their consumers and show compassion in order to create and maintain a good relationship that will restore a positive image of the company (Jung et al., 2013).

2.2 Main objectives of Relationship Marketing on Social Medias

2.2.1 Loyalty

When discussing Relationship Marketing it is almost impossible to not include the concept of loyalty (Egan, 2004). According to Mende et al., (2013) customer loyalty

is one of the major objectives that a company wants to create using Relationship Marketing and Egan (2004) states that it is the highest possible level of a relationship. Loyalty can be described as a deep commitment towards a company to re-buy a preferred product or service in the future, independent of situational influences or competitive marketing efforts (Turri et al., 2013).

The reasons for companies to strive for loyal customers are that customers who are loyal are less sensitive to price, the company faces reduced marketing costs and it has an overall positive impact on the profitability of the company (Jung et al., 2013; Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

When a company wants to create loyalty among their customers the creation and development of long-term relationships is essential parts (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014). Research suggests that close relationships with repeated interactions between a company and its customers create strong bonds and gives the customers a feeling that they want to maintain the relationship (Mende et al., 2013).

When a relationship has been established the company may want to create some kind of stability in the relationship and one important aspect the company needs to take into consideration when planning for that is closeness. Relationships that are perceived as close and stable are positively associated with loyalty (Mende et al., 2013).

When a relationship between a company and a customer starts to evolve in an online environment, online loyalty, even called e-loyalty starts to emerge (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014). The difference between loyalty in an online environment compared to an offline environment is that it is more costly for a company to establish loyalty online than through traditional relationship building, but the profits that online loyalty generates also grows at a faster rate (Kim et al., 2009; Reichheld and Schefter, 2000). According to Gamboa and Goncalves (2014) a customer who participates in a social network creates an emotional connection with the subject of the network, which in turn can help to establish customer loyalty.

Nowadays some, but far from all companies, have understood and use social media as a tool for creating customer loyalty. Companies who have got a grasp of and start

using social media in this purpose have reported an increase in customer loyalty and satisfaction (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

No matter if a company operates in the online or offline environment, in order to be able to create loyalty among their customers they need to know what factors that trigger customer loyalty. The main ingredients in the creation of loyalty are customer satisfaction, because a satisfied customer has an increased tendency to buy more and comment positive things about the brand. There are also other important factors, such as perceived value, commitment and trust (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

2.2.2 Satisfaction

Companies who strive to create loyalty among their customers must take into consideration the importance of customer satisfaction, since this has a huge impact over customers' loyalty (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

Satisfaction can be created through the personal experiences of the customers and are based on expectations (Egan, 2004). According to Lim et al., (2013) it can be influenced by a variety of factors, such as product and service quality and shortly explained, customer satisfaction is when the company meets or exceeds the expectations of their customers (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

When a company succeeds to satisfy their customers they gain competitive advantage in the meaning that they minimize the risk for their consumers to search for other alternatives. Satisfied customers are also more likely to spread positive information about the company and recommend it to others (Anderson and Srinivasan, 2003). By establishing satisfaction among their customers a company increase their chances of develop closer relationships and make their customers choose them as their solely choice (Anderson and Srinivasan, 2003).

The concept of satisfaction also applies to the social media but it differs slightly from offline satisfaction. On social media the satisfaction is connected to the information systems rather than the company's products. Social media satisfaction can be defined as the extent, to which the individuals feel that the information systems available meets their information requirements and needs (Lim et al., 2013)

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Since satisfaction represents beliefs about the other party in the relationship in terms of overall evaluations, feelings or attitudes it can be highly related to trust, in the matter that they both focus on these attributes (Egan, 2004).

2.2.3 Trust and Commitment

In Relationship Marketing literature, trust and commitment are frequently paired together and are also described as inseparable. They are seen as important parts in a successive Relationship Marketing strategy, on which the relationship between the company and the customer can be judged (Egan, 2004).

Trust is defined as the confidence of the reliability and integrity of an exchange partner (Egan, 2004) and it represent a set of beliefs that concerns the integrity, goodwill and competence of a service provider (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014). Trust is not seen as a behavior, but rather an underlying condition, which can result from activities. It is of great importance in Relationship Marketing due to the relatedness to perceived risk (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014) and the fact that trust reduces risk perception more effectively than anything else (Egan, 2004).
Trust is, just as satisfaction, built through experience. A customer who had many positive experiences with a company is likely to become more trusting than a customer who had many negative experiences (Egan, 2004).
Trust is an aspect of the quality of the relationship between the company and the customer and can be used as a determinant for e.g., the amount of cooperation and the functionality of the conflicts that can arise between the parties (Moorman et al., 1992).

Companies need to bear in mind that trust is as important on social medias as in the offline world and Habibi et al., (2014) argues that social media allows for customers or admires of a brand to easily communicate with others. When customers join a social media they can get exposed to a company's content and take part of meaningful experiences others have had with the company. To share and communicate experience with the brand on social media and receive feedback from the company and other users opinions about a brand strengthens the bond between them and makes

the customers perceive the company as more trustworthy. (Habibi et al., 2014).

Trust is of crucial importance for companies because it shows that the relationship between the consumers and a company can go beyond just satisfaction and if a company can establish trust among their consumers the likelihood that they get loyal customers increase and also the level of brand commitment and purchase intention (Koschate-Fischer and Gärtner, 2015).

Commitment is the dependent variable that are most used in studies about company-customer relationships. Commitment refers to how important the relationship is for both parties and how desired they are to maintain it (Egan, 2004).
If a company can understand their consumers' commitment they are able to build brand communities and develop the relationship with their customers further in order to create attitude strength and loyalty (Guèvremont and Grohmann, 2012; Turri et al., 2013).
For a company who manage to establish highly committed customers, negative publicity is easier to handle. Customers with high commitment to a brand often defend the brand towards negative publicity and they also care less if they hear something negative about the company or its products (Keel and Padgett, 2015).

Nowadays marketers have an increased interest of developing committed relationship on the Internet and especially on social medias. On social medias emotional relationships are intimate and the customer has a self-connection towards the company, which in turn can create strong commitment that allows for loyal customers who works as advocates for the brand (Turri et al., 2013).

2.2.4 Customer retention
When managing Relationship Marketing in a successful way, customer retention is an important part because it is connected to the customers' satisfaction with the brand and the firms' profitability (Gamboa and Goncalves 2014).
A customer who repeatedly makes purchases from the company is a very valued customer (Turri et al., 2013). According to Jung et al., (2013) attracting and serving a new customer costs five times more than retaining an existing customer, repeated

purchases gives the company both financial but also brand performance advantages, such as market share and customer lifetime value (Turri et al., 2013).

Nitzan and Libai (2011) state that in the customer retention process there are some important elements, where one of the most important ones is the customer satisfaction.

A company must also be able to analyze trends in customers' usage because a decrease in customers' usage levels can indicate a possible defection. Even personal characteristics, such as age and gender can have an impact on customers' intention to repurchase (Nitzan and Libai, 2011).

Social forces can also affect customer retention. Research has shown that people are socially affected by others and there is a growing realization that quitting behaviors of customers can depend on social effects. If marketers are aware of this social effect they have the possibility to understand and predict it (Nitzan and Libai, 2011).

Today the marketplace differs a lot from before due to the emerging trend of the social media, and companies have no other choice than to adapt their strategies into this new digital era. This also calls for new marketing strategies in order to create customer retention on social medias (Bernabé et al., 2015). Bernabé et al., (2015) claims that a company needs to understand and analyze the impact of every interaction between the users on a social media channel in order to find an appropriate reaction to it. If a company manages to do this they can create customer retention online (Bernabé et al., 2015).

Over the past two decades many companies have understood the importance of customer retention and paid increased attention to it and this is mainly because of the impact retention has on the customers lifetime values (Nitzan and Libai, 2011).

2.3 Value Creation within Relationships

When talking about Relationship Marketing the creation of value for the customers is described to be the core of the concept (Blomqvist et al., 2004). It is such an essential part that according to Grönroos (1996) all activities and resources that do not create any value for the customers should be excluded.

Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar (2015) define the perceived value of a customer as the overall evaluation of the usefulness of a product based on the customer's' perception of what is given and what is received. Blomqvist et al., (2004) argues that customers perceived value is directly related to the relationship between a company and its customers, which is strengthened by Agnihotri et al., (2012). How customers perceive the value is what determines how the relationship between the company and their customers will develop (Blomqvist et al., 2004).

Value creation is argued by many researchers to be of significant importance (Blomqvist et al., 2004; Grönroos, 1996; Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2015, Agnihotri et al., 20120) but what companies need to be aware of is that the emerge and development of new technologies and especially social medias have caused a change in the way value is created and the focus is nowadays directed on the co-creation of value (Smaliukiene et al., 2015).

Co-creation of value is assigned to the stages in the value-creation process where a company is present together with the customers (Grönroos, 2012) and emphasizes that value is a result from activities and interactions between them (Fyrberg-Yngfalk, 2013). Value co-creation can be described as "joint activities by parties involved in direct interactions, aiming at contributing to the value that emerges for one or both parties" (Grönroos, 2012, pp.1520).

The company contributes with its products to the co-creation of value, whilst the customers apply their skills and knowledge when using the products (See-To and Ho, 2014).

Since the ability to create value now is in the hands of both the company and the consumers the role of the company has expanded from only producing and distributing value to also propose and co-create value and produce services (Smaliukiene et al., 2015).

In 2004 Blomqvist et al., stated that new technologies gave companies the opportunity to strengthen the relationships with their customers and thanks to the role of social media it has enabled for co-creation of content and in turn value (Luo et al., 2015). The reasons why social media has become important for the value co-creation process are due to that it has no time constraint or geographical boundaries, the information transparency is high, it allows for multi-party communications and customers can

easily share consumption experiences and interact with each other and companies can take part of all this important information (Luo et al., 2015). Lou et al., (2015) states that many companies nowadays use social medias in this manner in order to gain competitive advantage and seek new opportunities.

Smaliukiene et al., (2015) states that there are different levels of customer value co-creation, all depending on the degree of interaction that occurs between the company and the customer.
See-To and Ho (2014) emphasize that another really important factor to consider in the co-creation of value is a customers' emotional engagement with a brand, since it motivates the customers to participate in the creation of value.

2.4 Emotions

Emotions are referred to as the positive or negative feelings of a person and the human behavior is to a large extent influenced by emotions. Many actions taken by individuals are emotion-based (Hudson et al., 2015) and it controls the rationality and the decision making process of individuals (Pawle and Cooper, 2006).
Many people believe that emotions and feelings are synonyms for each other, while in fact they are not the same thing. Feelings are a part of the emotional language, which describes the point where a person becomes aware of the emotion (Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., 2011).
Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., (2011) argues that there are six primary emotions which, independent of individuals background, beliefs or culture are dealt with and perceived in the same way. These emotions are surprise, anger, fear, disgust, sadness and joy (Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., 2011).
In contrast to these there are also a set of secondary, also called social emotions, which are to some extent triggered by things the individual, by previously experience, had come to associate with a certain emotion. These feelings are part of social construction notions and can differ across cultures and change over time. Examples of these feelings are guilt and embarrassment (Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., 2011).

Every individual holds in something that is called a non-declarative emotional memory, this is where unconscious responses occur from learning incidents that have

been forgotten. Customers can have an emotional association with a brand, which has been created through previously experiences with the company and these emotions are linked to the brand in the customer' memory. When a memory is recalled all parts of that memory, including the emotional associations to the company, are reunited (Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., 2011).

It can be desirable for a company to try to analyze how customers will respond to certain emotions but predicting emotional responses is hard. A company needs to take into consideration that emotions are something that is not optional for the consumers and over which they have very limited control (Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., 2011).

Hudson et al., (2015) states that a company who wants to create strong relationships with their customers needs to incorporate a lot of emotional content in their marketing efforts but it is important that it is not too obvious. The less aware the customers are of the emotional parts in the companies marketing, the more likely it is to be successful (Hudson et al., 2015).

In research about emotions there is an often mentioned concept called "Lovemarks", it was initially introduced by Kevin Roberts in 2004 and it is described as "super-evolved brands" who maximize their connections with their customers by creating strong, emotional bonds (Pawle and Cooper, 2006; Hudson et al., 2015). When a company creates a lovemark with a customer they establish a unique relationship that the customer feels are very personal, even though other people have the same relationship with the company (Pawle and Cooper, 2006).

By creating such strong bonds and emotional connections between a company and their customer the company increase their chances of establish loyalty among their customer base and it also provides the company with a competitive advantage (Pawle and Cooper, 2006).

Emotional relationships are shown to be intimate on social medias and it can foster commitment and loyalty through the self-connection that the customer has towards the brand (Turri et al., 2013).

2.5 The Communication Process within Relationships

Communication in this concept refers to when a company acts as a sender and sends a message to a target market or consumer, whom acts as a receiver (Gripsrud, 2010; Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008).

In a Relationship Marketing concept, communication emphasizes on relations and interactions between customers and firms, which often is seen as a crucial part within the concept (Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008). The goals with the companies' communication efforts are to achieve communication objectives and create a relationship with their consumers (Shin et al., 2015). Without a strong communication it is next to impossible for a company to reach consumers and gain revenue (Trott, 2008).

It has been stated that communication is an ongoing process where each element affects the other elements. In this process of communication there is three core elements: 1) simultaneity - people can be both senders and receivers at the same time; 2) temporal unfolding - it reveals and must be understood over time, it is not a single interaction or exchange; 3) behavioral interdependence - each participants' behavior depends on other participants' behaviors (Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008). It is crucial for companies to understand the communication as a process rather than as a simple transmission of a message, if not it can have negative consequences on their relationship with consumers (Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008).

Fig. 1 Communication Process and Relationship
(Kodish and Pettegrew, 2008, pp.160).

In todays society it is the social medias that are the most beneficial environment in which companies can communicate with their customers (Hanna et al., 2011). This new way of maintaining information and the fact that Internet and social medias grow at an extensive rate drives and enables companies to reach out to their consumers by using a variety of online communication platforms (Shin et al., 2015). Social media has enabled companies to go from one-way communication to a two-way communication, where the customers are able to have a dialogue with the company. By making use of two-way communications the companies can create stronger relationships with their customers but also demonstrate how committed they are to the relationship (Shin et al., 2015).

This way of using social media makes consumers co-creators of value and contributes to the process of brand building, which in turn will create a stronger relationship and commitment towards the brand (Vernuccio, 2014).

It can be favorable for companies to make use of two-way communications because it often leads to a positive perception of the brand (Shin et al., 2015).

2.6 The Five Sources Model

The Five Sources Model consists of five core motivations that drive brand consumption in a social media setting. These are: functional, emotional, self-oriented, social and relational. Davis et al., (2014) are the researchers behind the model and it can help to enhance the brands relationship towards their customers (Davis et al., 2014).

2.6.1 Functional brand consumption

Social media can be a useful platform to use for consumers when they want to address problems to the company. This is mainly when other communication tools, such as email, phones etc., are unavailable, inconvenient or money/time consuming (Davis et al., 2014). Davis et al., (2014) found five primary functional reasons behind contacting a brand via social media, these were: to solve problems, to send specific inquires, search for information, to evaluate the service before purchasing and to gain access to a company's special deals and giveaways (Davis et al., 2014).
Service functionality and problem solving were other important aspects for contacting a company, but also service failure and to give feedback regarding brand experiences. This is due to the reduced effort, money or time that a consumer normally would have to spend on contacting or receiving services from the company (Davis et al., 2014). This concludes that a consumers' perception of a company can be dependent on how easily they can access the information they want from the same company. Davis et al., (2014) claims that this indicates that contacting companies on social medias are for some consumers based only on gaining rewards, pointing at a transactional rather than relational connection (Davis et al., 2014).

2.6.2 Emotional brand consumption

An emotional connection towards a company is reinforced by enjoyable interactions, according to Davis et al., (2014). They found three emotional motives for contacting a company on social medias, these were: alleviating personal problems or situations, feeling privileged, recognized, and valued by a company, and escapism and satisfaction of curiosity. The emotional attachment to a company can be deeply rooted in the consumers own personality traits or motivated by personal circumstances (Davis et al., 2014).

Pleasant service experiences are particularly highlighted, as well as the co-creation of those. There are also sources of enjoyment connected to the emotional brand consumption, such as: interactions with other users, escapism and curiosity. The lack of enjoyment can lead to a negative perception towards a company, as well as perceived enjoyment can lead to a positive perception (Davis et al., 2014).

2.6.3 Self-oriented brand consumption

The self-oriented brand consumption is, according to Davis et. al. (2014), similar in those characteristics found in functional and emotional brand consumptions, such as the need for knowledge, service etc. What separates them are the consumers' lifestyles and the goals connected to it, which is emphasized in the self-oriented brand consumption. The three main motives for brand consumption within this category is: self-actualization, self-perception enhancement and self-branding (Davis et al., 2014). If a company's social media is presenting an image that is similar to the users' personal values, interests and beliefs, the user is more likely to consume that particular brand and construct a social self around that consumption. This can also apply to the more professional self of a consumer. Through consuming brands they visualize their ideal selves and have the opportunity to create their own identities. It is also through the public consumption of brands that the consumers do not only different themselves but also communicate this identity to other users, emphasizing the knowledge, skills and interest that they want to be known for (Davis et al., 2014).

2.6.4 Social brand consumption

This source is focusing on the interaction between consumers within social media brand communities. Four functions are proposed to create social value for those consumers: experience exchange, community attachment, building links and social interaction (Davis et al., 2014).

To share experiences of companies with each other is a common phenomenon on social medias and friends' activities on social medias are of high relevance to many users. What type of content that a users' friend like, comment, share or recommend can influence that user to consume the same content even if it is out of his/her personal interests. Thereof is the public opinion regarding a company and its

products/services highly relevant for consumers when evaluating the company (Davis et al., 2014).

This sort of networking in social medias have been proven to have both professional and personal benefits for the user in the form of socialization with others, bringing value both to the company experience as well as the users personal lives (Davis et al., 2014).

2.6.5 Relational brand consumption

This part focuses on the interaction between the consumer and the company alone, and the desire for interacting with the company on a more human level. An important aspect of the relation is the "human touch" of the company. The relational brand consumption is characterized by three motives: co-creation of the service offering, the desire for personalized brand interaction, and the desire to know the real people behind the brand (Davis et al., 2014).

The fast and easy way to communicate with companies through social medias have provided the consumers with a feeling, and expectation, of that there always is someone who will listen and help to fix their problems. The companies are not as distance for the consumers anymore, inviting to a more personalized conversation between them (Davis et al., 2014).

Relational archetypes

The relational brand consumption motivation seems to define the overall consumption relationship that consumers create with companies. There are five different types of relational archetypes (Davis et al., 2014):

Fickle: This is a consumption relationship that is rather unstable, demanding and unpredictable. It can vary depending on the most recent interaction between the customer and company, influenced by the quality and degree of brand relevance (Davis et al., 2014).

Obliged: In this kind of relationship the consumer feels obliged to communicate with the company, examples could be with banks or telecommunication services. Consumers can here chose to interact through companies social medias channels, although there are disliking towards being forced to do so (Davis et al., 2014). These relationships can be originated from statutory obligations and even if the consumers have a long-term relationship with the company they prefer to

communicate with them offline. Often there are no emotional or self-brand ties towards this kind of relationship, but value can still be created through service functionality and convenient accessibility (Davis et al., 2014).

Pre-existing: When a consumer is quite satisfied with a company and its offerings offline but still chose to interact with the company on its social medias this is the case of a Pre-existing relationship. This will strengthen the relationship and experience between the consumer and the company through visualization and reinforcement, and can also lead to online activism (Davis et al., 2014).

Emerged: This bond is characterized by not having any previous experience with the company in an offline environment but still creating an relationship with the company on social medias. These relationships are characterized by a low degree of self-relevance, but could be developed further leading to interactivity and co-creation (Davis et al., 2014).

Casual: This bond occurs when consumer relationships are shaped by the frequency of service usage, regardless of the online or offline context, and is characterized by irregular communication. The nature of the company is a determining factor for the intensity of the communication on social medias and is often oriented towards the consumers' practical needs (Davis et al., 2014).

Social media can shift the casual relationship and its functional aspect of consumption towards satisfaction of the consumer' utilitarian, social and emotional needs, thereby creating a stronger relationship (Davis et al., 2014).

It has been proven that consumers expect personalized communication from the company where they know the real persons behind it, instead of a faceless company. Consumers want to create a close contact with the representatives of the company even if the contact itself is practical and brief (Davis et al., 2014).

3. Method

This chapter will present a description of the research methodology used to conduct the research. It highlights the selected research approach, discuss the choice of appropriate methods pursuant to the purpose of the research. It also emphasizes the important aspects of trustworthiness and ethics of the research.

3.1 Research approach

A researcher can choose between two different research approaches when conducting a research, a qualitative or a quantitative approach. These two approaches determines how the researcher will proceed when collecting the empirical data and they differ a lot from each other, stressing the importance for the researcher to know which one that is most suited for the study (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The main difference between a qualitative and quantitative research is the relationship between the theory and research as well as their focus. A qualitative approach, which this study will make use of, is more concerned with words and strive for getting a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation than a quantitative approach, which direct its focus on numbers and measurements (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

In order to learn what customers think about relationships on social medias the researchers of this study will use a qualitative research approach, this is due to that the approach focus on words and seeking understanding as well as examining the personal experiences by people (Ingham-Broomfield, 2015). Researchers who use the qualitative approach wants to make it possible for the participants to share their opinions and stories and they also wish to reduce the distance between themselves and the participants (Creswell, 2013). This approach also use a non-statistical method when doing the analysis (Ingham-Broomfield, 2015), and the researchers of this study aims to seek a profound understanding of the investigated phenomena rather than being able to generalize the findings, which also calls for doing a qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The relationship between the theory and research within the study can take two different directions, either an inductive approach or a deductive approach. The inductive approach is most often connected to a qualitative research and the deductive approach to a quantitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In an inductive approach

the theory is the outcome of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2011), while a deductive research approach is characterized by starting in existing theories and therefrom draw conclusions/hypotheses regarding individual phenomenon that then will be tested (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Patel and Davidson, 2014).

However do both of the approaches contain elements of each other according to Bryman and Bell (2011) and so does this study, it will make use of both the deductive and inductive approach.

The study will mainly take a deductive standpoint due to its stance from the existing literature within the theory chapter. However will the analysis open up for a more inductive approach because of its exploratory nature.

3.2 Research strategy

In the beginning of the research process, when researchers have succeeded to identify their research problem, there arises a need to create a purpose for the study. In order to be able to classify a research purpose most researchers make use of exploratory, descriptive or explanatory classifications (Saunders, 2009).

Since this study has the purpose to *explore* the customer's perception and expectations on relationships with companies on social media, the researchers will use the exploratory approach.

When researchers choose to conduct an exploratory study it is because there is a field that is rather unexplored and unknown (Krishnaswamy and Satyaprasad, 2010). The researchers should want to get an understanding of this problem and therefore seek after gaining new insights and review the phenomenon in a new light (Saunders, 2009).

Advantages that an exploratory study brings to the researchers are its flexibility and ability to change. The researchers are able to change direction along with the process when new data is being collected that gains the researcher with new insights but that still is focusing on the purpose of the study (Saunders, 2009).

According to Saunders (2009) there is three ways the researchers can conduct an exploratory study and these are either to search in the literature, interview experts in the subject or conduct focus groups or interviews.

The researchers in this study will make use of the last alternative and conduct semi-structured interviews, which is argued by Saunders (2009) to be a useful method to use when seeking understanding and looking for new insights. The semi-structured interviews will be discussed further on in paragraph 3.5.

3.3 Research design

When conducting a research there are different kinds of research designs for the researchers to choose from and it is important to choose a design that is suitable for the study. There are five research designs that according to Bryman and Bell, 2011) are the most prevalent ones and these are; experimental design (which make use of real experiments), cross-sectional design (which uses several cases measured at the same time), longitudinal design (which is suitable for mapping changes), comparative design (which make use of approximately identical methods of two or more cases) and case study design, which will be used in this research.

What defines a case study research is that it is only concerned with a single case, it can be one single organization, location, person or event. It is a commonly used approach, which has been used in some of the most well known studies in management and business (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Krishnaswamy and Satyaprasad, 2010).

A case study differs from other research designs in the manner that all focus is directed towards a delimited situation or system with its own purpose and functioning parts. The aim is usually to provide an in-depth clarification of this situation. It is argued to be most suitable for a research of qualitative nature with rich data collection methods, such as interviews and participant observations, since they give deep and detailed information about the case (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Bryman and Bell (2011) states that there are three different kinds of case studies; Intrinsic, Instrumental or Multiple collective cases. The intrinsic kind, which this study will be based on, is used merely to gain insight into the specific features of the case, rather than to get insight into other cases or generic issues. The instrumental kind use the case as a mean to understand a bigger problem or to allow generalizations to be challenged and the multiple collective cases are carried out jointly with the aim of exploring a general phenomenon (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

In this research the case that will be examined is the social media platform Instagram, which over the last years has become very popular and is one of the most used social medias on the Internet (Gibbs et al., 2015). It was founded in October 2010 (Instagram, 2015) and is described by Gibbs et al., (2015) as a social networking service for smartphones and other mobile devices, which enables the users to share photographs and videos with other users. The photographs and videos can then be edited and the users can choose among different filters and settings in order to get the desired effect. On Instagram it is also possible to add a written description to the photographs or videos and then post them online or publish the content on other social media platforms as well, such as Facebook and Twitter (Gibbs, et al., 2015). Another important feature that Instagram provides their users with is the ability to use hashtags (Highfield and Leaver, 2015). Hashtags serve as a marker that indicates what type of subject, place, events, emotions etc. that are featured in the picture and the users can search for a certain hashtag in order to find pictures published by other users. The use of hashtags is a convenient way for the users to find people that are interested in the same things as them and when some hashtags are frequently used they can grow into communities (Highfield and Leaver 2015).

Instagram quickly became a popular platform with one million users after only two months. In December 2014, the number of users had increased to 300 million (Instagram, 2015).

In 2012 Facebook purchased Instagram and the reason was claimed to be that Instagram was seen as a too powerful and dangerous competitor that had possibilities to destroy the future prospects of Facebook. Instagram had also managed to get a grasp of the mobile photo sharing in a better way than any other social network had managed to do (Wilken, 2014).

The popularity of the platform and its unique features were the main reasons for choosing this social media as the case for this study. It is also one of the less explored platforms within research, providing the study with a chance to contribute within this area of research.

3.4 Data collection

When collecting the desired data for a research, the researchers can make use of two different sources; these are primary data sources and secondary data sources (Lantz, 2014).

Primary data is information collected by the researchers themselves for the first time, which is specific for the actual research conducted (Lantz, 2014) and with its specific purpose in mind (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). Several methods can be used when collecting primary data (Halvorsen, 1989; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005) but the most common ones are questionnaires, interviews and direct observations (Lantz, 2014). The advantages of primary data are that it is adjusted to the specific purpose of the study (Lantz, 2014; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005) and often seen as more reliable than secondary data (Kylén, 2004). It is only primary data that can provide the researchers with information regarding people's attitudes, behaviors, intentions etc. and the reasons behind them (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005).

The disadvantage is that it is time consuming to collect the actual data (Lantz, 2014; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). It can also be hard to find respondents that are suitable for the study and who have the required knowledge needed, the researchers is dependent on the respondents' willingness to participate in the study. The researchers also need to take the methods used into close consideration in order to make the results reliable (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005).

Secondary data is contrary to primary data in the way that it retells or compiles what others have said or written in previous data collections (Lantz, 2014; Kylén, 2004). Secondary data is useful in the purpose of finding information in order to solve the study's' research problem but also to be able to understand and explain it in a better way (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). The information in secondary data is originally gathered for another research and collected with another purpose, the information is although still applicable and relevant for the new study (Lantz, 2014).

Common sources for secondary data are books, journals, official statistics, literature and databases (Lantz, 2014; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). There are some main benefits the researchers can gain by using secondary data. One of the main advantages is that it saves the researchers a lot of time and money (Halvorsen, 1989) since there

is no need for extra resources when collecting it (Lantz, 2014). It also provides the researchers with broad information from which scientific conclusions can be drawn (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005).

Although secondary data provides researchers with great benefits there are also some disadvantages when making use of it. One of the main drawbacks is that the data originally was collected for another research, with another purpose and objectives, which can make it misleading due to that the population examined could change and thereby making the data outdated (Lantz, 2014; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005).

Within most studies the researchers make use of both primary and secondary data (Halvorsen,1989), and so does this study.

The primary data have been collected by the researchers through the conducted interviews that were designed for this particular study and its purpose. The authors found it necessary to collect primary data due to the purpose of the study and its intention of exploring consumers' expectations.

There were also a need for the researchers to collect secondary data, due to the importance of understanding the prior research and anchoring the study in existing literature.

3.5 Data collection method

When collecting the desired data for the research there are multiple methods that the researcher can apply, however must the method for collecting data be consistent with the research and suitable for its stance within the qualitative or quantitative nature (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Since this research will use a qualitative approach the researchers can exclude the methods appropriate for a research of quantitative nature.

When conducting a qualitative research there are several methods that the researcher can apply, such as interviews, focus groups and participant observations. Out of these, an interview is the most commonly used method (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and is also chosen for this study.

Although, focus groups could have been used as well in this research. They can be described as group interviews where a certain topic is being discussed and its main focus is how the individuals discuss the issue as members of a group (Bryman and

Bell, 2011). Due to its group influences the researchers of this study did not believe that focus groups were a suitable strategy. A qualitative research strive for the aim of getting a deeper understanding of the phenomena (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and by conducting semi-structured interviews the researchers of this study would gain access to deep information directly from the customers without any social influence, which was the intention of this study.

An interview is described as a meeting between two or more people. It consists of an interviewer and participants and before the meeting the one who conducts the interview has prepared questions for the participants to answer. During the interview the interviewer writes down (or records) the important parts that later on will be used for the analysis (Kylén, 2004).

There are different kinds of interviews that can be conducted in a qualitative research, two examples, which are the most common types are unstructured and semi structured interviews (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

This study will apply the method of semi-structured interviews. When conducting semi-structured interviews it has an unstructured approach and the interviewer usually has an interview schedule from which the interview is based, but along with the interview the researcher is able to vary the order of the questions. The questions are more general than in an interview with a structured approach and the interviewer is also able to ask further questions in response to what the participants answer (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Semi-structured interviews are appropriate for this research in the aspect that there are premade questions to ensure that the researchers get the information needed and the ability to ask further questions enables the researchers to in some extent direct the interview in the desired direction. It also allows for deep and rich information to be gathered since there is an open nature of the questions, where the participants are not driven towards a certain direction (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

3.6 Sampling

When conducting a qualitative research using interviews the researchers cannot interview the whole population and it is of great important that they before starting have chosen a sample (Bryman and Bell, 2011). A sample refers to a part of the whole

population that is chosen for investigation, and the population is the total amount of individuals from where the sample will be selected (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Qualitative research is connected to the term non-probability sampling, which is a method for selecting the participants for the interviews. In non-probability sampling the sample is not selected randomly and some individuals in the population has a higher chance of being selected than others (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Cleary et al., (2014) argues that the participants for the interviews should be carefully and purposely chosen with a logical basis and they must be able to contribute with something meaningful to the study. The participants in the sample should also be chosen based on their personal experiences or knowledge about the subject under investigation (Cleary et al., 2014).

Another important consideration for the researcher is the size of the sample. When conducting a qualitative research the depth of the information is much bigger than in a quantitative research, and so is the amount of information. The researchers in a qualitative study cannot take on a sample that is too big because it would generate a massive amount of data to analyze, but the sample can neither be too small due to the risk of not gathering enough information (Cleary et al., 2014).

In this study, the population that the sample has been chosen from refers to all the citizens in Sweden that have an account on the social media platform Instagram. Due to the big size of the population, the researchers chose to use something called a convenience sample, which is a part of the non-probability sampling method. When using non-probability sampling there are three types of sampling methods that can be used; the quota sample, snowball sample and convenience sample (Bryman and Bell, 2011). A convenience sample was preferable in this study because it means that the participants will be selected because of their availability for the researchers and it is a commonly applied method within business research (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The snowball sampling can be seen as a form of convenience sample but within this approach the researcher contact a small group of people that are relevant for the study and uses them in order to get in contact with others, something that was not appropriate for this research. The quota sample on the other hand differs from both the snowball and convenience sample and the aim with it is to produce a sample that can reflect the whole population in terms of relative proportions of people in different categories (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Since the current study did not to aim at

generalizing its findings to the whole population this sampling was not appropriate for the study.

When researchers make use of the convenience sample they need to be aware that the data they collect from this sample cannot be generated as definite findings due to the problem of generalization. The findings can, however, be used as a starting point or springboard in further research within the field (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Due to the unexplored area of Relationship Marketing on social medias, and especially Instagram, the use of convenience sampling seems appropriate for the researchers. When the authors selected the participants for the sample they decided to divide equally between the genders in order to get equality. A criteria of age was also created. The age span chosen by the researchers was 23-27 and the reason why the researchers chose this time span was because, according to them, participants who were over 20 years old could generate more prudent answers. The most important criteria that the participants needed to meet were that they had a personal account on Instagram and that the social network was frequently used. Since Cleary et al., (2014) argues that the participants should be selected based on their personal experiences and knowledge about the subject under investigation; people who did not have Instagram were excluded.

3.7 Operationalization

Operationalization of concepts means moving from an abstract level towards the empirical level (Lewis-Beck et al,. 2004). It can be described as the process of designing measurements of the concepts within the theoretical framework, which the researchers are interested in (Bryman and Bell, 2011), and are viewed as distinct and differentiated activities (Lewis-Beck et al,. 2004). The goal of the operationalization is to gain valid and reliable measurements in order to capture the concepts (Lewis-Beck et al,. 2004).

Within this study the operationalization process was conducted through developing and structuring the interview questions after the theoretical concepts derived from the literature. This provides an overview of the questions and their purpose and also ensures that all necessary areas within the theories are discussed. The results can be seen in the model below.

3.7.1 Operationalization model

Operationalization			
Theory	**Theoretical definition**	**Definition of operationalization**	**Questions**
Relationship Marketing	*"An approach to develop long-term relationships with the customers of the organization to gain profits but also to contribute to strengthen the awareness of the brand, increase an understanding of the consumers needs and provide them with additional value"* *- Williams and Chinn (2010)*	Provides the researchers with the information of customers' perception of what a business-customer relationship is and how this differs from an ideal relationship.	What is according to you a business-customer relationship and how would you prefer it to be?
Relationship Marketing on Social Medias	*"A commonality with companies, which creates a deeper level of commitment, which removes geographical boundaries that otherwise can arise between the customers and the companies"* *- Jung et al., (2013)*	The researchers are provided with information about how a traditional business-customer relationship differs from one on Instagram.	What is according to you a relationship with a company on Instagram and how would you prefer it to be?

Satisfaction	*"When the company meets or exceeds the expectations of their customers"* *- Gamboa and Goncalves (2014)*	Gives the researchers an insight in what expectations the customers have on companies	What are your expectations on a company when following them on Instagram? *What type of content do you prefer the company to post on Instagram and how frequently?*
		Provides the researchers with knowledge concerning to what extent posts of products can create satisfaction.	What is your opinion about companies who only posts pictures of their products?
		Provides helpful indications for the researchers of how loyalty and satisfaction is connected on social media	If you follow a company on Instagram that you are satisfied with, would you still consider following other companies on Instagram within the same field? Why/why not?
Trust	*"The confidence of the reliability and integrity of an exchange partner and it represent a set of beliefs that concerns the integrity, goodwill and competence of a service provider"*	Provides the researchers with insights regarding the possibility for companies to create trust on Instagram and in that case, how?	How can, in your opinion, companies be trustworthy/ create trust on Instagram?

	- Egan, (2004) *- Gamboa and Goncalves (2014)*		
Commitment	*"Refers to how important the relationship is for both parties and how desired they are to maintain it"* *- Egan (2004)*	This question provides the authors with information about the customers level of commitment	How would you react if you hear negative feedback about a company that you follow and are satisfied with on Instagram?
Communication and Value creation within relationships	*"Relations and interaction between customers and firms"* *- Kodish and Pettegrew (2008)* *"Joint activities by parties involved in direct interactions, aiming at contributing to the value that emerges for one or both parties"* *- Grönroos (2012)*	Helps the authors to find out the participants level of communication and driving factors. Provides the researcher with insights into the customers tendencies to co-create social value	Have you ever commented on content posted by companies on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to comment? Have you ever "liked" content posted by companies on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to like? Have you ever commented on a company's content with the purpose to inform a friend and what drives/would drive you to recommend content?

		Provides the researchers with consumers' opinion about this kind of attempt to communicate.	How do you feel about companies/brands who starts following you on Instagram instead of the other way around?
Emotions	*"The positive or negative feelings of a person"* *- Hudson et al., (2015)*	The researchers gets insight in what emotions the company should evoke.	What kinds of emotions do you like the company's pictures to evoke?
Five sources model Functional brand consumption	*"Social media can be a useful platform to use for consumers when they want to address problems to the company."* *- Davis et al., (2014)*	Give the researchers information regarding consumers' willingness to turn to Instagram for communication.	If you needed to contact a company or brand, where would you turn? (Instagram, website, etc.)
Five sources model Self-oriented	*"If a brands' social media is presenting an image that is similar to the users' personal values, interests and beliefs, the user is more likely*	Asked to see if consumers are more eager to follow companies that reflects him or her or who they want to be.	Do you follow any companies that reflect your lifestyle or a lifestyle that you wish for and what drives/would drive you to do so?

brand consumption	*to consume that particular brand and construct a social self around that consumption"* *- Davis et al., (2014)*	Provides the researchers with insight into consumers occupational self on Instagram.	Do you follow any companies on Instagram that are connected to your occupation or your future occupation and what drives/would drive you to do so?
Five sources model Social brand consumption	*"Focusing on the interaction between consumers within social media brand communities"* *- Davis et al., (2014)*	The researchers gain information regarding the level of influence friends have on the consumer as well as their willingness to share brand-based content.	Have you ever started following a company based on a friends recommendation and have you ever recommended one yourself?
		The researchers gain information regarding the level of influence friends have on the consumer	Have you ever visited a company's account because a friend had liked/commented on its content, what drives/would drive you to do so?
		The researchers gain knowledge about consumers' willingness to spread content in a community sense.	Have you ever used or searched for hashtags and in what purpose?
	"This part focuses on the interaction between the consumer and the	Supplies the researchers with knowledge of the importance of personal interactions with the company.	How important is it for you to know the people behind the brand?

Five sources model Relational brand consumption	*brand alone, and the desire for interacting with the brand on a more human level."* *- Davis et al., (2014)*	Provides the researchers with information regarding if a relationship on Instagram is possible without an offline brand experience.	Do you follow any company on Instagram that you never had an offline experience with, what drives/would drive you to do so?

3.7.2 Conducting the interviews

The researchers of this study conducted ten semi-structured interviews.

Before conducting an interview there are several things the interviewers must bear in mind. First of all the interviewers must be fully confident with the interview schedule, which they should have prepared before the interview since it facilitates for the researchers if stressful situations occur during the interviews (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The researchers of this study carefully prepared and memorized an interview schedule before their interviews, which can be found in appendix 1.

Both researchers of this study were present during the interviews that took place in the Linnaeus University library, which according to the researchers was as a calm and neutral environment.

Before the researchers began the interviews they carefully introduced the purpose of the study to the respondent and what contribution his/her participation would have on the research, something that is emphasized as very important by Bryman and Bell (2011).

All of the ten conducted interviews were recorded and then transcribed in accordance with Bryman and Bell's (2011) statement regarding that it is favored to record interviews since the respondents answers and thought otherwise can be easily distorted or forgotten. The respondents were informed before the interviews that all of their answers would be recorded and all of the participants gave their approval.

The researchers began to ask the respondents some general questions to get a grasp about who they were and find out age, occupation, interests and also how active they

are on Instagram. An interview should according to Bryman and Bell (2011) start with general questions before moving on to the more specific questions.

If the researchers have a lot of things to cover and has prepared many questions it can be a good idea to group the questions into sections, because it gives a better flow (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and the researchers of this study decided to divide the questions into three categories; "General questions", "Users on Instagram" and "Companies on Instagram".

The length of the interviews varied between 20 minutes to 40 minutes and all the questions were asked to all respondents but with a variation of the follow-up questions. The researchers opened up for the ability of follow-up questions in order to get more and deeper information if there was a necessity for it.

When the interview was done and all questions were asked the researchers thanked the respondents for taking from their valuable time in order to help the researchers with the study.

When the interviews had been transcribed they were sent by e-mail to each of the participants in order for them to review their statements and give their approval of the material, which all of the respondents did. This review was made in accordance with the credibility of the study as well as the ethics.

3.8 Pilot-study

Before the interviews were conducted the researchers carried out a pilot study of the interview. A pilot study can be made with the purpose to make sure that the interview questions measures the concepts intended and that the research method is appropriate for the study (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It can also provide the researcher with experience and a sense of confidence for when the real interviews should be conducted (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The advantages of doing a pilot study is that it increases the chances for quality within the real interviews since it allows the researchers to remove unnecessary or inappropriate questions, change the order of the questions and to get a better flow in the interview. The opportunity to change questions that are not understood also arises (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The researchers of this study made one pilot study in order to see how the questions

were received, how long the interview would take and if all questions were relevant for measuring the concepts.

The pilot study can be connected to the chosen research strategy of an exploratory study, since it enables the researchers to change direction or make changes along the way. When the researchers conducted the pilot study it gave valuable insight into were greater focus should be placed and what direction the study should take.

3.9 How to present and analyze the empirical data

When conducting a research with a qualitative approach the researchers most often end up with a massive amount of data that without a structure can be hard to analyze (Christensen et al., 2011). The purpose with a qualitative analysis is to bring order, structure and bring meaning into the data (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005) and there are guidelines on how to proceed this. The most common approach to use is a thematic analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The goal is to be able to bring up themes and patterns that are hidden in the information in order to be able to explain the data collected in the empirical material. This can be done by finding pattern-controlling variables in the text (Christensen et al., 2011).

According to Christensen et al., (2011), these variables can be made by conceptual categories, which can consist of keywords or concepts that have been prominent in the empirical material or directly collected from the theoretical framework. In order to be able to find these themes and patterns there are three main processes to be used and these are reduction, structuring and the visualization process (Christensen et al., 2011).

In the first step, which is the reduction process, the amount of data collected will be reduced. All the data needs to be rearranged, coded and summarized (Christensen et al., 2011; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). When coding, the keywords and key concepts that are found should describe and explain the content and they also lay the way for patterns that later on will be discovered (Christensen et al., 2011). It is important for the researcher to know that the aim with the reduction process is not to find the same keywords in all interviews, but to facilitate for the next steps in the process the

researchers can note similarities and differences that arose from the data (Flick et al., 2008).

The next step is to structure the data in order to gain an understanding of it. The key words and concepts that were found in the reduction process will now be connected and composed (Flick et al., 2008). This process is to some extent controlled by the theoretical framework, which controls what data that will be of interest (Christensen et al., 2011).

In the beginning of this process the keywords and concepts will only be somewhat related to each other but along with the process there will be more clear connections and a possibility to group keywords together (Christensen et al., 2011).

When some of the categories have been identified there is a possibility that the researchers can group them together to superior categories and in accordance to this a pattern will appear. What is important in this process is for the researchers to not try to fit the data into predetermined categories, but to let them emerge together with the empirical material, the theoretical framework and the problematization of the research (Christensen et al., 2011).

The last step in the process of analyzing qualitative data is the visualization process. This last step is intended to make the material understandable and it is done by, in different ways, converting the reduced data and emerging pattern to short summaries or figures. The final visualizations are the actual result of the research and from what it is possible for the researchers to draw conclusions (Christensen et al., 2011).

Within this research the process of thematic analysis have been followed. The researchers started with the reduction phase by coding the empirical material into different keywords. When the keywords had been identified the second step, which was the phase of structuring the material, was conducted by putting related keywords into categories. These categories were then named in the last phase of the visualization process and these categories can be seen further on in the analysis chapter.

3.10 Trustworthiness of the study

Researchers who conduct qualitative studies often get criticized for the lack of trustworthiness and credibility of their studies. The criticism usually concerns that qualitative studies are too subjective, unconfirmed and lack generalizability (Cope, 2014).

When evaluating a business or management research and its trustworthiness there are four salient criteria to have in mind and these are credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. There is also one more suggested criteria in order to determine a study's trustworthiness, which is authenticity (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Cope, 2014).

The criteria of *credibility* refer to the participants' views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researchers. The credibility of a study determines how reliable the findings of the research are (Bryman and Bell, 2011). A qualitative study is considered credible if the descriptions of humans' experiences, described by the researchers, are recognized by others who share the same experiences (Cope, 2014). The credibility of the current study was determined by carefully describing each step of the research and how the empirical material was collected and on what basis. The respondents of the study were also given the opportunity of reviewing their transcribed responses to the questions after the interview were conducted in order to give their approval. This would also ensure that the researchers had understood the respondents correctly in their statements.

Establish *dependability* of a study can be made when the researchers adopt an auditing approach, which ensures that records are kept of all stages throughout the research process (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It can be another researcher that agrees with the original authors decisions through the whole process (Cope, 2014). Bryman and Bell (2011) argues that adopting an auditing approach is very demanding for the researchers in qualitative studies since they often generate a huge amount of data and due to this it is not a commonly used approach. The researchers in this study however, showed tendencies to achieve dependability. Records were kept when collecting all of the empirical data and they also described how they have proceed throughout the whole process.

A tutor was also present as a guidance throughout the whole research, auditing the work.

When researchers of a qualitative study want to prove its *confirmability* they need to describe how they established their conclusions and interpretations and make sure that the data represent the view of the respondents and not the researchers (Cope, 2014). It is impossible to be completely objective in business research but in order to establish conformity the researchers must have proven that they act in good faith and not let personal values affect the research (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The researchers of this study tried to keep a subjective vision throughout the whole research, without letting personal values influence any part of the process. When collecting the empirical material the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and in order to establish conformability they were sent out to the respondents. The reason for this was to enable the respondents to audit if they believed that their opinions and thoughts had been expressed in the right way, unaffected by the researchers values and opinions.

The criteria of *transferability* refers to if the researchers findings can be applied to other groups or settings, which means that this criteria is met if people who were not involved in the study can associate their own experiences with the result (Cope, 2014). Important to have in mind is that many qualitative researchers do not aim to generalize their study and the criteria of transferability are only relevant for those qualitative researchers who strive for generalization (Cope, 2014).

Since this study does not aim to generalize the findings to other contexts or settings but rather to be a starting point that other researchers can make use of, the criteria of transferability is not relevant for this research.

3.11 Ethics in business research

When conducting a research within the area of business it is very often dependent of an examination which in one way or another includes the general publics' participation, which stresses the importance for the researcher to conduct their research in an ethical way (Christensen et al., 2011). Conducting a research in an ethical way means that it is conducted in a way that preserves the general public's

respect and that actions taken by the researchers are in accordance with what is seen as good morals (Christensen et al., 2011), it also concerns how the researchers should treat the people who participate in their study (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Bryman and Bell (2011) states that there are especially four concerns that are commonly discussed in the aspect of ethics in business research. The discussion concerns whether there is a harm to the participants, if there is a lack of informed consent, if there is an invasion on the participants' privacy or whether there is deception involved.

Harm to the participants can occur in different forms, such as physical harm, harm to the participants self-esteem or future career prospects (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It is always the researcher's responsibility to try to minimize the risk that the participants feel harmed. One way to do so is by agreeing with the participants upon the anonymity, if the respondent wishes to be anonymous the researcher needs to respect that (Christensen et al, 2011; Bryman and Bell, 2011). The researcher need to be careful that the material will not reveal any kind of information which can uncover the identity of the participants (Flick et al., 2008) and even after the findings have been published the researcher needs to ensure that the respondents will not be identified (Bryman and Bell, 2011).
In this study all of the respondents wanted to be anonymous and according to the researchers the result of the study would not be affected by anonymity and they were careful throughout the whole study to keep the identity of the respondents safe.

The concern of *lack of informed consent* is the ethical problem that, according to Bryman and Bell (2011) is the most debated one but it mostly concerns disguised or covert observations. In these observations the researchers true identity is unknown and the participants are not given the decision whether they want to participate in the study or not (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Flick et al., 2008).
According to Bryman and Bell (2011) it is very difficult for researchers to provide their participants with all the information that might be required for the participants to make an informed decision whether they want to be a part of the research or not. In order for a researcher to minimize the risk of lack of informed consent they need to provide the participants with as much information as possible, in order for them to be

aware of what their participation will contribute with to the study and what they are participating in (Flick et al., 2008).

The researchers in this study were trying to provide the participants with as much information as possible before the interviews, concerning the purpose of the study and what effect their respondents participation would have. They also informed the participant before the interviews that recording equipment would be used in order to record all their answers, which according to Christensen et al., (2011) is a way of minimizing the risk for lack of informed consent.

The third concern when discussing ethics in business research is the *invasion on the participants' privacy.* Privacy is something many people highly value and it is seen as unacceptable if a research infringes it (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Privacy can to some extent be connected to the lack of informed consent because if the participants get informed about what their participation will result in they know that their privacy might be exceeded (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Even though that researchers inform their participants there still may be questions the respondents refuse to answer, which most often is connected to the nature of the questions, and is seen by the participants as sensitive or something they do not want to make public (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The researchers in this study tried to avoid asking any questions that would make the participants uncomfortable or make them feel like the researchers were intruding on their privacy. This was also one of the reasons why the researchers choose to conduct a pilot study, in order to see if any of the questions asked were seen as offending. After the pilot study was conducted, the respondent provided the researchers with valuable feedback about the interviews, which gave the researcher a good insight of the nature of the questions.

The last highly discussed topic concerning ethics is if there is any *deception involved* in the research. Deception refers to when the researchers indicate that their study is something other than what it truly is (Bryman and Bell, 2011) Deception can to some degree occur frequently in research because the researchers intentionally limit their participants understanding of the research's purpose in order to get more naturally responses (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

It is however not desirable for researchers to use deception in their studies. If it becomes known that some researchers make regularly use of this, their image would be affected in a negative way and it can become hard to gain support for the study and it may be difficult to find participants for future studies (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The researchers in this study did clearly inform their participants before conducting the interviews about the purpose and what contribution their participation would have on the study. The researcher did not see how they could, in any way, obtain any benefits from keeping information from their participants.

4. Empirical material

Within this chapter the empirical material that have been collected through semi-structured interviews will be summarized.

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself, who are you, what are your interests and what is your occupation?

There were a total of ten respondents who were in the age of 23-27 years old. Six of the respondents were studying at universities and four of the respondents were employed.

2. How often do you use Instagram?

It was only one of the respondents that used Instagram around four times a week and the rest of the participants use Instagram daily or several times a day.

3. Why do you use Instagram and in what purpose?

All of the respondents used Instagram in the purpose of updating themselves of what their friends, family and other people were doing. Other purposes mentioned were inspiration, information, entertainment and as a time-killer.

4. How often do you post pictures on Instagram?

The respondent who posted pictures most frequently on Instagram updated once a week, while the respondent who was the least active posted one picture every sixth month.

The activity of the other respondents varied between twice a month to once every third month. Two of the respondents mentioned that they used to post pictures more frequently before and one of the respondents activity depended on what he/she was doing.

5. Do you follow any companies on Instagram?

Seven of the respondents did follow one or several company accounts on Instagram. Some of the respondents also mentioned that they had followed other companies before but for different reasons chose to end that relation. Two of the three

respondents that did not follow any company stated that they did not do this since they wanted inspiration, which other accounts provided in a better way.

6. Have you ever purchased products from the companies that you follow on Instagram, and what did you do first?

From the empirical material it were concluded that five respondents who followed companies on Instagram also had bought products from them, they also stated that the products were bought before they decided to engage with the company on social medias. Out of the other five respondents who had not bought anything it were two respondents who stated that it was a possibility that they would consider to buy products that they saw on Instagram.

There were also two respondents who followed companies on Instagram even though they never had purchased anything from them.

7. What is according to you a business-customer relationship and how would you prefer it to be?

This question received a lot of different answers from the respondents. Three of the respondents claimed that personal service and a more personal connection between the company and the customer were preferred in a relationship and that a good contact between the company and customers was an important factor.

Much of the focus from the respondents were connected to what the companies should do in the relationship and for one of the participants it was important that the company offered products in which the respondent were interested in, but also how the company managed to do it. Two of the respondent mentioned that the company needs to be polite and take good care of their customers in order to keep them satisfied.

Among three of the respondents the importance of the company's' offerings were of high priority. Two of the participants mentioned that in an ideal relationship the company should provide customized solutions for their customers and one of the respondents stated *"For me it is much personal contact and personal service I think. Maybe even customized solutions".* One of the respondents thought that in the relationship he/she was a part of some deal where the company shows what they have to offer.

For two of the respondents it was important that in a relationship the company provided them with extra value, which makes them feel special. One of the respondents mentioned that the company should reward good customers by giving them discounts.

Another respondent claimed that he/she did not see how a relationship with a company was possible since the respondent did not think that he/she gave something back to the company and that it was a one-way communication.

Two of the respondents emphasized the importance of a two-way communication in an ideal company-customer relationship.

8. What is according to you a relationship with a company on Instagram and how would you prefer it to be?

The respondents had varying opinions about what an relationship on Instagram was and what it should contain. The most prominent features however were that the followers should receive offerings from the company, followed by expectations of information in the form of news, how-tos and updates. One of the respondents stated that "*It would be smart to follow those companies on Instagram to see when they post news and to be updated. It becomes one more source of contact, instead of visiting their homepage*", whilst another respondent highlighted the easy way of giving feedback to the company through "liking" their content.

Other attributes mentioned were that the company should be personal, caring of their customers and respond to comments, it was also important that the consumers felt that they gained something extra from following the company on Instagram.

One of the respondents clearly stated that he/she felt that extra value were not achievable on Instagram: "*I think it is hard for them to [...] provide me with some extra value and I think that on Instagram they can only inspire me and give me examples of how to use their products*".

Hashtags were also mentioned by one respondent as a tool for companies to use in order to find consumers and possibly like their company-related content as a way of showing their appreciation.

9. Have you ever "liked" content posted by companies on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to "like"?

Eight of the respondents had liked content posted by companies. Three of the respondents said that they liked the content simply because they thought it was appealing. One of the participants said that competitions of different kinds would be a reason to like the pictures, while another respondent stated that it needed to inspire in order for him/her to like. One of the respondents claimed that the company needed to post something new in order to get a like from him/her and two other respondents emphasized that the most important was that the content were funny and humoristic. If the content contained something that the respondents could relate to, two of them would consider liking and for another it needed to be something extraordinary. One of the respondents wanted the content to do something for the whole society and not just for him/her, then the respondent would consider liking in order to show the company her support.

10. Have you ever commented on content posted by companies on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to comment?

Seven out of the ten respondents stated that they never had commented on content posted by a company. There were different reasons for not commenting. One respondent mentioned that he/she did not know what to comment and that it would be more favorable for the company if he/she liked their posts because it would spread and reach out to more people. The same respondents said that the only reason he would comment on a company's' content were if it was a question he/she were interested in.

Three of the participants had commented on companies' posts with the purpose of informing or recommending a friend about the company or its content.

Three of the respondents would never consider commenting and one of the respondents claimed it was because he/she did not want others to see what he/she was writing to the company.

One of the participants would consider commenting if it was a competition of some kind, another stated that it needed to be something funny, like a humoristic video and a third respondent would only consider commenting if it was something he/she reacted negatively against and felt a need to speak up for.

11. Have you ever commented on a company's content with the purpose to inform a friend and what drives/would drive you to recommend content?

Out of the ten respondents there was only one who had commented on a company post in order to inform a friend. However were all of the other participants willing to do so, but the importance for the content to be really interesting for the friend was highlighted.

12. Have you ever started following a company based on a friends recommendation and have you ever recommended one yourself?

It was only one of the participants that had started to follow a company due to a friends recommendation but all of the other participants stated that it was something that they could consider doing if they found the company's' content interesting. The majority of the respondents had never recommended a company account on Instagram to a friend, there were only three respondents who had. Although, four of the ones who never had recommended stated that they could do so. The matter of interesting content for the friend was highlighted as an essential factor for recommending.

14. Have you ever visited a company's account because a friend had liked/commented on its content, what drives/would drive you to do so?

Eight of the respondents had visited a company's' Instagram account because a friend had liked or commented on it and some of the respondents also mentioned that it happened frequently. One of the respondents were not sure if he/she had done it or not and one of the respondent had never did it. Reasons mentioned for visiting content that friends had liked were such as nice pictures and products, interesting company or that it was a close friend who was the one who had liked/commented on the content.

15. Have you ever used or searched for hashtags and in what purpose?

Out of the ten respondents it was just one who had not used hashtags. All of the other respondents had used them but in an unserious manner. One of the respondents stated that except from being funny he/she had used them in order to spread the picture to others, another respondent stated that he/she used it in order to capture the picture with one word and another respondent used hashtags when travelling, in order to let people know where the picture was taken.

It was only two respondents who have never searched for hashtags and the simple reason was because one of them had never thought about the function and the other

one had thought about searching for it in order to see what there is but not done it yet. All of the participants who had searched for hashtags had made it with the purpose of finding certain content, such as make-up, brands or pictures connected to workout.

16. What are your expectations on a company when following them on Instagram?

What type of content do you prefer the company/brand to post on Instagram and how frequently?

The respondents' expectations were mostly concerning the content posted by companies and how it should be. Most frequently mentioned were inspiration and news, each emphasized by five different respondents. Pictures of the company's products were another important expectation by the respondents, however did several of them state that those pictures needed some element of new thinking/knowledge or creativity surrounding them. One respondent said: "*[...] give something extra to the followers, not just the same studio-pictures that can be found on the internet [...]*", something that was supported by three other respondents that wanted the company to give something extra to their followers and not just post ads.

Discounts and offerings were another expectation mentioned rather often by the participants, as well as the company being up to date, have appealing content, post behind the scene-pictures and not retouched their photos too much.

The expectations that concerned the behavior of the company were that they should be serious, have a thought with their posts, be active, honest, answer on questions and have an overall good behavior.

Depending on their personal preferences the respondents wanted the company to post content between 2-4 times per day and 1-2 times per week.

17. What is your opinion about companies who only posts pictures of their physical products?

The overall opinion about this was that it was seen as negative. Four of the respondents said that it depended much upon the pictures and products and one stated that if the products were boring he/she would not follow and another respondent said that if it was a product you usually change or buy a lot, like clothes it could be okay while another respondent wanted to see new products otherwise it could become trite. Those who were negative about it argued that it would be boring with pictures of only

products, one respondent used words as incompetent, uninteresting and shallow and said following **" I think first and for all, that then they have nothing to contribute with. They have no… like they are not specially skilled because posting a picture on for example an iPhone is not especially hard".**

One of the respondents mentioned that he would rather turn to their webpage if he/she only wanted to look at the products, another wanted to be inspired when visiting a company's' Instagram account, one stated that he wanted to get an insight in the company through behind the scenes pictures and one other respondent said it would negatively affect the perception of the company.

18. Do you follow any companies that reflect your lifestyle or a lifestyle that you wish for and what drives/would drive you to do so?

Six of the ten respondents did follow a company that reflects their lifestyle or the lifestyle they would like to have. One of the respondents said that he/she would feel a connection to them and a feeling that they would know what he wanted.

Two of the respondents followed bloggers, which had lifestyles that in some way were connected to their lifestyle or their desired lifestyle. One of them also stated that if he/she were to follow a pure company on Instagram it would most likely be one that confirms the lifestyle rather than the desired lifestyle.

One of the respondents followed one of these companies in order to be inspired and get ideas about what he/she wants to do in the future and inspiration was emphasized by five other respondent to be one of the reasons for following these kinds of accounts or what could motivate them to follow. Nice products and content were also favored as motivational drivers for following these kinds of companies.

One of the respondents emphasized that the companies he/she followed rather were connected to his/her hobby than the lifestyle and one of the respondents could not picture him/herself following these kinds of companies at all.

19. Do you follow any companies on Instagram that are connected to your occupation or your future occupation and what drives/would drive you to do so?

It was only one of the respondents who followed a company related to current or future occupation and it was the respondents' current workplace. Two of the other respondents claimed that they could consider following their current workplaces if they created an Instagram account.

Five of the respondents could imagine themselves following these kinds of companies and they said it was because it could be good to learn about the industry and gain knowledge about competitors, also a third respondent state that it would be in an educational purpose.

One of the respondents explained that he/she does not know what his/hers future occupation will be and can therefore not know if he/she would consider following such an account. The remaining respondent could not see any purpose with following a company related to the occupation and were unsure if he/she could consider following such an account.

20. Do you follow any company on Instagram that you never had an offline experience with, what drives/would drive you to do so?

Seven of the participants did not follow any company on Instagram that they never had on offline experience with. Six of the participants could consider doing it if they liked the company's Instagram account. One of the respondents had followed a company before but not anymore and he/she had followed it to get inspiration. Inspiration and updates were the reasons why another participants followed these companies. Another respondent could consider following a company but it depended on how transparent they were and if it were a company that the respondent thought that he/she might have an offline experience with in the future.

Three of the respondents did follow companies that they never had an offline experience with and one of the respondents stated that *"I think Instagram is a good way to find new companies you did not know existed. So if I found a company, which post pictures I like and from which I could consider buying something from I would definitely start following it, even if I never had an experience with them in the real world"*.

21. If you follow a company on Instagram that you are satisfied with, would you still consider following other companies on Instagram within the same field? Why/why not?

Six respondents stated that they could follow other companies, reasons for this were that they could receive offerings and inspiration from both but also that they did not want to limit themselves. There were only one respondent that felt that one company would be enough if it satisfied this persons' needs. The other three respondents were

not sure what they would do but stated that it would depend much on the products of the companies.

22. How would you react if you hear negative feedback about a company that you follow and are satisfied with on Instagram?

On this question many of the respondents said that it depended on what kind of feedback the company are faced with. If it concerned that one or some customers were dissatisfied with a purchase the majority of the respondents would not care as long as they were satisfied.

One respondent claimed that he/she would rather go with his/her own experiences of the company instead if listen to others, but if there were no own experience to take from others opinions would be more valuable. But before taking any actions the respondent would try to find out more about the company and if it turned out that it stands for something the respondent do not stand for or act bad the respondent would stop following them. Another participants' response was also in line with this.

Many of the respondents answered that negative feedback would have a bigger impact on their buying behaviors and four of the respondents stated that negative feedback could make them not purchasing anything from the company. One of the respondents said that he/she would reconsider the purchase decisions and three participants claimed that it depended on the nature of the feedback but if it was something really bad it would affect their buying decisions or make them stop following the companies on Instagram.

One of the respondents did also say that he/she probably would tell his/her friends about it as well.

Another participant stated that he/she would look how the company responded and handled the negative critique first and then take a standpoint.

23. How can, in your opinion, companies be trustworthy/create trust on Instagram?

The most visible sign of trustworthiness according to the respondents would be if the company were personal in their content and had many followers. One of the respondents stated that: "*It is quite important how many followers the company has as well and if many people like and comment their pictures because then it feels like they have a wide customer base [...]*". Another respondent stated that behind the scene-

pictures was a great way of being personal: "*I do not think that they only should scoop out pictures of their products but also post some behind the scenes-pictures [...]*".

To be honest and not exaggerate or edit their pictures were also seen as important. Other factors for creating trust according to the participants were such as; have a purpose with the pictures, show fellowship, express their opinions, have nice pictures, be relevant, have a variation of content and answer on questions and comments.

24. What kinds of emotions do you like the company's pictures to evoke?

Inspiration, happiness and desire were what most of the respondents wanted to feel when looking at a company's' pictures. Six of the respondents mentioned inspiration, five mentioned happiness and four of them mentioned desire.

Other feelings that were mentioned among the respondents were creativity and new thinking, something extraordinary to give the respondents a WOW-feeling, excitement, safeness and calmness.

One of the respondents on the other hand argued that he/she did not care about emotions or feelings in the picture, he/she only wanted discounts.

25. How important is it for you to know the people behind the company?

Nine of the ten respondents did not think that it was important for them to know the people behind a company. One of the respondents stated that ***"When I am on Instagram and see a cool picture I do not care about if the person behind the picture is a criminal. Of course I would not like him to be but on Instagram it is the pictures that is in focus"***.

Two of the respondents stated that if they knew that it was a respectable company it would not matter what people that were behind the brand and two other respondents said it could be fun to know but not a necessity.

It was only one of the respondents who did say that it mattered, but only if it was a small company. If the company were established it was not important for the respondent.

26. If you needed to contact a company, where would you turn? (Instagram, website, etc.)

None of the respondents saw Instagram as a very useful tool for contacting the brand and six respondents stated that they would never use Instagram in this purpose.

Reasons for this were mostly because it was seen as too official and they had to comment on a post in order to do so. One of the respondents said: "*I do not think that there is any case where I would turn to Instagram because there it is impossible to write something private*".

Although did the respondents find some reasons for using Instagram as a contacting tool, such as for general questions on a post connected to the subject, according to four of the respondents Four other respondents also stated that subjects such as personal orders or purchases would never be handled on this media. Another reason for using Instagram according to two respondents would be for spreading negative feedback.

Mostly the respondents would turn to the company's customer support or their webpage.

27. How do you feel about companies who start following you on Instagram instead of the other way around?

The respondents had an overall negative feeling towards this. Nine out of ten respondents saw this as a desperate and unprofessional act. It has happened to three of the participants and it was not appreciated. Some of the respondents mentioned that it probably was an attempt by newly established companies to reach out but it felt like the company was fishing for followers and likes.

But it would be different, according to two respondents, if it was a company that they followed who started to follow them. Then they would feel happy and special and it would strengthen the relationship.

Other negative comments among the respondents were that it felt scary, weird and annoying.

Chapter summary

The main findings of the empirical material emphasized inspiring content, offerings and new knowledge and information. There was also a desire for more efficient communication between the company and the consumers, however were the respondents current communication efforts with companies rather low. The participants showed tendencies of being affected by other users feedback and opinions, but still stressed the importance of their own experiences.

5. Analysis

In this chapter the empirical material will be analyzed in relation to the theoretical framework. By using the analysis method of thematic analysis the following six subdivisions were found;, Expectations, Value-creation, Relationship, Communication, Social and Negative effects, which will be prominent in the analysis. The analysis will concern the research question: What motivates consumers to participate in a relationship with companies on social media?

5.1 Expectations and Value Creation within Relationships on Instagram

According to the literature there is a difference in how companies should manage their relationships in an offline environment compared to an online environment (Jung et al., 2013). Through the collected empirical material it can be found that the respondents perception of the relationship in the different environments did not differ in any great extent. Even though similarities in the different environment exist, the literature is still correct in the sense that some expectations differ.

Within the empirical material there were an emphasis on more customized solutions, respondents claimed that customized offerings would be an important factor in an ideal relationship. This is supported by Jung et al., (2013) who states that the mass-marketing is overtaken by more customized marketing, which companies should make use of in order to generate stronger connections with their customers. However, since companies on Instagram are limited to only sending out one picture for all of its followers it does not become customized in that sense. There is a need for more knowledge regarding the customers and their preferences in order to create customized content. But due to the respondents' negative attitude towards companies who starts following them, and their aversion to comment, the possibility for the company to find theses preferences becomes limited on Instagram.

When analyzing the empirical material it was found that there are certain actions that a company needs to display in order for the consumers to be willing to engage in a relationship. The expectations mentioned by the respondents of the current study were highly connected to the attributes of the company's account and content, rather than focusing on its products. Lims et al., (2013) state that the information system rather

than the products is a vital part on social medias when it comes to satisfying the company's customers. The literature also states that a company who choose to operate on social medias need to be aware of that customers expectations will vary from an ordinary company-customer relationship (Jung et al.. 2013).

On Instagram the respondents favored inspiration and it can be seen as a highlighted motivator throughout the whole empirical material. Another factor that would motivate the respondents to engage in a relationship on Instagram was offerings, which is supported by Davis et al., (2014) Functional brand consumption concept where customers can gain access to offerings and giveaways through contact with the brand. Because of this the inspirational factor in the desired content as well as offerings could be an alternative focus for the companies in order to meet the customers expectations.

Inspiration was also a main factor when discussing feelings connected to the content. In a relationship the respondents also wanted the company to evoke feelings such as satisfaction, happiness and excitement. According to Hudson et al., (2015) and Pawle and Cooper (2006) emotions can have a great effect on peoples' behaviors, which in turn can influence the consumers willingness to interact with the company and affect their buying decisions. By evoking these desired feelings the company can further motivate the consumers to engage in a relationship on Instagram. Since the respondents requested something exceptional in the pictures the emphasis on feelings can be a tool to for creating this value. See-To and Ho (2014) state that customers' emotional engagement with a brand is an important factor when considering the co-creation of value, since it motivates the customers to participate in the creation of value. This could differentiate the company from competitors and make the customers more committed on Instagram.

When the respondents were asked if they engaged in relationships on Instagram first or if they bought products from the company first, all of the respondents who ever bought anything did it before they followed the company on Instagram. This can be connected to the concept of pre-existing relationship in the Relational brand consumption of the Five source model by Davis et al., (2014). Their choice of following the company on Instagram after purchasing and consuming the product can be seen as a proof of their satisfaction with the experience and it indicates a

motivation to further deepen the relationship with the company. As a result of this an opportunity for the company has arisen in the possibility of further strengthening the relationship through Instagram since satisfaction is an important step towards loyalty according to Gamboa and Goncalves (2014).

On social medias it is important to maintain a trustworthy image, the empirical material revealed that companies should be honest and authentic in order to achieve this. It is in accordance with Gamboa and Goncalves (2014) statement that trust is represented by beliefs that contain acts of goodwill. Gamboa and Goncalves (2014) also state that trust can be achieved through the results of activities, on Instagram this activity can be equal to when companies post content. The respondents often referred to the quality of the content when discussing the subject of trust on Instagram, which reinforces this theory, as well as Lim et al., (2013) statement that the quality of a service influences the level of satisfaction. If a company wants to establish a trustworthy image their content should meet these criteria. The respondents' requirement of quality and authenticity in the pictures could be connected to their preferences for more personal content and by combining these two attributes it could be a possibility for the company to establish trust but also satisfaction.
Another topic mentioned by the respondents were the importance of many followers of the company's' account and that it referred to the perception of trustworthiness of the company but it also motivated customers to engage in a relationship with a company in a higher extent. which can be connected to the theory of Habibi et al., (2014) which claims that the experiences of others when joining social medias is an important factor for trusting a company.

Despite the respondents expectations of personal content, e.g. behind the scene pictures, they did not desire to learn about the people behind the brand in any greater extent. This rejects the theory of Relational brand consumption in the Five Sources Model by Davis et al., (2014), which state that an important need for the customers is to know who the people behind the company are in order to get a human touch of the relationship.
Accompanied with this problem there seems to be a subtle line for companies whether they are too impersonal or too personal, which can make it hard for companies to know how to act in order to meet the expectations regarding this subject.

The empirical material demonstrated that the respondents had divided opinions regarding following companies related to their occupation. Those who were positive towards this kind of relationship were in accordance with the concept of Self-oriented brand consumption within the Five sources model by Davis et al., (2014) who states that a professional identity can be built around the brands consumed. Those respondents who felt negatively towards it, or only wanted to follow their current workplace, goes against this theory due to the fact that they did not gain any value from it.

The Self-oriented brand consumption within the Five sources model by Davis et al., (2014) also emphasizes that customers build brand consumption around their lifestyle or desired lifestyle. The researchers of this study could see a significant difference in the respondents' answers between the two subareas of lifestyle and occupation. A clear majority was or could consider following companies that reflected their lifestyle and personal self compared to their occupation and professional self. One of the key factors for following accounts connected to the respondents lifestyle were inspiration, whilst following occupational accounts were more connected towards education and information according to the respondents. Since this study found that inspiration was one of the motivators for engaging with companies on social medias this may be the influencing factor for the higher rate of following accounts connected to the respondents' lifestyles.

When asked if the respondents would follow other companies even if they already followed a similar satisfying account, a majority of the respondents stated that they would. This shows that even if customers on Instagram are satisfied they do not display a behavior that indicates loyalty. Thereof the empirical data is contradicting towards the literature written by Anderson and Srinivasan (2003), stating that satisfied consumers are less likely to search for other alternatives.

The main reason for this behavior was that the respondents gained more value from following several similar brands in terms of offerings and inspiration. This can be associated with the concept of Emerged relationship within the Relational brand consumption of the Five sources model by Davis et al., (2014) which claims that this relationship is when a consumer have no prior experience of a company but still follows them on Instagram. The empirical material supported that this kind of

relationship exist. Here, the main driver for engaging in this relationship is also the inspirational factor combined with the additional source of information and offerings, something that was seen as an extra personal gain by the respondents.

This further emphasizes the importance of inspiration as the main motivational factor for consumers and needs to be addressed by companies when operating on social medias.

5.2 Communication on Instagram

Kodish and Pettegrew, (2008) claims that a company needs to understand communication with their customers as a process, rather than a simple transmission of a message. Since a majority of the respondents argued for value within the content, this demonstrates the importance for a company to communicate a purpose with their pictures, rather than only show off their products. Since the customers expectations are that companies should post content concerning their products on Instagram but not only flat product pictures, it strengthen Kodish and Pettergrew's theory that companies need to understand that a single picture is not enough. The company also needs to communicate with their customer through responding to comments and questions in order to create a more lasting relationship and it is also argued by both the respondents and the literature as important in the communication process. Habibi et al., (2014) claims that companies who reply to comments and provide their customers with feedback also strengthens the bond between them, something that were emphasized among the respondents of the current study.

According to the literature social media provides the company and the customers with the ability to use two-way communication (Shin et al., 2015) , which also was favored by respondents in a relationship according to the discovering in the empirical material.

However, there was an overall negative attitude among the respondents towards commenting on content posted by companies. The reason for this was that Instagram was seen as too official and that it was hard to have a private conversation with the company. These findings are contradicting the concept of Functional brand consumption within the Five sources model by Davis et al., (2014), which suggests that social media is an appropriate platform for consumers when addressing problems.

Since the respondents are not willing to ask questions on Instagram it is not functional for them in that purpose.

The importance of creating extra value was also highlighted by the respondents in several aspects and can be applied to the concept of co-creation. It is described by Fyrberg-Yngfalk (2013) as the result from joint activities and interactions between a company and the customers. It was found that most of the respondents were inconsistent in their behaviors, claiming they wanted extra value and two-way communication from the company but their behaviors showed that they were unwilling to participate in the process through commenting, they rather engaged in the process of co-creating value together with other users.

However there were a few situations in which some of the respondents felt that they could comment, such as participating in competitions, ask general questions and recommend friends. Since there seemed to be a low willingness to comment it increases the importance for the companies to make use of the few motivators the consumers have in order to get an activity in their comment fields.

Another reason stated by the respondents was to comment in order to give feedback. Negative feedback was generally more motivating to post than positive feedback, something that indicates a low level of commitment. According to Keel and Padgett (2015), customers who are committed feel obliged to defend the brand from negative publicity and since the respondents of this research felt that one of their reasons to comment on Instagram was to spread negative information, they cannot be seen as committed.

By making use of the motivators, such as competitions, and raising the activity among consumers the company could increase the possibility of creating committed customers.

The empirical material also showed that the respondents of the current study were more eager to like than comment. The higher rate of likings among the respondents compared to the rate of commenting shows that liking companies' content is an easier way of showing support. This can be connected to the respondents statements of Instagram as a too official platform for addressing problems, it is possible that the respondents see this as a more anonymous way of interaction since they will become a number in the feed rather than stating a personal opinion.

5.3 Social forces on Instagram

The respondents' main purpose for using Instagram was to be social and see what others were doing. This is in accordance with Davis et al., (2014) function of social interaction within the Social brand consumption of the Five sources model. Through coding the empirical material it could be discovered that there were three categories in the area of social activity.

One of those were social attention due to the use of Instagram as a medium to spread the users own content and be socially active, which can be connected to the term of self-branding in the concept of Self-oriented brand consumption within the Five sources model by Davis et al., (2014).

The second one was to inform others in the term of commenting or hashtagging content. This type of behavior can be connected to the Social brand consumption within the Five sources model by Davis et al., (2014) where they state that sharing experiences with others on social medias is a common phenomenon. The sharing of information was a key factor for the participants when communicating in a relationship with companies on Instagram. This factor was important in both the purpose for engaging in a relationship as well as an expectation on the company to provide this.

The third activity was the behaviors of others on Instagram. The empirical material showed that others opinions were of great importance and could affect the perception of brands through comments on the content. It derived from the empirical data that the majority of the respondents had visited a company's' Instagram account due to that others had commented or liked its content. According to Davis et al., (2014) concept of Social brand consumption in the Five sources model, users can get influenced by what others comment or like and start to consume it too, even if it is not directly connected to the personal interests. When customers on social media interact with each other and share experiences it is also a part of the value co-creation process (Luo et al., 2015).

Many of the respondents stated that negative feedback would affect their buying behavior negatively, which indicate that these customers are not committed to the company. According to Keel and Padgett (2015) committed customers are not as

sensitive to negative feedback as others. Customers who stop following companies due to others feedback and negative opinions can also be related to the statement about customer retention made by Nitzan and Libai (2011), who claims that quitting behaviors of customers can be affected by social forces.

In the case of negative publicity a difference between the behavior on social media and the respondents buying decisions could be noticed. Negative feedback would affect the purchase but not the respondents' willingness to continue the relationship on Instagram, many of the respondents would go after their own preferences instead of listen to others.

Highfield and Leaver (2015) emphasize that the feature of hashtags can serve as a tool for creating communities on Instagram. Community attachments are also mentioned within the concept of Social brand consumption by Davis et al., (2014). However did the empirical material not support the use of hashtags with that purpose. The reason for using them were rather in the purpose of creating humor in connection to the users' own content, this social act can be connected to Davis et al., (2014) concept of Social interaction within the Social brand consumption of the Five sources model. Although, participants claimed that they have searched for hashtags in a more serious manner in order to find specific content, but none indicated any sort of engagement in communities.

5.4 Negative effects on Instagram

When coding the empirical material a group of negative attributes emerged through the data. The most distinct one were towards the behavior of companies and more specifically when companies start to follow consumers. This was by most participants seen as unprofessional, desperate and not trustworthy. Chung and Buhalis (2008) emphasize that in Relationship Marketing on social medias, companies need to observe the behavior of the consumers in order to learn and be able to predict the behavior. One way for a company to do this can be to start following their consumers on Instagram but according to the empirical material this is not an appreciated gesture. According to the literature social media is the platform that is the most beneficial environment for companies to communicate with their consumers (Hanna et al., 2011), but according to the participants in this study the communication must occur

on their terms and customers need to be open for communication, otherwise it can have negative consequences on the relationship.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter the main findings derived from the analysis will be concluded. It will answer the purpose of the research, which is; to explore the customers' perception and expectations on relationships with companies on social media.

According to the customers a relationship on Instagram should be personal and consists of a two-way communication, where both the company and customers are a part of the value creation process. Within this relationship the main expectations were that companies should post inspirational pictures, updates and news, discounts/offerings and pictures containing products and information.

The expectation of a two-way communication stresses the need for active involvement by both parties in order to co-create value. Nevertheless the consumers were reluctant to participate in the process and they showed a determination to only receive content that they could gain personal value from, without giving something to the company in return.

This concludes that Instagram is not an appropriate tool for communication, however Instagram can work as a strong supplement to a company's' other marketing channels and as a possibility for the company to strengthen relationships with their customers. It is an appropriate supplement because of its ability to show an alternative side of the company as well as showing their products in a new manner. It facilitates for customers to get access to important information in a convenient and easy way without making any efforts searching for it by themselves.

Instagram can also be used in the purpose of creating awareness. The expectations concerning offerings, news and information were a vital factor for the respondents to engage in a relationship and by posting these attributes on Instagram the company cannot only meet the desired expectations but also create awareness of these attributes.

Due to the prominent expectation of inspiration on Instagram, which also was seen as one of the main motivators for engaging in a relationship, this is a vital attribute to place emphasis on for the companies when operating on Instagram. Companies should

take a stance in this and lean more towards becoming an inspirational account of their own products and services in order to create a stronger and more loyal relationship with the customers.

7. Contribution

This chapter will discuss the findings of the research as well as suggestions for future researchers within the field.

The study was made with the aim to seek a deeper understanding of the phenomena concerning a customer-company relationship on social medias, taking a stance from the aspect of the customers. It defines the expectations and motivational factors for engaging in a relationship and contributes to the lack of qualitative research that explores relationships between customers and companies on social medias. It differs from prior research due to its focus on customers' perceptions.

The results in this study cannot be generalized to a bigger population since the findings results from a qualitative study with a convenience sample. This research can however be seen as a contribution to the rather unexplored field and future researchers can take a stance from its findings.

It is suggested that a quantitative study within the field should be conducted in order to establish validity and reliability and come up with further conclusions.

Since this research did use a case study design with focus on Instagram the results cannot be transmitted to other social medias since they concern Instagram in particular, however the research can be used as a guideline when conducting other qualitative studies regarding other social medias.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide - Relationship building on Instagram

How can companies manage their relationship marketing on Instagram?

Keywords: Relationship, Instagram,

<div align="center">

Users of Instagram

</div>

Opening

Presentation of ourselves, the aim with the interview, an overall explanation of the arrangement and how long the interview is expected to be.

General questions

- Tell us a little bit about yourself, who are you, what are your interests and what is your occupation?
- How often do you use Instagram?
- Why do you use Instagram and in what purpose?
- How often do you post pictures on Instagram?
- Do you follow any companies on Instagram?
- Have you ever purchased product from the companies that you follow on Instagram, and what did you do first?

Users on Instagram

- What is according to you a business-customer relationship and how would you prefer it to be?
- What is according to you a relationship with a company on Instagram and how would you prefer it to be?
- Have you ever "liked" content posted by companies/brands on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to like??
- Have you ever commented on content posted by companies/brands on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to comment?
- Have you ever commented on a company's content with the purpose to inform a friend and what drives/would drive you to recommend content?

- Have you ever started following a company based on a friends recommendation and have you ever recommended one yourself?
- Have you ever visited a company's account because a friend had liked/commented on its content, what drives/would drive you to do so?
- Have you ever used or searched for hashtags and in what purpose?

Companies on Instagram
- What are your expectations on a company when following them on Instagram? *What type of content do you prefer the company to post on Instagram and how frequently?*
- What is your opinion about companies who only posts pictures of their physical products?
- Do you follow any companies that reflect your lifestyle or a lifestyle that you wish for and what drives/would drive you to do so?
- Do you follow any companies on Instagram that are connected to your occupation or your future occupation and what drives/would drive you to do so?
- Do you follow a company on Instagram that you never had an offline experience with, what drives/would drive you to do so?
- If you follow a company on Instagram that you are satisfied with, would you still consider following other companies on Instagram within the same field? Why/why not?
- How would you react if you hear negative feedback about a company that you follow and are satisfied with on Instagram?
- How can, in your opinion, companies be trustworthy/create trust on Instagram?
- What kinds of emotions do you like the company's picture to evoke?
- How important is it for you to know the people behind the company?
- If you needed to contact a company, where would you turn? (Instagram, website, etc.)
- How do you feel about companies who start following you on Instagram instead of the other way around?

Appendix 2

Transcribed interviews

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself, who are you, what are your interests and what is your occupation?

A - I am 24 years old, I am soon graduating and will be a so called young professional. My interests are music, travelling and I also like sports.

B - I study economics, third year at the Linnaeus University. I am 23 years old. I like to work out and hang out with my friends.

C - I am 27 years old and study communication, ehm… I like… interior, baking, to read and to fika… yes.

D - I am 24 years old, I study and I like to dance and work out.

E - I am 23 years old, I study marketing. I love working out, I play soccer and I am very interested in interior.

F - I am 24 years old, I work as an assembler at a big company. I have a big interest in travelling, music and clothes.

G - My name is X. I work at Ica Maxi, I like to work out and hang with my friends

H - My name is X, my interests are to work out and.. well, watch TV. I work with telecommunications.

I - I am 27 years old and I am studying to become a teacher. My interests are Music, movies, food… cooking, eating, sports.

J - I am 23 years old. I work in banking. My interests are make-up and I also like to hang out with my friends.

2. How often do you use Instagram?

A - Every day, several times every day.

B - Every day, several times a day.

C - I look it through every day.

D - Everyday, several times a day.

E - Everyday, several times a day.

F - I would say around ten times a day, sometimes more and sometimes less.

G - Daily.

H - Several times a day.

I - Around four times a week.

J - Several times a day.

3. Why do you use Instagram? In what purpose?

A - From the beginning it was to see what my friends were up to and if they had taken any photos of me I wanted to see how the photos were. But now it is almost just a platform I go to in order to look for memes and funny pictures. It feels like people do not use Instagram in the same way that they used to do.

B - To get updated about what other people are doing and as a time-killer.

C - Maybe mostly for inspiration… what people eat, what they do, how their homes look. But also to see what, like, family and friends do. So you know where you have people.

D - To look at other peoples pictures.

E - Mainly to keep an eye on what others are doing but also for inspiration about clothes, interior etc.

F - To see what other people are up to and know what my friends are doing.

G - I am not sure if I have a direct purpose, but maybe to know what others do, like my friends… or enemies.

H - To be socially active… see what others are doing and so on.

I - Hmm… information, and to see what the ones I am following do.

J - To see what my friends are up to. I also want to get inspiration and information about news and updates from companies.

4. How often do you post pictures on Instagram?

A - Ooh, rarely. But it has also changed, I used to post maybe every third week when I was as most active but now it was almost six months since I published something so now I maybe posts one picture per half-year.

B - In average one time a week or once every second week maybe.

C - I just recently looked through my pictures, but I would say maybe every third month. But before I could post everyday.

D - Very seldom, maximum one picture a month.

E - It differs a lot, sometimes it is once a month and other months I can post a lot of pictures. It depend a little bit of what I am doing.

F - Maybe two times a month.

G - Once every second week maybe.

H - Not so often anymore, maybe… once a month.

I - It goes in waves, on average maybe once a month.

J - I would say, one picture every third week maybe.

5. Do you follow any companies on Instagram?

A - Ehm. I do not follow any pure companies in that sense but I follow a lot of inspiration-accounts.

> *Ok, have you ever followed a company?*
>
> **A** - Well, I once followed ACNE.
>
> *What made you stop following them?*
>
> **A** - They posted pictures of clothes I did not like. I think that these inspiration accounts I follow do it much better.

B - **No**, I do not follow any company.

> *Have you ever followed a company on Instagram?*
>
> **B** - Once I followed BIK BOK but not anymore.
>
> *Do you remember why you stopped following them?*
>
> **B** - Probably because it did not interest me.

C - **No**… But I follow a blogger who has a company; she sells books that she wrote. But she post pictures for her, not to sell anything. But nothing else…

> *Have you ever followed any companies on Instagram before?*
>
> **C** - No and it is simply because I want pictures where I get the inspiration that I want, that are more private in a way. Companies rarely post… like I think that they often post pictures that are more… like more studio pictures that are not as inspiring.

D - Yes one.

E - Yes I do, but not many.

F - I follow one company but I look at many different companies accounts so in a way you can say that I follow many companies, just that I have not pushed the follow button.

G - I don't think so… I have to look…. (Silence) Sportamore! Then I follow one company.

H - Ehm, no. I don't think so. I follow a friend who has a company but he has not posted anything yet… Otherwise I do not think I follow any.

> *Have you ever followed any companies on Instagram before?*
>
> **H** - Yes! JC Hässleholm, mostly because a friend works there.

I - **Yes**, one! Helsingborgs Bryggeri

J - **Yes** I follow a lot. Seven I think.

6. Have you ever purchased products from the companies that you follow on Instagram, and what did you do first?

A - No actually I have not, I saw a pair of nice pants from Acne when I followed them on Instagram that I wanted and I thought, I can buy these when they get them in store, but I never did. Do not remember why.

B - Yes I did, when I followed BIK BOK I used to buy their clothes. I started to follow them after I purchased something from the company.

C - No… I have not.

D - No, it is a camping resort so it is hard to buy something from it. But I have visit the resort and it was before I started to follow them on Instagram.

E - Yes I have, I buy a lot from one of the companies that I follow. I bought a lot of products from them before I found them on Instagram.

F - No, I have not.

G - Yes, but I bought products before I started to follow them.

H - No, not even when I followed JC. But it is possible that I would if I followed any companies.

I - Yes I have and I bought from them before I started to follow.

J - Yes I have. I think that I have purchased something from at least five of them… probably before I started to follow them.

7. What is according to you a business-customer relationship and how would you prefer it to be?

A - For me that kind of relationship is that the company offers products that I am interested in, which is the most important! But then it is also HOW they do it. They can do it in a good way where I feel surprised in a good way but also that they give me some extra value, lets say I need new pants and if I buy them from the brand it gives me some sort of status and makes me feel cool.

B - I want them to be nice and polite and take care of their customers.

C - The relationship I think is more about the communication then, the dialogue itself, it does not have to be that you buy something but… right now I cannot come up with any example.

> *So you would not feel that you have a relationship with a company if you visit a store and buy something from them?*

> **C** - No, that is not my opinion of a relationship… no, absolutely not. To have a relationship I have to feel something for the company and be a regular customer than just going there just because I have to… because there are companies that you have a contact with and where you are often but that I don't… ehm, have any relation to in that way. Then I would like that the company listens to me as a consumers…and that there is a possibility for *me* to contact the company and have a dialogue with them… ehm… that there is a mutual dialogue.

> *Would you then prefer that you contact the company when you need to or that the company contacts you when they have for example offerings or something else?*

> **C** - I probably prefer that the consumer themselves or I contact the company, but… ehm… at the same time, if the company does it in a good way when they contact me then it can be perceived as positive but most often… it would feel intrusive and then I would like to contact them myself. But there are companies who contact you where you feel noticed.

D - I want them to give me something extra and make an effort to make me feel special

E - Hmm, I do not know. I guess that the company should preserve their customers and make everything in their power to keep their customers satisfied.

F - (Silence) According to me it is when a company provides me with mails with offerings and they should also reward the good customers, with for example discounts in order to make the customers come back.

G - I did not know that I had relationships with them, ha-ha. Since they don't follow me back they don't get anything from me.

> *It does not have to be on Instagram, this question concerns your general thoughts of a relationship, offline as well as online.*

> **G** - But they don't get anything in exchange from me? I just receive things from them…

What is it that you receive then?

G - Advertisement… it is one-way-communication. I buy their products but they don't know who I am because I don't have a webpage!

Do you feel that the relationship is the same if you walk into a physical store?

G - I don't know what they gain from me, money?! I do not think that they get so much from me, or what they should, or… maybe they do not take as much from me as I take from them, you could say, I don't know. Or they could get like opinions and feedback from me… but they usually do not! But technically they can.

How would this relationship look if it were ideal? How would you prefer it to be?

G - Maybe personal service, that it is focused on me as a person and that I receive personal offerings. That everyone gets offerings suited for him or her as persons. That must be the ideal relationship. Where there is a template for you and your needs and from what you shop instead of what everyone else is shopping, or what is a trend right now.

H - Good contact. Like, good service, good… well, yes. If it is a company that you shop a lot from it feels more personal if you have a good contact with someone at the company, the more personal it is the more you will purchase, but I don't expect a specific relationship with companies.

How would you describe an ideal relationship between a customer and a company?

H - That should be, for me it is much personal contact and personal service I think. Maybe even customized solutions.

I - According to me it is that you are a part of some deal where the company shows what they have to offer, actually. And when you follow a company you accept that you will receive their offerings in your phone.

Excuse me for not being clear; this question also includes the offline environment. Does the offline relationship look different than the one you just described or is it still about receiving information?

I - (short silence) Yes, in one way it still is since… It depends on whether you can build some sort of, quality, like... a trust towards the company because its good quality or easy to purchase or if you are treated in a nice way. That is included in a relationship. But it is not really any communication, but more

one-way-communication from the company in the form of commercials and such.

The relationship you just described is this the way you want a relationship to be between you and a company or is there a more ideal relation, and how would it be then?

I - Well, it is the same and that the consumer has, inputs to the company in form of maybe reclamations or opinions about improvements or similar. So really the best sort of a relation is if there is a two-way communication.

J - Hmm, it would be that you have a more personal connection than just buying from a company. Maybe that the customer agree on receiving offerings and such. The ideal relationship would probably be that both the customer and the company know each other on a more personal level, that I know who they are and they know who I am.

8. What is according to you a relationship with a company on Instagram and how would you prefer it to be?

A - Then I think it is hard for them to, as I mentioned before, to provide me with some extra value and I think that on Instagram they can only inspire me and give me examples of how to use their products. For example clothes, how I can combine and style certain clothes.

But I think there are some companies on Instagram that make their company a lifestyle. And I think many, especially me, would be interested if it was about music for example. Imagine Red Bull but if they were a clothing brand instead who arranged festivals and events, I think the brand would have been really cool. As long as it has to do with my interests I think it is cool.

B - The company should behave well, respond to comments and take care of their customers. And they should not post provocative pictures.

C - (Silence) Well, as said I do not follow any companies on instagram, but that would be if I follow any company on Instagram and… I… for example would comment their picture and the company in their turn would answer on my comment so that there is an exchange… ehm… But also that I follow and create my perception of the company and it feels like I get to know the company but if there is no exchange then the company does not know me, and then it might not be a relationship after all.

How would you want an ideal relationship with a company on Instagram to be?

C - Hard question… I haven't searched for that kind of relationship actively… but… It would then be if you get a better insight into the company. I would not like it just to be commercials like, now its sale, buy this, but more.. like behind the scenes at the company, that they open up and you not only see… like not the background but the inside of the company. That they are a bit more transparent and that I then can participate in that and leave comments if I would like and such.

D - I think like this; for example clothing companies where I buy a lot of clothes, for example H&M, it would be smart to follow those companies on Instagram to see when they post news and to be updated. It becomes one more source of contact, instead of visiting their homepage and search for the new things or goes to the store in order to find out if there is something new.

E - I think it is the same for Instagram, that they should appreciate their customers and provide them with important information such as offerings, news and updates about the company.

F - It is when a company that used a certain hashtag and knew that their consumers used it as well, they could use that hashtag to find their consumers and like some of their photos. I also think that companies on Instagram should share offerings and campaigns to make the consumers more aware.

G - I do not know. Maybe it is easier to reach out on Instagram and then it is easier to receive feedback. It is just to press like if it is something that you like and then the company knows that. It is easier than in real life

H - Well, there are companies who chose to start following you and then I think that they are fishing for followers, so that they can market themselves better... I think that they should, post pictures of what they are doing and their personnel to create a better personal feeling.

I - The best sort of relation on Instagram is that those who follow companies on Instagram gets to take part of better offerings. That you gain something, or you get news there first or something similar, that there is a value in following them just on Instagram. That news is posted there first, information or a new product or offerings.

J - On Instagram it would be that the customer follows a company… and that the company in return post things that the consumers want. Maybe offerings or inspiration? The best relationship would be that consumers are active, maybe like and comment on the company's' posts if they like them…

9. Have you ever "liked" content posted by companies/brands on Instagram?
What drives/would drive you to "like"?

A - Yes I have, if a company inspires me and post things that has to do with my interests they would get a little like from me (laughs).

B - Yes I have and what drives me is if they post a picture that says: If you like the picture you have the chance to win this. I do not think that I would like anything just because I think it's **nice**, or maybe I would. I do not really know.

C - No, and then I have never followed any either besides from that blogger, but I do not think that I have liked any… An occasion where I could like would be if I feel that this post would do something for the society and not just me, that I think that there is a purpose with their content… so maybe it is more like controversial posts in that case, where you want to show your support.

D - Yes I have. I like if it is a nice picture and in the case with this resort I follow, it is something I recognize which is the reason why I like it.

E - No I don't think that I have ever done that. Even if there is something that I really like and for me to like a picture it must be something really extraordinary and something I really, really liked.

F - Yes I have liked pictures and I guess it was the simple reason that I liked the picture (laughs).

G - Maybe but I don't think so… well, yes maybe and I guess it either was maybe some clothes or like an offering maybe. Something new**.** Because in order for me to like something it has to be something that gets me going, like some offering or some really new and hyped up product or something that I have not seen before or that makes me interested. Like, news or a really good offering.. or something similar.

H - Yes I have. What would drive me would probably be if it is a **f**un picture or… like if someone posts a picture of jeans then I would not care but if it is something fun, maybe a staff party or… well, sometimes companies post pictures of kickoffs and such stuff, that can be fun to see. And to see how they work and such.

I - Yes I have and it was because it looked appealing… it looked like… yeah, appealing.

J - Yes, not much but some posts, I think it was because they were funny and I could relate to them.

10. Have you ever commented on content posted by companies/brands on Instagram and what drives/would drive you to comment?

A - No I have never done that because I do not really know what to comment…"Nice", it feels weird and I think it would be better for the company if I liked the picture because then it would spread so others could see it. Commenting feels more like a dialogue with the company, where they can answer, depending on what I write. And in order for me to comment, ehm... it must in some way be a question that interest me and that I want to answer. Because I would never comment "nice" "cool" "glamorous" or something like that.

B - No I have not and the only reason I would comment was if it was some kind of competition, otherwise I would never comment.

C - No, I haven't either, but it would probably be for the same reason as the other one. (Referring to last question)

D - **No** and I do not think that there is anything that would make me comment.

E - No. Or maybe that I have tagged a friend in something, but not in another purpose. And what drives me (silence), nothing, I do **not** think that I would comment on something even if I liked it very much, I do not want others to see what I write to a company.

F - No actually I have not and it is because it takes to much effort. I don't think that I ever would comment on a picture posted by a company.

G - Most often I would do that because I want, like a friend that I think should see that post or so, so it is more like I want to inform friends about offerings or if it is something that I think would be good for that person.

H - No, I do not think so. It should be something fun if I should do that, some sort of comedy surrounding the post, or a fun video. Otherwise I do not think that I would comment.

I - No I have not and for me it would require rather much actually… Probably something.. that I had reacted negatively towards, and then I would consider to comment but not otherwise. If it is something where you feel that you have to speak up.

J - Ehm, I do not think so. Maybe tagged a friend once...

11. Have you ever commented on a company's' content with the purpose to inform a friend and what drives/would drive you to do so?

A - Yes actually I was thinking about that, maybe I would tag a friend in, like a funny picture.

B - Did not thought of that… Yes with that purpose I could comment if I knew that my friend would benefit from it.

C - Ehm, yes. If the friend *really* would like it I could, but I think that I would rather just tell them.

D - Tricky one, I think I could if it were interesting.

E - Yes, I think I have done that; it was a funny picture I think!

F - Well, it's rather easy to just tag a friend, so maybe that if it was something that the friend would like.

G - Of course! What would drive me would probably be if it were something that my friend needed.

H - Not on a company site but I have done it many times on other accounts and still do, often because it is something fun.

I - Hm, it needs to be *really, really* interesting for my friend then, like really interesting.

J - It is possible that I have, but I am not sure… as I said I could have recommended some makeup for my sister once, something that she needed. But it is definitely something that I could do it if it is of interest for both me and especially the friend that I recommend it to.

12. Have you ever started following a company based on a friends recommendation and have you ever recommended one yourself?

A - No but I could absolutely do that. If I see others that comment or follows a company I might feel like "Oh I want to follow this company too".
And no again and I would only do that if it was something like, as I mentioned before about Red bull, something cool then I would direct or indirect recommend others to follow the company.

B - No.

> *Would you consider following a company that a friend has recommended?*
>
> **B** - Yes I would at least check it out and if I liked it I could start following it.
>
> **B** - And no I have never recommend a friend but I could do it.

C - No, I haven't but I probably could if it was a good recommendation. (Silence) On the other question... I don't think so… But on the other hand sometimes, it could be if

you talk **to others** about like stores or restaurants or companies, I could mention, like, that they have an account on Instagram and that they can look there for information and so… If it is something that I think is good, so then it is a quick way for someone else to go there and look and create his or her own perception. So I think that I have done that sometime.

D - No I have not but if a friend recommended me of something I would at least check it out and I have not recommend a friend actually.

E - No I have not.

> *Would you consider following a company that a friend has recommended?*
>
> **E** - It depends on the company but if I really liked it I think I would.
>
> **E** - And recommend a friend (silence), not that I can think of right now at

least.

F - No, but if a friend did recommend me to start following a brand I think I would do it if I liked the pictures and yes actually I have recommend a friend and I think he started to following the company.

> *Why did you recommend your friend to start following the company?*
>
> **F** - I thought it was a company that would interest my friend and be suitable

for him.

G - Mm, I do not think so.

> *Would you consider following a company if a friend recommended it to you?*
>
> **G** - Mm, yes I probably would. If it had been a serious recommendation. I I
> have also not recommend anyone.
>
> *Is it something that you could see yourself doing?*
>
> **G** - If it is a site that I know would favor the other person, for example
> offerings or some sort of inspiration or whatever, I could do it.

H - Yes, that would be JC, which my friend who works there invited me to. and, ehm… I do not think that I have recommend a friend or so but it is definitely something that I could do.

I - No.

> *Would you consider it if a friend had recommended something to you?*
>
> **I** - Yes I would. (Silence) I recommended a friend once.
>
> *What made you recommend that to your friend?*
>
> **I** - It was probably the prior information that I had through my relation to that
> friend, that I knew that… my friend could gain something from it.

J - I do not think that I ever have been recommended something by a friend… But, like, I follow a lot of make-up artist and they sometimes recommend other MUAs, and I have started to follow several of those… if that counts?

Would you consider it if a friend had recommended something to you?

J - Yes I would! But recommend (silence), well… not companies I think, but I have recommended other accounts that I like.

14. Have you ever visited a company's account because a friend had liked/commented on its content, what drives/would drive you to do so?

A - Yes exactly, I have done that. It was some clothes that I wanted to see.

B - Yes, I have done that, often when it is close friends that like something.

C - I do not think so but I am not sure. Maybe I could do it if it were a company that i was already interested in.

D - Yes I have because the picture looked cool.

E - Yes I have, many times. I often look at what others have liked and so on, its fun.

F - Yes, yes, a lot of times actually. Often if the picture looks good or if it is a company that I like.

G - Yes and it was probably something that like… often it is clothes or something that you think look good so you go there to see where it is from.

H - Yes, I have. It was companies that I liked.

I - No, maybe if it was a close friend that liked something.

J - Yes I have, although I cannot remember what company but I am pretty sure that I have. Often it is pictures that close friends have liked or if they look cool.

15. Have you ever used or searched for hashtags (and in what purpose)?

A - Yes I have used hashtags but not in the purpose I think they are meant to, I have only used them in order to be funny. I have search for hashtags in the purpose to find certain pictures.

B - Yes, I use them mostly in an unserious purpose. It is mostly to be funny. And I have searched for hashtag in a serious purpose. For example regarding Depends nail polish. You are not able to open them in the store so I searched for that particular nail polish because then I knew that it would come up pictures of people who took pictures of their nails with this nail polish, so I could see how the color looked. I have

also searched for a hashtag for a particular shoe brand in order to see how the shoes look.

C - Yes, I think that I have done that but it has been… because it looks fun (Laughs). I have not searched for hashtags but I actually thought about it earlier today because I am doing a website in school where I am connecting Instagram to it, and then I remembered that it is good to search for hashtags in order to see what there is but otherwise… no, its nothing that I have thought of.

D - I might have searched for hashtags but I have never used it myself when I have post a picture.

E - Yes I have, mostly in an unserious purpose to like, be funny but also if I have travelled somewhere I can hashtag the name of the place where I am in order for others to know. I have searched for hashtags because I wanted to find certain pictures or a certain company.

F - Yes, I usually use hashtags when I post pictures and I use different kinds of hashtags. It can either be with the purpose to be funny or I also use hashtag that I know a lot of other people use, that are popular in order to spread my picture and make it available and easier for others to find. And I search for hashtags in order to find certain pictures.

G - Yes, most often it probably is that you want to capture the picture with one word. Without needing to write. And humor as well. When I searched for hashtags I were probably to find pictures or users for the thing that I searched for or… often it is like workouts or something like that.

H - I have used hashtags, often with the purpose of being ironic. I usually do not hashtag in a serious manner. I do not think that I ever have searched for hashtags, but I have not thought of that function before so it is probably something that I could do.

I - Yes I have, because it looked fun. (Silence) I have searched for hashtags but I actually don't remember why, I just know that I have done it.

J - I have used them but not really seriously, mostly for fun. I have searched as well, and then mostly for, like, make-up looks or outfits, never companies.

16. What are your expectations on a company when following them on Instagram?

What type of content do you prefer the company to post on Instagram and how frequently?

A - That they inspire me, or for example Volvo who has cool commercials with famous people.

What type of content would you like the company to post?

A - Inspiring pictures. Rather inspiration than pure ads.

B - The reason that I would follow them would be because I was interested in their products and because of that I would expect them to show me their products in a good way. And it is always nice with new thinking, that they publish different photos. Instagram is quite superficial and it is all about the pictures, so they need to publish nice pictures that are appealing to me.

And also, I do not know if it works like this now, maybe it does, but I would like to get discounts. Like these discount apps, like show this in the store and you get the discount. Otherwise I would just like them to post interesting things and show what is new in their stores. Or that they show what they have on their webpage, like: right now we have 15 percent off on these items, something like that.

How frequently would you like the company to post pictures?

B - Every day or every other day. If a company post to much pictures that are not interesting it feels unnecessary but if it is quality in their pictures they can post more.

C - I expect, first and for all, that they are honest. But I also expect that if you have an Instagram account that you will give something extra to the followers, not just the same studio-pictures that can be found on the internet, like, on clothes or whatever it could be, but something extra. Pictures of the staff or inside the factory or… anything. I also expect that they behave well, that they are up to date and if I would follow a company I would also expect that they would post relatively often. But it's nothing that I can demand.

What type of content should the company post?

C - Well, the content should be pictures taken with a mobile phone or similar, more like pictures on the go and that is not very fixed or so. Maybe something inspiring or exciting, something that I did not know about the company or something that makes me become closer to the them and… you said how often? Maybe at least, one or a couple of times per week. It would depend on how big the company is. Several pictures per day are like, a lot, especially if it is a small company that have other things to do. It could also be too much because than you would not keep up, I use instagram maybe once a day and if

there are four new pictures every time you log in it could be tiring in the long run. So once or twice a week.

D - I want the company to post what is new and give me updates. They should update a few times a day and the pictures should be of the company's products in order to get inspiration.

E - That they post nice pictures and have some thought behind the pictures and not just post in order to have something to post. I also want the company to give me updates about new products and when they will get them in store. Also when they have discounts and offerings. A great mix of those things and they will meet my expectations.

How frequently do you want the company to post pictures?

E - Not too often! I followed, it was not a company but some inspiration account, and they posted pictures constantly so the only thing I saw was pictures from that account which made me irritated because I missed other pictures.

F - That they give me inspiration.

What type of content do you prefer the company to post and how frequently?

F - It depends on what company it is but lets say that it is a travelling company I want them to post nice pictures which makes me want to visit those places and if it is a fashion company I want them to post inspiring pictures, even if it is clothes that I cannot afford.

G - That it should be serious, that they answer if you have questions that you ask on their posts, and that they should be active most and for all I think. That's why you follow them, you want to read their posts and look at their pictures so then you expect them to be active.

What type of content would you prefer the company to post?

G - That depends on what you are following, what you are interested in. Say that, since I follow Sportamore I expect that it should... often it is news that I want to see so maybe that it is showed there before all the other places, that I get to see it first because they post it as soon as they get the new items for example. And that you get offerings and such.

And how frequently would you like them to post?

G - Then I would like it to be daily, because I mean within a company there is a lot going on, like they do not receive one new product every week but a

stream of products in most companies and then they should be able to deliver I think.

H - My expectations are that they should post… things that, like if it is a company that makes clothes you expect that they should post pictures of clothes. Ehm… not to retouched or so, but I do not have any bigger expectations on them. Regarding the content it is nice to have a mix of behind the scenes pictures and offerings. Behind the scenes is quite nice I think, so that you get more insight into the company and everyday tasks.

How often would you like the company to post content?

H - Not too often, there are a lot who I think post too often, like several times a day and I think that is too much. A couple of times per week maybe. Two, three times.

I - (Silence) That I will receive information that I can gain something from and also pictures of the company's products, innovatively and creatively about the products. Things that you might not think of yourself or did not know.

How frequently would you like the company to update on Instagram?

I - (Silence) Around two times a week, not to often.

J - That I… get information about upcoming products early and inspiration… maybe how to use products in a new way. The pictures I want to be inspiring and innovative. If they post good pictures or videos it does not bother me if they post often, maybe two to four times per day.

17. What is your opinion about companies who only posts pictures of their physical products?

A - I would not follow them because then I would rather go to their webpage, it is not what I want and it would destroy my Instagram feed.

B - It depends on what kinds of picture they post. I follow them because I want to see their products but if the pictures are boring or not of any interest for me I would not follow them.

C - I think first and for all, that then they have nothing to contribute with. They have no… like they are not especially skilled because posting a picture on for example an iPhone is not especially hard. So, a bit **i**ncompetent also, uninteresting and… also a bit shallow.

D - It depends on the pictures.

E - Boring, I want to get inspired when visiting a company's Instagram account.

F - I would say that such a company would be really boring to follow and if they do not post any information or anything about it, it would be so exhausting and time consuming to try to find that information.

G - **Depends on what kind of products**.

> *Let's say products that you are interested in?*

> **G** - Yes, well then it is good I guess. I don't know, if it is like nutrition supplements its not as fun with like, yet another powder. If it is clothes, I mean that is something that you change daily but you don't change nutrition supplement daily, or TV, but with clothes you do. So a company that sells something that you buy often maybe could do that.

H - It gets boring after a while since… like if it is a company that does not post a lot then you at least get to see their new products and that can be interesting but a company that constantly post products then it becomes old. But it also depends on the product!

I - That it easily can become flat. (Silence) The best in that case is to alternating.

> *What should they alternating with?*

> **I** - Show another side of the company or maybe behind the scenes of the company, maybe how it looks in the office or.. the production of a product where you get a bit more insight.

J - It gets boring, I have one company who does that, Sephora, and I have already unfollowed them ones, then decided to follow them again because I *really* like their store. But to be honest, it drags down my perception of them.

18. Do you follow any companies that reflect your lifestyle or a lifestyle that you wish for and what drives/would drive you to do so?

A - Yes, because I would feel a connection to them. Like if they know me and know what I want.

B - I follow a lot of bloggers who seem to have nice lives that inspires me, so maybe if that counts.

C - Yes, partly that blogger I follow but if I followed a company it probably would be some that confirms my lifestyle, rather than some that I would like to have. But then… it is also inspiring with something that I would like to have.

D - Yes. The interior accounts for example. I follow them to get inspiration.

E - Hmmm, no I would not say that. Or I follow Lagerhouse and I think they have nice stuff and I often make purchases from the company so maybe it reflects my lifestyle a little bit.

F - Yes, I follow them because they post nice things, especially about travelling and it gives me inspiration and I find new things I would like to do in the future.

G - Sportamore probably does and I follow them because I like their stuff.

H - Absolutely, like workout accounts. I already follow some profiles to get inspiration and motivation… and many of them also have their own brands that they are marketing and selling.

I - No.

> *Is it something that you could do?*
>
> **I** - I cannot really picture it in my head

J - Well, lifestyle I do not know, but hobby definitely! Six of the seven companies that I follow are makeup-related.

19. Do you follow any companies on Instagram that are connected to your occupation or your future occupation and what drives/would drive you to do so?

A - No I do not but I would definitely consider doing that but it would not be because of my personal interests but rather due to my professional self. It can be good to follow companies connected to my occupation in order to learn about the industry and to see what competitors do.

B - I work extra at a bank. If the bank I work on created an account I would follow it but not any other account that is related to my job.

C - Ehm… no, like, I have worked with interior before so… so that would be relevant, and now I am studying to communicator, so like *everything* is really interesting. In that way it would be interesting to follow all different kind of things really, to see what happens out there.

> *Your future job then, would you consider to follow a company related to your occupation?*
>
> **C** - Yes. Ehm… like I read a lot of blogs for example that is related to this so then I could just as easy follow on instagram really… It might also be a necessity since social media will be included one way or another in my future occupation.

D - Yes I do, I follow the company that I work for.

E - Right now I am a student but I do not follow any company that reflects any of my extra jobs and I do not follow my school or anything. But I think I could consider following something related to my future occupation because it could be nice to learn more about it.

F - No I do not. Do not know what my future occupation will be so it is hard to say, sorry..

G - No but if my work has had an Instagram I would have followed it.

H - I do not follow any but I definitely could do so in order t**o** see how they work and their offerings and… well, what they want to sell and so. So that you know where your have your competitors.

I - No but I could do it but in a more educational purpose, like more information.

J - No I do not, I am not sure if I can see any purpose with it actually..

20. Do you follow any company on Instagram that you never had an offline experience with, what drives/would drive you to do so?

A - No but I could consider doing it if I liked them.

B - No, but if they had a nice Instagram account and if I **liked their products** I could do that.

C - I think that I could do that. It probably depends on how transparent they are, like how close one feel that they can become. Or some who you think that you will have an offline experience with in the future. Like the blogger for example, I have never met her or read her books.

D - No but if I really liked their Instagram I would not mind starting to follow them even if I did not have an offline experience with them.

E - Yes I do! And I think Instagram is a good way to find new companies you did not know existed. So if I found a company, which post pictures I like and from which I could consider buying something from I would definitely start following it, even if I never had an experience with them in the real world.

F - Yes, yes I do and it is because I like their products.

G - No I do not but I could do it in order to get inspiration about, like...workout.

H - Well I do not follow any companies right now but I have followed companies that I never had an offline experience with. It was a workout-profile so it was mostly for inspiration.

I - Ehm, no, no I don't.

J - Yes, two actually. One that gives me inspiration and one that keeps me updated.

21. If you follow a company on instagram that you are satisfied with, would you still consider following other companies on Instagram within the same field?

A - Yes, definitely, I think the chance is bigger that I follow a lot in the same product category

B - Not necessarily, it depends on what kinds of pictures the other accounts are posting.

C - I think that I would be satisfied with one, if I feel that it satisfies all of my needs. Ehm…yes, that's what I think.

D - Yes I could do that, to gain more inspiration.

E - It totally depends on how the other companies Instagram accounts are. If they had nice pictures and if I liked the products I could start following them.

F - (Silence) There is a chance that I would but not necessarily.

G - Yes, I could. Since both compete about me, both want me to shop from their store. They are not friends in any way and it favors me to follow two companies since I get offerings from both.

H - Yes, of course. Why not? You are always interested in competing offerings and so. Maybe I would not follow a lot of other companies, it can be too much but two or three that do not update too often would be ok.

I - Yes I would consider to do that and that is because.. to… to not limit myself. To get different opinions from different parties.

J - Yes, it gives me more inspiration and different offerings.

22. How would you react if you hear negative feedback about a company that you follow and are satisfied with on Instagram?

A - As long as they post inspiring pictures or creative ads I would not care if other people are dissatisfied with them.

> *Would it affect your buying decisions?*
>
> **A** - If other users say that the company is bad, that the products do not get delivered or that the company fools their customers I would not buy anything from them.

B - If I hear a lot of negative about the company, I would reconsider my purchase decision concerning that company.

C - If I would have had my own connection with the company in reality I possibly still would go with my own experiences and opinions. Although, if it were a company that I did not have any other contact with except from others opinions, these perceptions would be more important… Then.. I would have tried to find more information and if it turns out that the company stands for something that I do not stand for or do something that I do not consider to be right then it is just to stop following them.

D - Depends on what kind of negative feedback it is. If it was something really bad I might have stopped following them but if it just was that someone has had a bad experience with the company I would not have cared that much.

E - If you mean that many people comment a lot of negative about it I do not think I would care because I very seldom look at other users comments. I would not unfollow the company due to that but if they had done something really bad, for example boggles their customers on money or something I would unfollow them and **never buy** something from them. I would probably tell all my friends about it as well.

F - I do not think I would react at all..

> *Would it affect your buying decisions?*
>
> **F** - Yes of course, if a lot of people say that the company does not keep it promises or something else I would not buy from that company.

G - That depends on what type of critique it is, if it is like child labor or something. But I probably would not care that much, if it works for me I don't care what others say.

H - Then I would see how their response are on that post, if they respond at all or not at all, and then I would take a standpoint from that answer. But if I have a good perception of the brand I probably would not unfollow them or stop buying from them because someone says something negative.

I - It would probably depend on what it the feedback is about I think. If it would be… something extreme such as affecting the environment in their production I probably would have **unfollowed** them. If it would be something that I still could have anticipated, such as their price is too high or something I don't think it would have affected me.

J - I often listen if others have negative things to say, but I would still make my own decision. It has to be something really bad for me to stop buying or unfollowing a company.

23. How can, in your opinion, companies be trustworthy/create trust on Instagram?

A - To be, (silence) honest. For me it would be important that they had man**y** followers, like "Oh they have one million followers, now I will follow them too".

B - Ehm. For me it is important that there are good reviews about them and that people reviewing them in a good way. Many followers are also a sign of trustworthiness; according to me it indicates that people are buying their products and that it is a well-known brand.

C - Well, its about not uploading pictures that are edited for example, that are uploaded at the same moment as they are taken and then they are more honest kind of… And the trust.. Well, maybe they can write a little text, that is interesting to the picture and … that, like we talked about before that it is not just a fixed or edited picture on a product with white background but that the picture says more and that it is well thought out... and that it is uploaded with a purpose also.

Ehm… if they post pictures on their fellowship it shows of strength or something.. so then I can feel more trust. Maybe also if they dare to stand out and show their opinions and so on.

D - I do not really know. Maybe that they publish nice pictures that are nicely taken and not bad pictures. And have relevan**t** and good stuff in their pictures. Not like offerings that are not true and do not exist in reality and not fool their customers and followers.

E - (Silence) For me it is important that they do not only post about offerings but a variety in their pictures. It is quite important how many followers the company has as well and if many people like and comment their pictures because then it feels like they have a wide customer base. But for me the most important is what kind of pictures they post.

F - I do not think that they should scoop out pictures of their products only but also post some behind the scenes pictures and that the manager should post something, to make it more personal.

G - By answering on questions and comments. Trust… I don't know, I think that is it.

H - It could be hard maybe…I actually do not know. But being more persona**l**? As I said before it can create another view of the company, so maybe that… but trust, that is hard.

I - By not exaggerate or say that they are something that they are not. To keep it as real as possible.

J - Hard, but they need to be real and personal. Kind of create a feeling of that they are just as your other friends in your feed maybe? I would fall for that at least (Laughs).

24. What kinds of emotions do you like the company's pictures to evoke?

A - I want them to be creative and new thinking and do something cool to make me feel like WOW!! This was cool. Which is why I follow many photographers etc. It can just be a cool picture with many powerful colors or something and twisted with mirrors, something that is extraordinary.

B - I want to feel inspired and I want the pictures to make me happy.

C - That was a hard question… Well, if I follow to be **i**nspired then I want to create some feeling of desire for doing something, energy and want to fix something, get inspired and want to do it right away or do something. And if I follow more for confirming my lifestyle or so then I am searching for a feeling more that makes me calm and satisfied, and safe.

D - A desire that I want the products or inspiration.

E - The most important is that I feel inspired and I also like pictures of for example beautiful places of the world that like, take my breath away and make me feel like WOW! So I guess I want to feel happy and excited!

F - I want some kind of feelings in the pictures, if it is for example travelling pictures that they bring out the feeling in the pictures and that they make me want it. I want a company to create a feeling that I "must have" their products.

G - Love! No, feelings…? Endorphins! No, I don't know… I just want discounts. I don't care about inspiration or so.

H - Happiness, inspiration… kind of.

I - Well… mostly very happy.

J - Happy and… **i**nspired, like I have to try the product or buy that outfit, something like that.

25. How important is it for you to know the people behind the company?

A - Not important at all on social medias, it can be whoever.

Why do you feel this way?

A - Because I only want to be inspired and we know so little about people anyway, I might be follow a criminal without knowing about it. When I am on Instagram and see a cool picture I do not care about if the person behind the picture is a criminal. Of course I would not like him to be but on Instagram it is the picture that is in focus. BUT if I would consider buying from the company then it would matter because I would not like to buy anything from a company who uses for example child labor.

B - Not so important on Instagram but if I consider buying something from the company it would be important for me.

C - Well that is not as important for me. I almost have negative feelings towards this with names, all companies nowadays have like Nicklas in the Police force and Morgan from Ullared and… that all companies all of a sudden have become a person that represents them, that is just unnecessary because a company consists of all of the employees. So I rather see that the company like, talk as a whole.

D - It is not so important.

E - It is something I never reflected over, so I would say it is not important at all for me. If a like the company's products and I know that it is a respectable company I would make purchases from that company.

F - It is not important at all for me, whether it is on Instagram or in real life.

G - It is not that important, it depends on what type of company it is. If it's a company that I don't know much about then maybe I Google them so that its not Hells Angels who are the founders. But often I know who I am buying from and what other websites or stores that they own, for example the owners of Sportamore are the ones that founded Lunarstorm. More that I know who the owners are and so on, where their headquarter and inventory are located and such.

What would you think if Sportamore started to post pictures of their employees?

G - They do sometimes, and it is nice because you have a better picture of who the people behind the company are, those who pack my orders or whatever.

H - Well, it is not super important, it is not depending on whether I would buy from them or not but… it is always fun to see, especially if it is a company that you often purchase from so that you can see who it is that pack the order and who do this, and this, and this.

I - If I would follow like a small company it would matter quite a lot. But if it is like, Coca Cola it doesn't matter because then I probably would have followed them anyway.

> T*his small company then, if you get to see the people behind the company what would it give you?*

> **I** - It would give me a sort of trust probably… to gain insight. It would be nice.

J - It is not that important but I think it is fun, it becomes more personal and I like that.

26. If you needed to contact a company, where would you turn? (Instagram, website, etc.)

A - I have used twitter when for example contacting SJ because I know they are very fast at answering questions there. Otherwise I would send an email or call the company.

> *In what respect would you consider turning to Instagram?*

> **A** - Never Instagram, other social medias like Twitter seem more appropriate. I would not like everybody on Instagram to see what I am writing to the company, on Twitter I do not have a lot of followers so that is why I feel like I can write there.

B - If I saw a picture on Instagram of a product I would maybe ask when they would get it out in their store. For other questions I would turn to their customer support center. I would never turn to a company's Instagram and tell them for example that my order has not arrived.

C - I would *not* turn to Instagram. Then I would have looked at their website and found a phone number or email or contact form but definitely through the website.

> *In what respect would you consider turning to Instagram?*

> **C** - (Silence) Well if… If I did follow a company I could, or if I wanted to give positive feedback to the company then I could go to their account and like a picture or write a comment… a relevant picture then of course. But if I would have anything negative to say I would not have turned to Instagram to say that. And not even if I would have followed them cause then there is other forums for that.

D - Depend on what it is but if it was something I could read myself to I would turn to their webpage

In what case could you consider to turn to Instagram?

D - I do not think that there is any case where I would turn to Instagram because there it is impossible to write something private. And it does also feel like they do not have very much information on their Instagram accounts. The only thing would be to ask for opening hours if it were a local company.

E - I would visit the company's website in order to find an email or a phone number.

In what respect would you consider turning to Instagram?

E - Not if I had questions about a purchase I had made or something regarding the payment etc. I do not think I would ever write to a company on Instagram actually.

F - First of all I would turn to their customer support service.

Is there some occasions where you would turn to Instagram?

F - Not if I had some questions regarding a purchase or their products. But maybe if there was some competition of some kind and I had questions or wanted information regarding it.

G - Their website, look for phone numbers or such.

Is there any subject for which you would use Instagram to get in contact with the company?

G - It would probably be my last choice. Its official and there is no private thread where I can raise my questions, then I have to comment on a picture, which feels very strange if I have another purpose with the contact… Only time would be if I want to trash talk them, if I am mad at them and want to do it publicly. But otherwise no.

H - Telephone. I would not use Instagram since you have to comment on a post. Maybe if I were *really* disappointed.

Could you do the same if you had positive feedback?

H - Well, it is like so that you rarely write the positive things as easy as you do with negative things. If I were *really, really* satisfied I would.

I - Website or customer service.

Is there any subject where you would consider to use Instagram as a contact tool?

I - (Silence) No.

J - I would email them. Only time I could use Instagram would be for general questions, not personal things like when my order will be delivered.

27. How do you feel about companies who start following you on Instagram instead of the other way around?

A - I would have been happy. Or it depends; if a company that I follow start to follow me I would be happy and feel that our relationship is getting stronger.

B - That has happened to me. A big company started to follow me, but I do not t think that it was the actual company but someone who made an account and pretended to be them. But it would feel desperate.

C - It has happened. And I have this setting where I have to permit those who want to follow me and it has happened a couple of times now that I have noticed that there are companies who follow me that I have not given my permission to, which is... I don't even know how it has happened, and then I just get pissed off because then you really are not trustworthy and… no. I noticed once that there were someone who liked my picture and then I saw that they followed me in my follower list, I don't get how it is possible. Anyway, it does not give a positive or trustworthy impression at all, so they were thrown out again! Overall even if, like, say that Ikea would like to start to follow me it would just have felt weird like firstly they cannot follow everybody and secondly they have other things to do, because even if I would like to have a relationship with them… they cannot have a private relation with everybody so it would just feel like they were spying.

D - I think I would have found it a little bit weird, depending on what kind of company it was especially if it was an established company, while smaller companies does it in order to make people aware of them.

E - I would consider it desperate and I would not think that it would be an professional or established company who did that. When random companies start to follow me I do not understand how they found me and I do not like it. On the other hand, if it was a company that I followed and I know it was a respectable company that started to follow me I think I would be happy and feel special.

F - It does not feel like it would be such an established brand that would do that. I would get a feeling that they want to reach out to people and that is was a newly established company.

G - It feels like they fishing for something and it feels desperate. But it also depends on the company and how big they are, but often it is so that I will see them, it's their way of marketing themselves through following me.

H - I feel that they are fishing for followers and likes, but it can also be that they want people to notice them on Instagram. There are several companies who do this, I think that… the worst is when a company unfollows you and then start following you again and do so until you follow them back or so. That is really annoying.

I - Scary

> *Why would it be scary?*

> **I** - Because I don't know what they would do with that information. What they want me.

J - I do not like it, I have a couple of companies that follow me and since I have a open profile I cannot do anything about it. It does not feel serious, at least not the ones that follow me.