Community Management on Social Networking Sites: Why and How Stakeholders Use Corporate Facebook Pages

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Abstract
In recent years corporations have become increasingly active on social networking sites (SNS). From a communication management perspective, such sites offer great potential to communicate with stakeholders on online communities directly. However, our understanding about how and why individuals use corporate pages on SNS has not kept pace. In our study, we apply a combined perspective of uses-and-gratifications (U&G) and social cognitive theory (SCT) to investigate users’ incentives to consume and interact with Swiss corporations on Facebook. Based on our literature review we conducted an online survey (N=215). Exploratory factor analyses (EFA) identified the incentive dimensions of SCT underlying the motives of brand page use. Our results suggest interconnections of incentive dimensions unique to brand page usage: For consumption, novel incentives liaise with self-reactive incentives. Likewise, self-reactive incentives are connected to practical and ideological motivations for participation on corporate pages. Further implications for community management on SNS will be discussed.

1. Introduction

Many communication processes of our daily lives today take place in the digital environment of the web 2.0, i.e. on social networking sites (SNS). The term web 2.0 is used as an umbrella term to describe internet technology, which allows users to participate, work collaboratively, and interact instantly via computer-mediated communication [1]. Web 2.0-based applications such as Facebook are also called social media. On such applications, users can maintain own profile pages on which they can provide and exchange content with other users [2]. Furthermore, social media allow users to publicly articulate their social connections on an application. Much user-generated-content is also provided in the form of news streams which allows users to see the activities of their network connections on the site [3].

Early research on the use of SNS often focused on so called “digital natives”, which grew up with internet technology and therefore naturally acquired usage competencies with new media. In recent years, we also see a trend of people born after 1980 to increasingly use Web 2.0 applications [4, 5].

In 2007, Facebook opened its services to corporations. From then on, it was possible not only for individuals, but also for corporations to maintain a profile page. Organizational pages (such as corporate or product pages) on Facebook are also called brand pages and allow corporations to share their businesses and products with Facebook users [6].

Due to the above developments, many companies have discovered SNS for corporate communication and started to maintain corporate (brand) pages on Facebook. By having users connect to a brand page, companies build up their own online community of fans and followers. Thus, a corporation’s social network brand page community can be defined as the composition and size of the user network that utilizes a corporate page. From a corporate perspective, brand page users can generally be described as stakeholders. Their use of a brand page links the individual (represented by his/her online profile) to the corporation and makes him/her a communication partner on the brand page. Ridings et al. [7] have described a number of stakeholder types on SNS, such as lurkers or posters, who differ in their communication behavior. From a communication management perspective, community management on brand pages, thus, involves the provision and exchange of relevant information with online stakeholders on such pages.
Arguably, SNS offer great potential for communication management to engage in discussions with the community and (potential) customers, shareholders and other stakeholder groups. Recently, scholars have started to investigate how individuals use corporate pages on various SNS [6, 8, 9, 10]. However, these few existing investigations often take a qualitative approach and focus either exclusively on marketing or public relations (PR) communication. Other studies elaborate on individuals’ use of online communities to retrieve product and service information, but do not link such usage to the use of brand platforms [7]. Therefore we are facing a lack of studies that allow us to gain a broader understanding about why and how individuals use corporate pages on Facebook.

Our paper addresses this research gap by investigating the motives individuals have to read the postings on corporate Facebook pages, network with corporations, post own content, as well as to interact with corporations and other community members on the corporate Facebook page. In order to bridge the gap between marketing and PR literature, we follow an integrated approach to communication management which allows us to take the findings of both disciplines into account to describe community behavior on Facebook more holistically.

In our study we apply a combined theoretic approach of uses-and-gratifications (U&G) [11] and social cognitive theory (SCT) [12] brought forward by LaRose and Eastin [13, 14]. In addition, we analyze peoples’ usage motives in regard to three different types of web 2.0 behavior [15]. Exploratory factor analysis allows us to tie the usage motives investigated to the incentive dimensions of SCT for each respective usage type. The implications of the findings for further investigations into community management on SNS will be discussed.

2. Theoretical approach

2.1. The U&G approach and its application to corporate Facebook page use

The U&G approach [11] is probably the oldest and most popular perspective for investigating patterns of media use. The basic assumption suggests that people’s use of any type of media is purposeful and goal-oriented. By turning to media offers, individuals seek to satisfy particular needs, which can be described as gratifications [16]. These gratifications vary among individuals and can be divided into two groups: gratifications sought (GS) and gratifications obtained (GO).

Whereas GS are defined as the motives of individuals to consume certain media, GO represent the actual gratifications resulting from media consumption. The possibility of experiencing a discrepancy between what was sought and obtained indicates that media consumption does not necessarily lead to a satisfaction of the prior needs [17]. Therefore, individuals will evaluate the perceived discrepancy between the GS and GO, i.e. how well certain media turned out to gratify one’s individual needs. Over time, the result of this evaluation is cognitively processed as media knowledge and will be drawn upon in future situations of media choice [18].

Critics of the approach pointed at the necessity of surveying media users twice, i.e. before and after media usage, which might impact the accuracy of the results obtained, since individuals might feel the need to match their GOs with previously formulated GSs (social desirability). Furthermore, the U&G approach has often been criticized for being a theoryless research paradigm which only serves to offer lists of reasons as to why audiences attend to the media [19]. In addition, scholars criticized that U&G focus too much on audience activity and do not account for rather unreflected and habitualized media behavior [20]. It can be argued that the web 2.0 environment undermines the latter argument since any use of social web applications necessarily requires an active audience [19, 21].

So far, most studies which employed the U&G approach to investigate the gratifications of internet and Web 2.0 use adopted gratification items retrieved from previous studies on traditional media use. However, it became obvious that traditional media gratifications often seemed to inadequately represent the reasons driving internet behavior [22, 23, 24]. Therefore, LaRose et al. [13, 14] argued for the theoretic advancement of U&G with SCT [12] in order to explain the often-observed relationship between media gratifications and media use more adequately, and thus increase the explanatory power of the U&G paradigm.

2.2. The advancement of the U&G approach with SCT

Bandura’s [12] social cognitive theory (SCT) posits a reciprocal effect between individuals, their behavior and the environment. Behavior is viewed as an observable act and the performance of a specific behavior is determined by its expected consequences, i.e. the expected outcomes. The latter are formed through cognitive processes, most importantly by observing and imitating the behavior of other individuals in one’s
environment (vicarious learning) or by learning from experience (enactive learning).

Within the socio-cognitive approach to U&G, media use is seen as overt media behavior that is determined by expected outcomes, which are assumed to follow consumption. Consequently, gratifications sought can be explained as expected outcomes of media behavior. The expected outcomes serve as motives for media behavior, which are called incentives in SCT terminology. Bandura [12] differentiates six incentive dimensions, constituting broad categories in which to group motives for media use [14]: Activity incentives aim to satisfy the wish to take part in enjoyable activities and mainly include entertainment gratifications. Monetary incentives describe financial motives, especially money-generating motives for using certain media. Incentives to search for new information to acquire knowledge are called novel incentives, whereas social incentives relate to interactions with others to discuss or exchange opinion. Expected outcomes to regulate one’s mood or emotional state can be subsumed under self-reflective incentives. Finally, status incentives point to motives of social power and image cultivation.

A recent study in Germany investigating the U&Gs of Web 2.0 across different applications revealed two additional incentive categories specific to the social web [25]. The author found ideological incentives, which refer to behavior driven by an individual’s personal ideals and values, i.e. altruism; as well as practical incentives. The latter can be described as meta-outcome expectations since they describe motives, which catalyze outcome expectations, rather than posing unique motives, by themselves, i.e. laziness, comfort, organization or flexibility.

In research so far, the theoretic combination of U&G with SCT has yielded much higher explanation rates for internet and web 2.0 use than most traditional U&G studies [14, 25]. Furthermore, a central advantage in research design is that motivations no longer need to be prompted twice. This is due to their conceptualization as outcome expectations. Single prompting of media use incentives also helps to minimize social desirability issues addressed above. This is why we argue that the combined perspective seems promising to investigate the expected outcomes of corporate Facebook page usage.

2.3. Web 2.0 usage types

A distinction of web 2.0 usage types which has become prominent in recent investigations into corporate communication on SNS is one between rather passive usage, such as consumption [6, 9], and rather active use such as contributing [10] or engaging activities [6]. However, it can be argued that a dichotomous distinction of user activity is not complex enough to uncover the diverse uses people make of web applications. Consequently, it seems more adequate to measure audience activity on an interaction continuum from low to high.

Such an approach is offered by Shao [15], who differentiates three usage types for user-generated media (UGM): consumption, participation and production. In his paper, he describes media use which is limited to watching, reading or viewing behavior as consuming usage, the lowest level of interaction. Participation involves basic user-to-user interaction and user-to-content interaction, such as rating content (e.g. “like”) and sharing it with others. It can be argued that the establishment of a network connection on SNS could also be described as participating usage, since this type of behavior includes a rather basic form of user-to-user interaction. Participation behavior can, but must not necessarily follow consumption. For example, reading corporate messages can motivate users to network with a corporation to keep updated on corporate news in one’s news feed. Likewise, reading corporate postings in the news feed can pose a motivation to comment on a corporate post. The ladder describes the highest level of interaction with a brand page and is called production, which refers to the “creation and publication of one’s personal contents such as text, images, audio and video” [15].

The first empirical applications of the above mentioned typology revealed that a clear distinction between participating and producing usage was hard to draw [25]. This was assumed to be mainly due to Shao’s [15] conceptualization of participating usage, which included a mixture of basic (rate and share content) and more interactive user-to-user/content interactions, such as the posting of comments on a web platform. To further increase the distinction between participating and producing usage, we classify all content-generating activities, which result in the production of text (i.e. commenting on existing posts), under the production label. This classification seems suitable since it allows us to tie individuals’ motives to use corporate pages to distinct media behavior.

3. Literature review: Usage motives of corporate pages on web 2.0 applications

Investigations into the micro-perspective of why people turn to organizational messages on SNS remain
largely unexplored. In addition, studies using the combined perspective of U&G with SCT in the context of web 2.0 are rare [25, 26]. Among the pioneering studies to pursue a recipient-centered approach to corporate communication on SNS are the works by Vorvoreanu [6], Men and Tsai [8, 9], Ruehl and Ingenhoff [10] as well as Enginkaya and Yilmaz [27]. Likewise, in the field of marketing, only a few studies focus on consumer engagement on SNS [28, 29].

In addition, a substantial amount of studies was concerned with rather general motives to use applications on the web 2.0 [25, 30, 31, 32, 33]. Even though such rather general studies on SNS use are not directly concerned with the use of corporate offerings, their findings can help us conceptualize items for our study by transferring general motives to a brand page context.

In the following sections, we will discuss the state of research on the usage motives of corporate pages on SNS according to the above-described differentiation of the three types, i.e. consumption, participation and production [15]. The arguments to use corporate pages brought forward by the authors are italicized.

Since consumption, participation and production behavior are conceptualized on a continuum of interaction from low to high, we identify the motivations for brand page usage at the lowest interaction level, at which they are likely to occur first.

3.1. Consumption motives of corporate pages

Vorvoreanu [6] found that the majority of US students investigated had negative feelings about organizations being on Facebook and preferred the network to be exclusively for communication with friends and family. Yet, students were willing to accept corporations in return for rewards, i.e. coupons or discounts [also 23] or when they could take part in competitions.

Lately, researchers [9, 10, 11, 27, 28, 29] found that the primary reasons for people to consuming messages on corporate pages are to obtain product, promotional and corporate information, which they can trust. Furthermore, entertainment [27], relaxation and passing the time motivated individuals to visit corporate Facebook pages [9, 10]. Next to their interest in corporate product pictures and videos or advertising material student users were found to visit corporate Facebook pages because they want to play free games or quizzes [7, 27], or to seek unique company information, which they cannot find anywhere else on brand pages [10]. Interestingly, all authors come to the conclusion that individuals use corporate SNS pages passively to a major extent by reading/looking at available content.

3.2. Participation motives of corporate pages

Looking at the next higher interaction level, research shows that individuals are likely to establish a network connection with a corporation, i.e. “like” a corporate page, to primarily serve their self-presentational and image management needs [6, 10, 28]. Scholars point out that especially digital natives want to let others know which products and services they use, as well as which products and services suit their lifestyle by establishing a publicly visible network connection with a brand or product page on Facebook [10, 27]. Since the network connection becomes visible to other users through system notifications and the signalization of the brand connection in the “like” section of a person’s profile, the above motivations can be included in the participatory usage type.

Other researchers [6, 10] found that digital natives network with corporations because they feel close to the corporation or think that others will have a positive image of themselves/think of them as being sympathetic. Next to rather self-centered motives, businesses in the USA and Europe were befriended out of sympathy and the wish to support a corporation by “liking” their page, stating ideological incentives [6, 10].

A major reason to connect with brand pages is that establishing a network connection automatically results in the following of news updates on the respective brand page. This means that by liking a corporate page, corporate postings will prospectively appear in one’s news feed. Therefore, a brand connection seems to represent an easy way to receive continuous, instant information about the company [29]. For some European users, this seems to equal the motive to keep in touch with an organization in an easy manner [10, 27].

3.3. Production motives of corporate pages

Looking at the most interactive type of web 2.0 usage described in Shao’s classification, our literature research shows that one of the most prominent reasons to produce content on corporate pages is to inquire specific information from a company. This can either be general (new) product or service information, customer support inquiries or information about the company itself (non-product/service-related information) [6, 10, 29]. Furthermore, information exchanges with other users serve as major incentive to post content on corporate pages, i.e. asking questions to the community, commenting/answering questions posed by other users or just engaging in general discussions about the company and its products/services with the community.
Likewise, reactions to postings by the company eliciting feedback from the community are often mentioned interaction motives [8, 9, 10].

The provision of feedback to the company and community in the form of product reviews, praise but also criticism are objectives pursued by many users of corporate pages in recent years in different parts of the world [9, 10, 27]. Publicly criticizing a corporation seems to reduce stress and frustration among users and in turn, allow them to feel good/better [7, 25, 31]. Publicly visible statements were found to gratify some people’s need for public attention [30], with the further motive to exert influence on others (community members, corporation) [9] and the effect to appear competent [7, 11, 15, 31], not shy to publicly interact with corporations [32] and to receive recognition for one’s contributions [11, 15, 30]. Pai and Arnott [32] found for general SNS use, that users prefer such channels for messaging since they expect to receive answers more promptly than through other forms of communication. Likewise, users were found to be less inhibited to communicate with strangers on Facebook than through other channels [33], which might arguably also hold for communication with corporations.

However, again, most authors concluded that respondents had, in general, little interest in interacting with organizations on Facebook [9, 10]. Some were found to prefer more formal media, i.e. telephone and email to engage in dialogue with an organization [6].

The findings of the above literature research raise the question how the different motives to use corporate pages on Facebook identified among the three usage types of web 2.0 can be explained, or rather be placed on the different SCT incentive dimensions. Therefore, our research questions are: Which incentive dimensions best describe users’ motives to...

**RQ 1:** ...consume corporate Facebook pages?

**RQ 2:** ...participate on corporate Facebook pages?

**RQ 3:** ...produce content on corporate Facebook pages?

### 4. Method

In order to answer our research questions, we conducted an online-survey to investigate the incentives to use Facebook brand pages. The survey was programmed using the questionnaire web application LimeSurvey. The survey URL was active for four weeks from mid December 2014 to mid January 2015. Using snowball sampling technique, the URL to access the survey was communicated to 20 communication science scholars who volunteered to post the link on their Facebook wall and ask people for participation in our study. Furthermore, readers of the post containing the study URL were asked to further share the post among their network connections. The application of snowball sampling and URL redistribution by participants was chosen to reach a variety of people with different backgrounds from diverse geographic locations participate in our study. Snowball sampling is applicable in this research since the population we are interested in is geographically widely spread and not easily definable through listings or other easily accessible information. Furthermore, since snowball sampling involves individuals recruiting other individuals to take part in our survey on Facebook, the social connections between individuals - i.e. network connections - are likely to positively impact survey participation [34, 35].

At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked four filter questions to determine (1) how often they use Facebook in general, (2) how often they read corporate posts on Facebook, (3) how often they “like” corporations on Facebook, and (4) how often they make postings on corporate Facebook pages. Answer possibilities included “once or several times a day”, “once or several times a week”, “once or several times a year”, “less than once a year”, and “never”. In case respondents indicated that they “liked” brand pages on Facebook, they were also asked to estimate the amount of corporations, they are connected with. News pages, such as Euronews, CNN news, BBC News etc. were excluded from the investigation.

Once all filter questions were answered, participants were directed to the respective question blocks applying to their specific user type(s). Questions about the incentives for brand page consumption, participation and production were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The questions were formulated using SCT question wording [14] to have people indicate the likelihood with which they expected a certain outcome to drive their use of corporate Facebook pages, i.e.: “When I read postings of corporations on Facebook, it is likely that…” (consumption), “When I ‘like’ corporations on Facebook, it is likely that…” (participation), and “When I write a post or comment on a corporate Facebook page, it is likely that…” (production). At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate some basic demographic data.

All response data was analyzed respective to the usage behavior indicated by the participants. For each usage type, the response data was analyzed using exploratory factor analysis in SPSS 22 to reveal the underlying incentive dimensions of SCT fitting the various items applied.
5. Results

5.1. Presentation of results

In total, 271 people participated in the online-survey. After data cleansing, 215 (N; n_{female}=146, n_{male}=69) valid datasets were identified. Initial data analysis revealed that 174 persons (80.9%) consume corporate pages, 149 persons (68.2%) participate with brands, and 58 persons (26.9%) have already posted on corporate pages. Ten respondents (4.6%) indicated that they do not use corporate pages at all. On average, respondents use Facebook up to one hour a day and consume corporate pages once or several times a week. The average brand page user was 30 years old, connected with 27 corporations, hits the “like” button on brand pages once or several times a year, and produces content on brand pages less than once a year.

All item distributions were assessed and items exceeding a skewness value of one were excluded from the further analysis since they showed low communalities (<0.3) after log transformation. Initial EFA showed low communalities also for some normally distributed items, which were also excluded from further analysis since the variance of these items could not sufficiently be explained by the factors resulting from the EFA. The remaining items were statistically analyzed using exploratory factor analysis (Maximum-Likelihood method with Varimax rotation and extraction criteria of eigenvalue >1.0). The KMO measure for sample suitability indicated acceptable values for all items (consumption: .784; participation: .864; production: .814). The Barlett-test for sphericity was non-significant for all user type data sets. Therefore, data quality was acceptable to run exploratory factor analyses tests.

5.1.1. Factor solution for consumption items. Table 1 (see appendix) shows the results of the EFA for the consuming user type. The analysis suggests a three factor solution explaining 62.23% of the total variance in the data. Almost all items have relatively high factor loadings of >.5 on one factor, except “corporate pictures/ video clips” which has a factor loading slightly below .5. Two items load on two factors with a value higher than .3, whereas the respective higher loadings indicate a clear tendency towards one of the factors (“entertainment” and “information I can trust”). The first factor explains 37.13% of the total variance in the dataset, and includes the consumption incentives “entertainment”, “fun”, “pass time” and “corporate pictures/ video clips”.

Factor two explains 16.02% of the total variance and includes the four items “to form an opinion about a corporation’s products and services”, “to form a general opinion about the corporation”, “to find information I can’t find anywhere else” as well as “to find information that I can trust”. The third factor extracted with an eigenvalue bigger than one comprises the motive items “to receive vouchers, discount coupons or special offers”, “to take part in a competition”, and “to play a game or quiz for free”. These items explain 9.09% of the total variance.

5.1.2. Factor solution for participation items. The EFA of the operational measures for participation with brand pages show similarly distinct results: SPSS suggests a three factor solution in which factor one shows particularly high loadings above .79 and comprises the items “to convey a certain image/ impression of myself”, “to have others think of me as being sympathetic”, “to let others know which products and services suit my lifestyle” and “to let others know which products and services I buy”. The first factor explains most of the variance in participation with 44.02%.

The second factor explains 14.83% of the variance. The expected outcomes for “liking” corporations included in the second factor are “to have new posts on a corporation’s page appear in my news feed”, “to receive real-time information from corporations”, “to keep updated on news about the corporation, which I would not be looking for otherwise”, and “to sustain a relationship with the corporation in an easy manner”. These items explain a total variance of 14.83%.

The networking motives “I feel close to the corporation”, “I like the corporation/think of it as being sympathetic” and the need “to support the corporation” compose the third factor of this usage type, explaining 9.07% of the total variance in the dataset. In total, the three participation factors make up for 67.93% of the variance in the data (see table 2 in appendix).

5.1.3. Factor solution for production items. The third usage type is also best explained by a three factor solution explaining 64.3% of the total variance in the data. However, most items have rather high factor loadings of >.5 on the first factor. As a result, the first factor comprises ten production items, being “to comment on pictures/ videos”, “exchange opinion/ views with others”, “reduce stress and frustration”, “feel good/ better”, “less inhibited to contact the corporation through Facebook than through other channels”, “to catch other people’s attention”, “to want my posts to be appreciated by others”, “to influence the corporation and/ or other users”, “to want others to think I am a
Participation behavior can be explained mainly by four SCT dimensions in. Again, it seems that the motivations of traditional media usage, as well as general internet usage, for which monetary incentives are major drivers for brand page use [6], as opposed to general internet usage, for which monetary incentives do not play a major role [25].

Cronbach’s alpha shows very good reliability measures for all three consumption factors (factor 1: .838; factor 2: .831; factor 3: .856), which allows us to accept the factor solution as it is.

5.2. Interpretation of the results

Generally speaking, we find that the three factor solutions explain a substantial amount of the variance in the data with a minimum of 64% of variance explained. From the above results, it becomes now possible to interpret the items comprised in each extracted factor in regard to the incentives dimensions underlying the aggregated motivations for Facebook brand page use.

5.2.1. Interpretation of the factor solution for consuming usage. The first factor solution for consumption comprises the main items “entertainment”, “fun”, “pass time” and “corporate pictures/ video clips” which refer to rather enjoyable activities and therefore point to the activity incentive dimension of SCT [12]. The motivations included in the activity dimension are, thus, in line with generally acknowledged consumption motives of traditional media usage, as well as general internet usage [14, 15]

The second factor includes a mixture of novelty seeking incentives as well as self-reactive incentives for opinion forming (“to find information I can’t find anywhere else”, the intention to retrieve information from brand pages in general vs. “to form a general opinion about the products/ services of a corporation” and “the corporation in general”). Therefore, the second consumption factor can also be described as self-reactive novel incentives. It seems logical that the items on this factor fall together, since the need for new information might be accompanied with the feeling of emotional imbalance or distress, which can be balanced by receiving news information. The combination of self-reactive and novel motivations on one incentive factor has not been described in research so far. Thus, the results suggest that novel and self-reactive motivations for SNS brand page usage are interwoven.

The third factor extracted clearly points to monetary incentives, which are concerned with financial advantages resulting from the redemption of vouchers, winning products/services for free or playing free games. The quite high factor loadings of the monetary items supports earlier findings that financial benefits are major drivers for brand page use [6], as opposed to general internet usage, for which monetary incentives do not play a major role [25].

Cronbach’s alpha shows very good reliability measures for all three consumption factors (factor 1: .838; factor 2: .831; factor 3: .856), which allows us to accept the factor solution as it is.

5.2.2. Interpretation of the factor solution for participating usage. Participation behavior can be described as being motivated mainly by four SCT incentive dimensions. Among the first factor are items referring to image and impression management motives, which belong to the status incentive dimension in SCT. These findings are in line with earlier studies which describe Facebook as a tool to manage one’s online identity [36, 37]. Our results advance these findings by showing that individuals use brand pages for the same purpose. Thus, a user’s brand page connections can be seen as part of their social identity formation to convey and manage a certain (desired) image of oneself among other users. The reasons to use Facebook brand pages shown in factor two clearly point to a mixture of practical and novel incentives. It seems that “liking” corporate pages on Facebook offers a practical and easy solution to cater for individuals’ information needs. Therefore, the items among the second factor can be described as practical novel incentives. Again, the combination of the two dimensions advances our understanding of brand page usage in the sense that it combines motivations which have been investigated separately from each other in previous studies on web 2.0 behavior [25].

To “feel close to the corporation”, “to like the corporation/ think of it as being sympathetic” and to “support the corporation” among the third factor refer to behavior incentives altruism and longing for inner harmony, therefore pointing to a combined ideological self-reactive dimension of SCT. Also these findings differ from the results of general web 2.0 studies in which self-reactive and idealistic motivations were investigated separately.
Cronbach’s alpha shows good reliability values for all three participation factors extracted from the EFA, especially for factor 1 with a value of .915 (factor 2: .867, factor 3: .786), statistically supporting the acceptance of the items-factor composition with the data.

5.2.3. Interpretation of the factor solution for producing usage. The interpretation of the first factor solution for production behavior seems a little more complex. The items which load on the first factor can theoretically be assigned to the social incentive dimension (“to comment on pictures/videos”, “exchange opinion/views with others”), the self-reactive dimension (“reduce stress and frustration”, “feel good/better”, “less inhibited to contact the corporation through Facebook than through other channels”), as well as the status dimension (“to catch other people’s attention”, “want my posts to be appreciated by others”, “to influence the corporation and/or other users”, “to want others to think I am a competent person”, and “to show others that I am not shy to publicly communicate with corporations”) of SCT.

All items on the second factor include incentives to get in touch and interact with others on corporate pages, making it easy to theoretically place them among the social dimension. The items on the third factor comprise two self-reactive incentives in the form of being “less inhibited to contact the corporation through Facebook than through other channels” as well as “to receive a rapid answer”. Furthermore, the status motive “to influence others” highly loads on factor three.

It can be concluded that the factor matrix for production usage does not allow us to clearly allocate the items of each of the three factors on one distinct incentive dimension of SCT.

To be able to still draw conclusions about the applicability of the SCT incentive dimensions to production behavior, we will test the reliability of the items relating to the same incentive dimension as outlined above. By determining Cronbach’s alpha for the combination of all motives relating to one incentive dimension, we will be able to test whether or not the incentive dimensions can be applied to the data.

Cronbach’s alpha for the social items “to request concrete information from the company”, “to provide feedback about a corporation’s products and services”, “to react to the posts of corporations”, “to comment on pictures/videos” as well as “to exchange opinion/views with others” shows an acceptable reliability value of .759. Deleting the “requesting information” item increased the value slightly to .787, however, from a theoretical point of view, this does not seem appropriate since this item is one of the most representative items for social incentives.

Second, Cronbach’s alpha for all items relating to self-reactive incentives (“reduce stress and frustration”, “feel good/better”, “less inhibited to contact the corporation through Facebook than through other channels”, “feel good/better”, “to receive a rapid answer”) also shows an acceptable value of .782. Deleting the last item just mentioned increased Cronbach’s alpha to .789, again only posing a minor increase in the reliability value.

The last items to be assessed are the ones relating to status incentives (“to want my posts to be appreciated by others”, “to influence the corporation and/or other users”, “to want others to think I am a competent person”, “to show others that I am not shy to publicly communicate with corporations”, and “to catch other people’s attention”). These items have a very good Cronbach’s alpha value of .924.

The above analyses show that the EFA conducted for all items relating to the production of content of corporate Facebook pages initially did not allow for a clear allocation of one factor to a distinct SCT incentive dimension. However, the theoretical assignment of the items to a respective dimension allowed us to arrive at acceptable reliability values for each item package.

6. Discussion

6.1. Summary

In this study, we applied a combined perspective of U&G and SCT to investigate the incentives people have to use corporate Facebook pages. Our literature review analyzed the motives of (corporate) Facebook use brought forward in marketing and PR studies so far in regard to three usage types of Web 2.0 behavior (consumption, participation, production).

The results of our online survey (N=215) show that consumption behavior on corporate pages is mostly driven by activity incentives followed by self-reactive novel incentives and monetary incentives. Status incentives drive participation on brand pages, followed by practical novel incentives and self-reactive ideological incentives. Finally, exploratory factor analyses of the items motivating the production of content on a brand page did not allow us to clearly allocate the factor solution to one distinct SCT dimension per factor. A possible reason for this might lie in the rather low number of participants who indicated production use of corporate pages in our survey (n_produ=58).
In a second step, we theoretically assigned the production items to their respective SCT dimensions and conducted a reliability test for each item package, which yielded acceptable Cronbach’s alpha values. It can therefore be argued that the SCT dimensions applied offer a suitable theoretical foundation to explain brand page behavior.

Our results suggest that the theoretical differentiation of initially eight incentive dimensions for web 2.0 behavior seems applicable to study brand page behavior. However, we conducted exploratory factor analyses to gain a deeper understanding of the unique configurations of incentive dimensions for each user type. Following this path, brand page usage seems to have unique usage aspects which differ from general SNS usage in the sense that novel incentives were found to be intertwined with self-reactive (consumption) or practical (participation) usage motivations. Likewise, self-reactive motives were found to be interdependent with ideological motives (participation).

6.2. Limitations and future research

A limitation of our study refers to the representativeness of our results. The applied snowball sampling technique was based on a random selection of individuals to participate in our study. Therefore, statistical inferences from the sample to the entire Facebook brand page user population are not possible [34, 35].

Furthermore, our study applied motivations for brand page usage derived from a literature review on social media marketing and social media PR usage motives. Based on the literature, we theoretically assigned the SNS usage motives to the type of web 2.0 usage (consumption, participation, production) with which they are likely to occur first, given a continuum of user interactivity from low to high. Following this notion, another limitation refers to the fact that we did not intend to explore all incentive motivations possibly applicable to each user type1, but rather focused on gaining a comprehensive, statistically firm overview on the major prominent incentives for brand page usage.

Future research should broaden our study findings by applying a larger sample and test the proposed factor solutions for consumption and participation, as well as the item-packages for production incentives using confirmatory factor analysis. Since our literature review pointed out study findings obtained from investigations in different cultural areas, future research should further investigate the motives for corporate Facebook page use in different cultures with the same

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1 For a study which did so, refer to [10].

6.3. Implications for community management on corporate Facebook pages

Our results point to a number of implications for corporates’ effective community management on brand pages. First, the high number of participants indicating their use of corporate Facebook pages points out that company pages seem to be relevant communication outlets used by organizational stakeholders and therefore offer meaningful channels for community involvement and management. Yet, participation and production on the site remains rather low, since the vast amount of users only seem to consume the brand page content with very little interaction incentives.

To effectively manage one’s community on Facebook, it seems important to provide the users with entertaining and fun information about the corporation’s products and services, as well as offer competitions or other financial benefits such as vouchers. Such incentives are likely to keep up user interest and result in the continuous consumption of brand pages.

Status incentives and the need to manage one’s personality online indicate the willingness of users to “like” a corporation on Facebook. Therefore a positive corporate reputation might have a positive affect on community size and even result in the community’s support of the corporation because people feel close to it (self-reactive incentives). In addition, it seems as if the mere provision of continuous corporate information can already help to keep the community happy by gratifying their practical novel incentives to receive corporate updates in an easy manner.

The community’s incentives to interact with other users and the company on a brand page requires careful attention of the people managing the brand page to closely assess when company involvement is asked for and when the page provides a mere platform for community exchange. Once addressed directly, users tend to expect corporations to get back to them promptly, be it about general company inquiries, customer service inquiries, complaints, praise etc. Corporations showing appreciation for users’ contributions on their page are likely to be perceived positively, since community members seek social recognition from their posts.
7. References

### 8. Appendices

#### Table 1. Exploratory factor analysis results for consumption items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (expected outcome)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Factor*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...I want to feel entertained</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.517</td>
<td>.847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to have fun.</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.577</td>
<td>.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to pass time.</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.704</td>
<td>.623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to receive vouchers, discounts, offers for products and services.</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.840</td>
<td>.843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to take part in a competition.</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.826</td>
<td>.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to form an opinion about a corporation’s products and services.</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.621</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to form a general opinion about the corporation.</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.684</td>
<td>.876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to see corporate pictures or video clips.</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.790</td>
<td>.472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to play a game or quiz for free.</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to find information, which I can’t find anywhere else.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.621</td>
<td>.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I will find information that I can trust.</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.518</td>
<td>.507</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 2. Exploratory factor analysis results for participation items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (expected outcome)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Factor*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...I feel close to the corporation</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.473</td>
<td>.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I like the corporation/ think of it as being sympathetic</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.242</td>
<td>.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to support the corporation.</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.436</td>
<td>.688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to convey a certain image/impression of myself</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.762</td>
<td>.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...others will think of me as being sympathetic.</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.533</td>
<td>.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to let others know which products and services suit my lifestyle.</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.787</td>
<td>.819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to let others know which products and services I buy.</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.679</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to have new posts on a corporation’s page appear in my feed.</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.773</td>
<td>.677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to receive real-time information from corporations.</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.755</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to keep updated on news about the corporation, which I would not be looking for otherwise.</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.736</td>
<td>.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to sustain a relationship with the corporation in an easy manner.</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.602</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 3: Exploratory factor analysis results for production items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (expected outcome)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...I request concrete information from the company (on products, services)</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.779</td>
<td>.596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I provide feedback about products/services (i.e. review, praise, criticism)</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.701</td>
<td>.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I react to the posts of corporations (statements, questions etc.)</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.365</td>
<td>.634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I comment on pictures &amp; videos.</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.599</td>
<td>.432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I exchange opinions/ views/ information with other users.</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.619</td>
<td>.633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I reduce strain and stress/ frustration.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.636</td>
<td>.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I feel good/ better by doing so.</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I am less inhibited to contact the corp. through FB than otherwise.</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>1.616</td>
<td>.446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I expect to receive a prompt answer.</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.863</td>
<td>.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to catch other people’s attention.</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want my posts to be appreciated by others.</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.657</td>
<td>.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to influence the corporation and/or other users.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.995</td>
<td>.640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want others to think I am a competent person.</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.828</td>
<td>.930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...I want to show others that I am not shy to publicly communicate with corporations.</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.657</td>
<td>.834</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*factor loadings below .3 are not shown.