



Semester: 4th

Period: March 2018 – July 2018

Aalborg University Copenhagen
A. C. Meyers Vænge 15, 2450
København SV

Title:

Secretary: Maiken Keller

**Visual Digital Storytelling in Engaging the Audience
and Enhancing the Brand Awareness**

Semester Theme:

Master Thesis

Primary Supervisor:

Anders Henten

Secondary Supervisor:

Sergio Sparviero

Submitted by:

Ruiqi Zhou

Pages: 93

Finished: 29/07/2018

ABSTRACT

The advent of the multi-sided platform and new media altered the one-way communication in traditional storytelling as well as changed the paradigm of producing and consuming stories (Van Dijck, 2009). The emergence of visual content has been witnessed these years across almost all major social network players like Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram.

In the light of the service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) and business model canvas (Osterwalder, 2004), this thesis conducted in-depth case study of Tattoodo, a multi-sided service-oriented platform for tattoo community by qualitatively interviewing its head of customer success, marketing manager and AI engineer based on a modified analytical framework as well as empirical data from various sources to address how to strategically build up a digital world surrounding a brand in terms of enhancing the brand awareness with a visual content focus in order to win over businesses has posed challenges to most Internet firms.

Often are the cases, companies are facing a dynamic digital business environment with limited resource. Companies should establish their reputation through a strong network of social presence by prioritizing resource on various visual-oriented social channels. Taking into account the dynamics and attributes of different social channels, one should develop different initiatives with the purpose of contributing to an overall positive electronic word of mouth by a robust network of digital influencers and encouraging co-creating projects with the users.

Branding is an activity, not the purpose. To be able to make a multi-sided service-oriented platform functional eventually, well-designed digital technologies separating the company apart from its competitors like AI and social chatbots should be implemented to offer a better user experience to firstly retain the existing customer and secondly acquire more users by positive electronic word of mouth among customers.

When uploading this document to Digital Exam, the researcher confirms that **she** is responsible for the content of the Master Thesis. Furthermore, is liable for that there is no plagiarism in the report.

Table of Contents

List of Figures	2
Executive Summary	3
Digital Marketing for Digital Generation	4
Research Question	9
The State of Art in Digital Storytelling	10
Convergence	11
Digital Storytelling	12
Multiplatform Storytelling	19
Theoretical Background	21
New Dominant Logic in Marketing	21
Business Model Canvas	25
Multi-Sided Platform	30
Methodology & Analytical Framework	31
Theory	32
Qualitative Approach	33
Participatory Observations	34
Proposed Analytical Framework	35
Case Analysis	40
Tattoodo	40
Visual Centric Marketing Strategy	50
Digital Technologies in Visual-Driven Content Marketing	63
Findings and Discussions	71
Conclusion	73
Bibliography	74
Appendix	84

List of Figures

Figure 1 - McDonald Twitter Campaign Went Wrong	14
Figure 2 - National Geographic Uses Awe-Inspiring Content On Instagram	16
Figure 3 - National Geographic Uses 360° Video To Film	16
Figure 4 - Miu Miu's Women's Tales Series Mini-films	17
Figure 5 - Value Creation In Service-Dominant Logic	23
Figure 6 - A Tripartite View In Service-Dominant Logic	24
Figure 7 - The Framework For Research In Digital Marketing By Kannan	36
Figure 8 - Proposed Analytical Framework	38
Figure 9 - Tattoodo Business Model, Tattoo Artists (B2B)	45
Figure 10 - Tattoodo Business Model, Tattoosers (B2C)	49
Figure 11 - Internet Live Stats Tweets Per Second	51
Figure 12 - Tattoodo Facebook Emoji Reaction Campaign	53
Figure 13 - Tattoodo Facebook Live Video Post	54
Figure 14 - Three Types of Videos From Tattoodo	56
Figure 15 - Tattoodo Instagram Post Sample	58
Figure 16 - Electronic Word of Mouth in Instagram, Tattoodo	58
Figure 17 - Interactive Instagram Story, Tattoodo	60
Figure 18 - Chatbot In The Tattoodo Web Portal	65
Figure 19 - AI-Powered Image Recognition System	70

Executive Summary

The advent of the multi-sided platform and new media altered the one-way communication in traditional storytelling as well as changed the paradigm of producing and consuming stories (Van Dijck, 2009). The emergence of visual content has been witnessed these years across almost all major social network players like Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram.

In the light of the service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) and business model canvas (Osterwalder, 2004), this thesis conducted in-depth case study of Tattoodo, a multi-sided service-oriented platform for tattoo community by qualitatively interviewing its head of customer success, marketing manager and AI engineer based on a modified analytical framework as well as empirical data from various sources to address how to strategically build up a digital world surrounding a brand in terms of enhancing the brand awareness with a visual content focus in order to win over businesses has posed challenges to most Internet firms.

Often are the cases, companies are facing a dynamic digital business environment with limited resource. Companies should establish their reputation through a strong network of social presence by prioritizing resource on various visual-oriented social channels. Taking into account the dynamics and attributes of different social channels, one should develop different initiatives with the purpose of contributing to an overall positive electronic word of mouth by a robust network of digital influencers and encouraging co-creating projects with the users.

Branding is an activity, not the purpose. To be able to make a multi-sided service-oriented platform functional eventually, well-designed digital technologies separating the company apart from its competitors like AI and social chatbots should be implemented to offer a better user experience to firstly retain the existing customer and secondly acquire more users by positive electronic word of mouth among customers.

Digital Marketing for Digital Generation

According to the Harvard Business Review in 2005 that “of 30,000 new products launched in the USA, 90 percent of them failed because of poor marketing. The other 10 percent went on to become successful brands.” (De Chernatony, 2010, p. 3), therefore, it is evident that creating a powerful brand is centric to a company’s success.

The brand was “defined as a name, slogan, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of these elements that identify products or services of a company.” (Lake, 2018). As in when a golden arches logo pops up on the side of the street, one could know McDonald’s is around the corner; when a two-tailed mermaid against its green backdrop appears in the commercial center (Klara, 2014), one could recognize a free wifi spot is there to serve with a Starbucks coffee; Red Bull drinks, extreme sports; Swoosh logo Nike sportswear, the list could carry on and on.

De Chernatony (2010) stated that a company’s fate is more and more relying on the intangible resources (p. 7) and among technology intangibles: patents, software; customer intangibles: customer relationships; contract intangibles: distribution rights, assembled workforce and marketing intangible, brand, as the vital asset in the marketing, represents at least 20 percent of a company’s value (p. 8). A clear example can be found in the Coca-Cola/Pepsi-Cola blind taste tests that 65 percent of customers opted for Coca-Cola even little difference in the taste (p. 16).

It all points to the added value of a brand beyond its functionality (De Chernatony, 2010, p. 124) as proved above. Consumers consider brands as the non-verbal statements about themselves which enable them to bear specific images projected by the brand (Knowles, 2001). Consumers, nowadays, would purchase a similar functional product but different brand only because the brand fits their personality better. It is no longer the age of making better products, it is about better branding and fairly good products. “Functional differences between brands are narrowing due to technological advantage, but emotional differences are more sustainable (De

Chernatony, 2010, p. 124).” In a nutshell, a brand serves as a social integral, and consumers pay attention to what the brands say about themselves instead of what the brands do for them (De Chernatony, 2010, p. 127).

Tattoodo, a Danish startup aiming to disrupt the tattoo industry worldwide, is arguably the biggest platform for tattoo enthusiasts founded in 2013. With its web portal and mobile app, Tattoodo attracts 20 million monthly users and 150,000 renowned professional tattoo artists (Whitbread, n.d.). With various social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram reaching out 19 million followers, the multi-sided platform hosts both tattoo lovers, i.e., tattooers and tattoo artists with the purpose of lead generation and social outreach for tattoo shops in the community. It aims to build a community, a marketplace and a booking platform to be a one-stop tattoo destination eventually (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018).

Tattoos were considered as a subculture and transformed into pop culture in recent years that “36 percent of Americans aged 18-25 have at least one tattoo” according to the results of Pew Research Center (Thobo-Carlsen, 2014). However, the “massive interest and demand for inspiration was not properly met by existing platforms like Instagram and Pinterest, which both have a broad focus.” (Whitbread, n.d.) After that, Tattoodo came into the picture to help tattoo artists improve their connections with potential clients with a niche focus, unlike any other favorite social media channels.

Tattoodo accumulated 2 million followers on Instagram and 17 million fans on Facebook with its ability to create engaging social media content. Thobo-Carlsen (2014) mentioned that one of the first times streaming tattooing on Facebook scored 1.5 million views. Obviously enough, besides the mainstream trend of increasing video and visual content in marketing, the tattoo itself, as a visual product makes Tattoodo a proper example for visual marketing case study.

Furthermore, Tattoodo, like any other startups, experienced several business model transitions from a community, a media site to a service-oriented multi-sided platform, together with its niche focus making it an atypical case which could generate a good amount of information for others to learn from (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The tattoo industry is an old industry which has not been digitized completely (Whitbread, n.d.). The traditional tattoo industry has always counted on word of mouth, however, with the rising digital generation, it is problematic for both artists and customers to share equivalent information to be able to optimize their businesses and experiences. The artists have to adapt into the digital culture to be able to have a stable amount of customers, vice versa, and customers are expected to have better access to more artists' production to get a more satisfying tattoo.

Interestingly, few companies focus on this niche market, and Tattoodo is one of them to solve the issue. A digital approach in an old industry is worth digging into. As an atypical case, Tattoodo case study might be beneficial for both digitally disrupted industries and traditional industries to learn something from, especially its trial and error evolution.

Atypical, as the word suggests itself, is not typical. Due to the transition of the company in the past four years, it went from media company to something else, multi-sided platform, online booking community, media, video producing, just to name a few. Tattoodo is, after all, a startup which is trying to seek for different paths to success. Consequently, it makes an excellent case to study to reveal more information.

Marketing has come a long way from the TV commercials, newspaper or print advertisements to the ubiquitous presence thanks to digital media. Prime-time television audiences are dropping (Ryan, 2016), and print media are stressed over the poor circulation figures while digital media are acting incomparably powerful, influential and engaging audiences on a global level (Ryan, 2016).

Technology and revolution customarily come hand in hand. Printing technology enables mass production in print media, the same as broadcasting technology to radio and television (Konzal, 2011). Internet triggers a new and a better way of communication, and the increasing speed of the internet brings the revolution of information production and consumption to an absolutely whole new level. More and more diverse forms of contents are able to be circulated within seconds thanks to

the evolving internet speed. Technology, from a marketing perspective, connects people with one another more efficiently and effectively (Ryan, 2016).

Internet technology evolves into a ubiquitous tool which hosts many online channels for marketers to utilize. As digital marketing is defined in Hubspot:

“Digital marketing is an umbrella term for all of your online marketing efforts. Businesses leverage digital channels such as Google search, social media, email, and their websites to connect with their current and prospective customers.” (Alexander, 2018, Para. 1)

People spend time on the Internet. What the marketers need to do is to connect with them on the channels they are on. Differently, Van Dijck (2009) stated that the previous one-way communication between production and consumption engined by TV and broadcasting has transformed into interactive communication triggered by social media and user-generated content (UGC). The fine-line between producers and consumers is blurred (Van Dijck, 2009) and the transformation unavoidably provokes the rethinking of the marketing field.

Digital marketing has been coined for a while and evolved from a marketing method via digital channels to “an adaptive, technology-enabled process by which firms collaborate with customers and partners to jointly create, communicate, deliver, and sustain value for all stakeholders” by Kannan and Li (2017, p. 23). The digital-driven and technology-based marketing process are creating new value in the new environment through experiences and interactions between stakeholders (Kannan & Li, 2017).

After all, technologies only provide tools to achieve purposes. The essential part is still about consumers. Digital marketing is about understanding how people are using technologies and how to leverage them to engage the consumers effectively (Ryan, 2016, p. 13). He also stated that little difference from traditional marketing, digital marketing remains the fundamental goal of efficiently selling products or services to people yet in the context of digital media.

Some common tactics in digital marketing are as following (Alexander, 2018):

- Email marketing, often used to promote discounts, events as well as direct traffic
- Native advertising, such as BuzzFeed creating ads-embedded content alongside non-paid content
- Social media marketing, enhancing the brand awareness and driving traffic from various platforms to general leads
- Content marketing, creating quality content or shareable content to enhance brand awareness, generate leads and direct traffic
- Inbound marketing, essentially with the goal of converting strangers to customers with helpful and relevant content
- Marketing automation, software-based marketing tool to generate more potential revenue from the automation process
- Pay-Per-Click (PPC), a good example is Google AdWords
- Search engine optimisation (SEO), the process of higher your website's rank in the search results

Without marketable content such as blogs, Ebook, online brochures, logos, infographics, social media posts and interactive tools (Alexander, 2018), little feasible can almost none of those as mentioned earlier tactics be.

Noticeably, according to Ryan (2016), consumers transform from passive objects which have little control over what content they receive from TV or radio to active objects which not only can choose what information to get also contribute to the formation of the circulating content in the web. That is what Ryan (2016, p. 15) calls consumer 2.0.

Ryan (2016, p. 15 - 17) refers to Jupiter Research that interconnectivity shapes consumers. It becomes increasingly convenient to connect with like-minded people in niche communities. As the primary case study, Tattoodo is analyzed in such a niche context. With over 2 million community users and 20 million users' network across various social media platforms, the niche market hosts tattoo enthusiasts globally.

To the other end of the spectrum, the convenience is posing a plethora of challenges for marketing as consumers get more than ever information almost at anywhere anytime. With micro-publishing and social media being famous, the power libra is shifting from producers to consumers (Ryan, 2016).

Hence, having in mind information filter nature in consumers, the digital marketing tactics should be firstly relevant with the audience, secondly able to interact with the consumers and lastly inspiring engagement in the community to develop a long-term relationship (Ryan, 2016, p. 228). With the rapid change in media consumption habits, where more and more consumers become mobile-based (de Burgh-Woodman, 2018) and distribute time across multiple devices, the offerings from producers have to push the boundaries of digital advertising and think creatively (de Burgh-Woodman, 2018).

With the above mentioned pre-established importance of marketing a brand, the challenge is put on the table that in nowadays information society, one is exposed to the overloaded information surrounding the brand. How to efficiently brand oneself has become a significant subject for companies nowadays. For branding is a rather broad subject to discuss in one case, the thesis concentrates on providing strategic advice to build a digital world regarding a brand in the sector of multi-sided platforms.

Research Question

- How to strategically build up a digital world surrounding a brand concerning enhancing the brand awareness with a visual content focus to win over businesses?

Being said, the thesis majorly focuses on the content aspect, or rather the trending visual content in the marketing industry, taking into account consumers' co-creation process and inspirations from AI and social bots to discuss how to strategically

deploy visual content and digital technologies on top of its business model to engage the audience better in the context of digital generation.

The State of Art in Digital Storytelling

The global communication network experiences various transitions before it reaches what it looks like right now. Before the Internet era, the electronic communication starts from the wired telegraphy (Ryan, 2016). It connects people in the considerable distance and enables them to communicate from point to point more rapidly differed from courier pigeons and fast horses (Ryan, 2016). He continued that with more scientists' efforts, the electronic telegraph takes on stage by Morse Code invented by Samuel Morse. For the successful application of it, Ryan commented that newspapers were able to publish news hours rather than weeks after the event, and people were brought closer through the telegraph system. Even a New York Times article in 1852 described the network as "the highway of thought" (Ryan, 2016, p. 6).

The vast distance communication was based on the telegraph until telephone walked into the historical stage in 1877 according to Ryan (2016). Not until 1962, the "computer network" was conceptualized by Joseph Carl Robnett Licklider (Ryan, 2016, p. 6).

According to Ryan (2016, p. 6), the precursor of the Internet - ARPANET is initiated by Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) to connect "powerful computers owned by the government, universities and research institutions around the United States. To communicate with one another and to share valuable computing resources" (Ryan, 2016, p. 6), and he said it expanded overseas in 1974. Up to this point, he stated that the Internet was still a field for scientists or researchers till the first web page went online in 1991.

More and more people were attracted to the Internet, henceforth, marketers started to explore this new territory to convey their brand messages. In one ancient poem, Emperor Taizong from Tang Dynasty notes "Taking history as a mirror one can

know the rise and fall.” As is often the case, it is instructive and beneficial to dig through the history of digital storytelling.

Convergence

The convergence in the technological and media environment deepens the complexity of storytelling in the contemporary world. Unlike the conventional thinking, convergence occurs through individuals’ social interactions with others (Jenkins, 2006), which alters how content is “disseminated, used and re-purposed by engaged consumers. (de Burgh-Woodman, 2018, p. 19)”.

Digital storytelling has become a buzzword since brands pick it up to promote themselves. In the past, a good story, a good product and a TV commercial could get the brand success. However, the advent of the multi-sided platform and new media: YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Vimeo, Pinterest, Vine, and so on, altered the one-way communication in traditional storytelling as well as changed the paradigm of producing and consuming stories (Van Dijck, 2009).

Dating back to the pre-automobile era, due to the limitation of human mobility, people lived in a particular area where everyone could reach each other relatively conveniently by simple communication methods such as letters, talking and shouting (Ling, 2014). After the Second World War, radio-based communication technology was applied with the expansion of living area due to the civil use of cars (Ling, 2014).

With the introduction and development of the cellular system, mobile communication revolutionized the postmodernity. Postmodernity is commonly agreed since its ascendancy in the 1960s according to Huyssen (1986). However not until post-post modernity early this century (López & Potter, 2005), the diversity of media forms that digital storytelling started to be coined and vastly studied as part of the digital marketing.

Hart Cohen (2012) defines convergence as

“the first instance to the interlinking of computing and IT; communication networks and media content that occurred with the development and popularisation of the Internet and the convergent products, services, and activities that emerged in the digital media space.” (p. 335)

Arguably, new media plays a critical role in the emerging of convergence. People used to have specific tools or intermediaries for specific purpose, such as ipod for music, TV for series or shows, and bookstores for paper books. Nevertheless, all the above activities are able to be done in one device now. Consumers in the same period are also learning how to utilize diverse media technologies to bring the flow of media under their power and to interact with other users (Van Dijck, 2009).

Media convergence is not merely a technological shift, and it provokes the re-thinking in the existing technologies, markets, genres and audiences (Jenkins, 2006). Meanwhile, media consumptions become more fragmented with a plethora of delivery channels where consumers are becoming more selective (de Burgh-Woodman, 2018).

Specifically looking from the media perspective, convergence stands for a smooth experience without much interruption from any medium (de Burgh-Woodman, 2018). For example, because of tablets and smartphones, people are able to watch videos anytime anywhere without being limited to the TV only. With media convergence, devices stopped being an isolated island concerning each other (Jenkins, 2001). Besides convergence media, participatory culture and collective intelligence (Jenkins, 2006) are among the fundamental trends in digital storytelling.

Digital Storytelling

The digital storytelling in the new media environment has long passed the one-way communication stage. The press has a long time spoke ill of the content consumers as passive recipients until TIME MAGAZINE designated “you” as Person of the Year 2006 (van Dijck, 2009). The users eventually get their credit in the media world. “Due to the availability of cheap and easy-to-use digital, technologies, which certainly should stimulate the audiovisual production of audiovisual

production[...]particularly UGC sites, that allow for do-it-yourself distribution.” (van Dijck, 2009, p 43 - 44). Digital storytelling in the context of branding should inarguably take into account of participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006).

Jenkins (2006, para. 17) defines participatory culture as

- With relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement
- With strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others
- With some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices
- Where members believe that their contributions matter
- Where members feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created)


To this end, Jenkins et al. (2013) gave insights into the audience's role in actively producing content and transforming the raw material in an often unpredictable direction. Many firms successfully identified the opportunity of co-creation with their customers yet half of such campaigns failed (Verhoef et al., 2014).

Verhoef et al. (2014) gave an example of McDonald setting up Twitter hashtag campaign “#McDStories” wishing to start a positive feedback story circulation on the web, however, it also offered the audience the shelter to vent their negative feelings toward the brand in Figure 1. Bearing the co-creation process in mind, one can find it is beneficial to have a glimpse of the history of storytelling - how it develops from an activity to a digital marketing tool.

First of all, it is not new in human history. Telling stories is considered a daily activity in human life. Dating back to the ancient time, “[t]he first storytelling storm came with the emergence of the first uniquely human [...] speech is difficult to relate to the basic storytelling technology based on it — oral storytelling.” according to Konzal (2011, p. 46).

When Tweets Attack

McDonald's introduced the hashtag #McDStories, hoping to attract heartwarming, upbeat posts. Oops...

 #McDStories Hospitalized for food poisoning after eating McDonald's in 1989. Never ate there again and became a Vegetarian. Should have sued.

 #McDStories Watching my little brother vomit his chicken nuggets into my aunts hand...

Figure 1 - McDonald Twitter Campaign Went Wrong (Verhoef et al., 2014)

With the invention of printing, written stories are eventually able to be stored and accessed at any given time after its print. Technological shift tremendously facilitates the prevalence of stories. Various forms of storytelling took place: photos, radios, audios, movies, music, only to name a few.

“The broadcast storm began with the near-concurrent emergence of radio (Garratt 2006 [1994], pp. ix, 1, 75; Kern 2011, p. 211) and 35 mm film (Chardère, Borgé and Borgé 1985, pp. 70-71) in the years 1894/1895. Electronic television followed in 1929 (Abramson 1995, pp. ix-x, 226). Many storytelling technologies evolved based on these three broadcast technologies. Radio developed its own forms of comedy (Wertheim 1976, p. 501), soap opera (Lavin 1995, p. 77), radio adaptations of movies in the Lux Radio Theatre (1934 – 1955), music, news, sports, Orson Welles' The War of the Worlds (1938), and many more” (Konzal, 2011, p. 47).

Konzal (2011) believes that the aspects of audience expansion and communication between producers and consumers even the cost of the distribution. Konzal (2011) said that in the past storytelling process, these things were either significantly expensive or too hard to circulate farther. There were specific barriers at each stage to block it communicating broader and better.

For instance, broadcasting released the audience from their physical environment, but the audience cannot proactively engage in the content creation until various media institutions came onto the scene Konzal (2011). He also noted that the communication between storyteller and audience is the key to the success of a good story. However, the audiences' roles are changing, from passive to active (Konzal, 2011).

National Geographic garnered a robust storytelling gallery of “wow” factor images on Instagram as in Figure 2 with 88.6 million followers (until June 2018). National Geographic's Instagram uses its thumb-stopper storytelling content to engage the audience and harnesses new technology to win the game in Figure 3 (Mangles, 2018).

Same practices can be found in the partnership of BuzzFeed and NowThis with Samsung where virtual reality technology was implemented in various types of videos ranging from how-to tutorials to breaking news worldwide (The Drum, 2017). Similarly, in traditional industries like New York Times, which counted on print revenue and advertisements, searched for new way of survival in the digital era by introducing more features in its digital subscription service from personalized content to interactive chatbot - newsbot (Snyder, 2017) and augmented reality for digital news storytelling (Williams, 2018).

Lambert (2013), as one of the most notable pioneers in digital storyteller list, mentioned a standardized seven steps of digital storytelling to digitize a good story. Firstly, Lambert agrees that finding and clarifying what a story is really about might be difficult yet it is a mandatory journey as a start. Secondly, he said it is important to have “[...] an awareness of the contrasting and complex nature of a story's emotional content” (p. 58).

Thirdly, look for the right moment to distill change (Lambert, 2013). Fourthly, Lambert encourages to “look at how the use of visuals and sound bring things to life for the audience (p. 61).” Fifthly, he thinks giving the story a drop of “sound” is beneficial. Sixthly, using the storyboard to “assemble your story” is efficient

(Lambert, 2013, p. 65). Lastly, he teaches how to think about “who is the audience” and show them (p. 68).

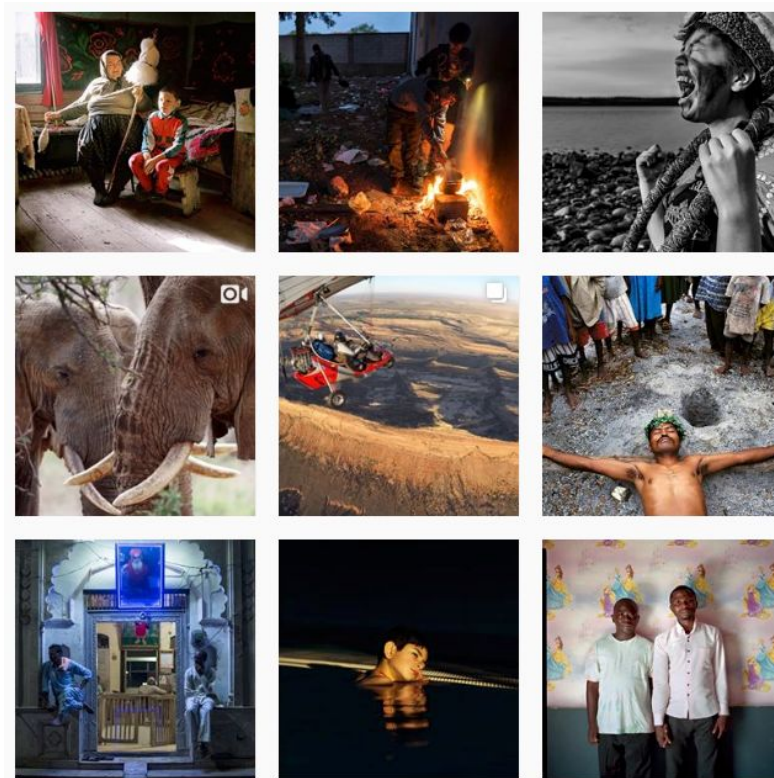


Figure 2 - National Geographic Uses Awe-Inspiring Content On Instagram
(Source: NatGeo official Instagram account)

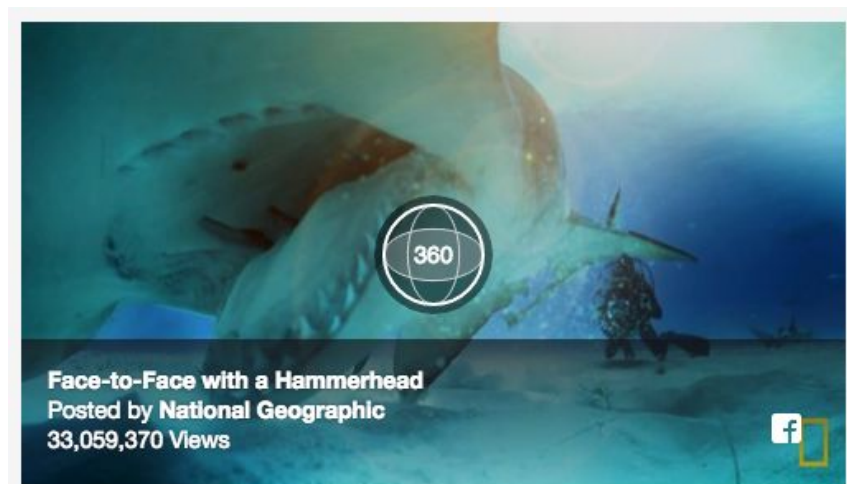


Figure 3 - National Geographic Uses 360° Video To Film (Mangles, 2018)

Taking into account the audience's attention span, one might find those mini-films set examples for digital storytelling in terms of branding. Miu Miu's Women's Tales (2018) in Figure 4 and Dior's Lady Blue Shanghai (2011) are typical mini-productions of digital storytelling infusing cinematic genre.

Defined by Chen (2015), mini-films also known as micro-films are

“branded entertainment with the form of a short feature film, generally with a duration of between three and ten minutes with a romantic or comedic storyline[...] The sponsor is identified at the beginning or the ending of the movie, and brand messages may or may not be explicitly placed in the film.”
(p. 21)



Figure 4 - Miu Miu's Women's Tales Series Mini-films

(Source: Miu Miu's website, retrieved from http://www.miumiu.com/en/women_tales?cc=IT)

In light of this trend, companies set up separate schedules for video production. BuzzFeed owned its studio in Los Angeles and established an entirely independent and profitable business line of series production with an MTV veteran - Lauren Dolgen as the head of the studio in 2018 according to BuzzFeedPress (2018).

BuzzFeed sold its shows to platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Netflix and Warner Bros to successfully build up one of its revenue streams (BuzzFeedPress, 2018). Similarly, in Tattoodo's case, it sold its internet TV show "The Tattoo Shop" to Facebook as well, which was premiered in March 2018.

Needless to mention with big platforms like Facebook, the branded show tremendously contributed to the brand reputation as a reliable and quality tattoo community. It also offered media brands a revenue stream from oligopolies like Facebook which garnered most of the advertising incomes (Peretti, 2017). Such a harmonious scheme eases the tension between media companies and oligopolies. This type of collaboration is not only a benign co-existence but also a possibility of future media companies.

From a content point of view, the digital storytelling evolved from texts, images, video to hybrid of them. However, quality images and videos are far from enough to build up a strong brand. Regarding the notes at the beginning of the section, consumers are now part of the content creation or value creation process. How the consumers and brands talk will necessarily have an impact on the digital storytelling.

Psychologically speaking, taking National Geographic, for instance, the content which is posted on Instagram shared more personal touch by giving credit to photographers without corporation branding or promotion (Mangles, 2018). Besides that, consistently staying true to its promise nurtures loyal engaging audience and paid subscribers. It started "#myclimateaction" campaign to encourage the audience to share their actions in line with protecting the environment (Newberry, 2018), which was aligned with its promise towards the society.

Tattoodo, with its core value at providing tattooers inspirations, insists on the non-sponsored content offering on Instagram with image credits to individual tattoo artists rather than any corporations or suppliers, etc. The reputation built-up across all channels is for attracting tattooers to embark on the web or mobile app to conduct the booking a tattoo transaction or consulting conversation with the artists on board.

Multiplatform Storytelling

Producing content that works through different media is a challenge because each medium has their audience and needs to make their contribution to developing the story as a whole (Jenkins, 2006). Some media are more visual-based, and others might be more text oriented. Therefore, how to develop a good story by making full use of each medium's features is somewhat pondering.

Jenkins (2007) scripted seven principles of transmedia storytelling, which intertwine storytelling across the different medium, creating a complete transmedia entertainment in a digital era as:

“a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes it own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story.” (para. 2)

However, when searching for examples of transmedia storytelling, the results are often within entertainment industry such as big budget, popular movie series like Star Wars, The Matrix and Disneyland movies, TV shows like Lost, or festivals like Tomorrowland.

Most transmedia storytelling cases somehow tend to be multiplatform storytelling which utilizes text, audio, blogs, videos, ebooks, social networks, movies, etc. (SÁNCHEZ, 2017). Therefore, in this thesis, a broader term - multiplatform is applied to accurately refer to the kind of storytelling and marketing strategy which does not utterly fit in the category of transmedia storytelling yet getting inspired by Jenkins (2006):

Spreadability refers to the potential in content dispersal - to search across the media landscape for significant bits of data. It is especially true when each platform has its absolute advantage in specific aspect(s).

Continuity vs. Multiplicity Continuity means the information which has been widely accepted as part of the definitive version of a particular story. Multiplicity, however, gives the way of multiplying production which extends the original story.

Disneyland, as a land of “illusions and phantasms,” utilizes the transmedia concept to the best (de Burgh-Woodman, 2018, p. 27). It creates a fantasy world surrounding the brand through its films, video games, kinds of music, comics, books and amusement parks. The audience can experience the fairy tales from more than one angle, which makes the transmedia storytelling smooth and immersive.

Creating a comprehensive fantasy empire is costly and might not apply to other industries like online publishing, journalism, and so on, nevertheless, a project for branding purpose could give it a go. Intel and Toshiba’s ‘The Beauty Inside’ was a social film for promoting Portege Ultrabook (AdAge, 2012).

This web series told the story of Alex who woke up every day with a different face but a same inner self (AdAge, 2012). Due to its fluid nature, the story was interacted and co-created by the audience who even was invited to the audition (Digital training academy, n.d.).

According to Digital Training Academy, the social component in the mini-film series triggers strong storytelling, which garnered almost 70 million views on six episodes and 26 Alexes in the films and 50 more in the Facebook timeline with 66% brand awareness lift for Intel and 40% for Toshiba (Digital training academy, n.d.).

The same practice can be found in Tattoodo’s Facebook Watch Show - The Tattoo Shop when it started to cast customers for the show to tell their stories. A few video campaigns for customer auditions were launched in November 2017 with 1.5 million views and 1,500 shares on Facebook (Tattoodo, 2017). It utilized fully of the co-creation process and took into tattooers’ needs into account. The show is a reflection of the multi-sided platform that a good tattoo should be co-produced by tattooer and tattoo artist.

Theoretical Background

The thesis takes in service logic in the marketing field as the theoretical context for the project. Furthermore, the business model canvas is applied to elaborate on both the value proposition and customer relationship components.

New Dominant Logic in Marketing

A revised logic has become dominating in marketing with a focus on intangible resources, the value of co-creation and relationships between stakeholders, which is different from the previous logic with a center in exchange of goods (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). In this logic, services are taking over the pre-established perspective in marketing and developing in a new domain to address the transition.

With Zimmerman (1951) pointing out that everything could be resources as long as humankind learns what to do with it, Constantin and Lusch (1994) define that the operant resources are resources that act on operand or operant resources to produce effects.

Services were deemed to be inferior in goods-dominant logic as added value in the form of specific outputs according to Vargo and Lusch (2004), but in service-dominant logic, service is considered as a process which puts an emphasis on operant resources for “doing something for another party” (Vargo & Lusch, 2008, p. 255).

Chronologically, the former logic revolving the emphasis on customers further develops into a series of decision-making activities to achieve the goal of profits (McCarthy, 1960; Kotler, 1967). Therefore, “4 P’s” gains significant attention as it fundamentally splits the whole process into four dimensions: product, price, promotion & place (Vargo & Lusch, 2008).

This goods-dominant worldview remained the center of marketing (Vargo & Lusch, 2010). It incorporates the marketing context with the decision of delivering the right

product at the right time to a right place for a right price. Nevertheless, relationship marketing, resource management and networks and so on, started to emerge from the 1980s without the base of 4 P's (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

With the digital development in the marketing field, 4 P's gradually lost its sparkles as it neglects the innovative and adaptive characteristics of marketing (Day & Montgomery, 1999). Services marketing becomes increasingly notable for it filling in the void left by product marketing (Dixon, 1990). The evolution is embraced vastly that an integrated view is formed, which recognizes goods and services as an offering to create value for the customers (Gummesson, 1994).

In the late twentieth century, skills and knowledge are recognized among the essential operant resources which are invisible and intangible core competencies or organizational processes (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

In service-dominant logic, operant resources which can produce effects and multiply the value of the resources are primarily appreciated (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). They are also considered the fundamental source of competitive advantages (Vargo & Lusch, 2010).

Different from the goods-dominant logic, the service-dominant logic does not separate the value creation process away from the consumers, instead, it is doing something for and with another party, therefore, it is a co-creation process (Vargo & Lusch, 2010) from the service offering, value proposition, conversion & dialogue to value processes & networks shown in Figure 5 (Vargo & Lusch, 2008).

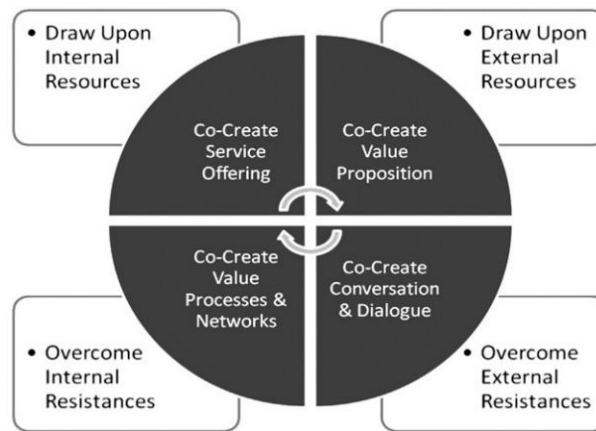


Figure 5 - Value Creation In Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2008)

Vargo and Lusch (2008) believe that, in the contemporary context, core competencies are perceived as the fundamental marketing element in the service-centered logic to create value propositions for clients and to be improved on a continuous basis.

Service marketing becomes a dynamic process for ditching the traditional perspective that value is embedded in output (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). They also said it is a process of co-creation by collaborating with and learning from the customers. Based on the inherent characteristic - customer oriented & relational (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) - in service-dominant logic, Vargo & Lusch (2010) put a focus on experiences, value co-creation, solutions, value propositions and the market rather than to look at customers isolatedly.

Vargo and Lusch place operant resources such as skills and knowledge in a favored position which makes them superior to the operand resources such as materials and hardware because the value can be created only by operant resources operating on operand resources. Furthermore, the dynamic essence in operant resources makes them unique and appealing. With the same set of materials or equipment, the better-skilled employees can have better output.

According to Vargo and Lusch's 2008 publication, companies can co-create the value offerings with the internal staffs by looking inside of the internal resources, and moreover, when taking a look into the external resources, companies can co-create

the value propositions with the potential customers. It is a somewhat dynamic process, unlike the goods-dominant perspective which might fix the output to a certain extent.

Marketing, as a social phenomenon, needs to recognize that both service providers and consumers are social actors to interact for value creation (Ballantyne & Varey, 2006). Production and consumption are sharing a blurred line increasingly; therefore, relationships between service providers and customers are centric to enhance customer satisfaction.

Ballantyne and Varey (2006) see dialogical interactions - communicative interactions, relationship development, and knowledge application in Figure 6 - as a beneficial form of communication in service-dominant logic for its supporting role in co-creation of value.

Communicative activities are for learning about the customers, which further supports the trust and appropriate knowledge applications to nurture a better relationship (Ballantyne & Varey, 2006).

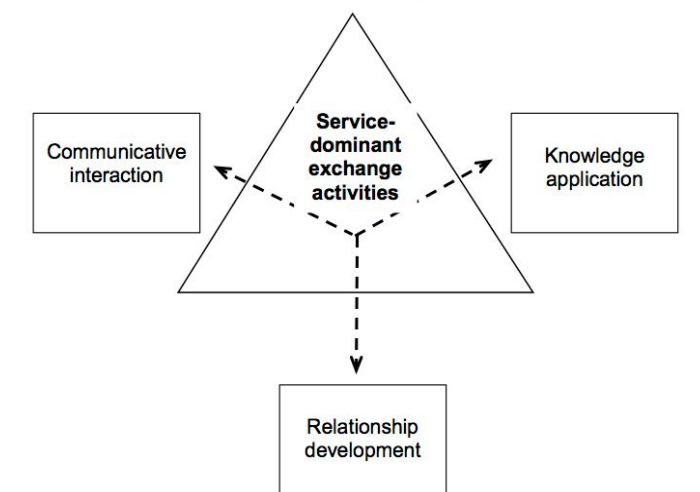


Figure 6 - A Tripartite View In Service-Dominant Logic (Ballantyne & Varey, 2006)

In a nutshell, Vargo and Lusch (2008) set the backdrop of “ the application of competences for the benefit of another party—that is, service” (p. 257), therefore, service-dominant logic, because of the preference in operant resources which are commonly related to people or stored in employees’ skill sets, and due to the

essence of those resources being dynamic and interpersonal, value propositions are the offerings based on various internal resources, instead of specific goods. Furthermore, the value propositions for customers are co-created with the customers in terms of the value offerings.

Business Model Canvas

Chesbrough (2007) simplifies business as two critical functions: value creation and value capture, which demonstrate “[a] better business model often will beat a better idea or technology” (p. 12) by instances from Wal-Mart, Dell, Southwest Airlines and so on.

Zott and Amit (2010, p. 216) describe the business model as “a system of interdependent activities that transcends the focal firm and spans its boundaries.” Evidently, building up a business from either a business idea or a product concept to the description of elements that make the business possible is as important as linking the outputs of R&D processes with the business world efficiently (Toro-Jarrín et al., 2016).

To create a business model is to understand the business logic of a company, to predict how things work in real life by exploring a particular case to generalize an abstract concept (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 14 - 15). Therefore, studying a particular case is an excellent way to learn about a particular business model.

In the business ontology, the business model is positioned in the middle, yet it has to be aligned with business strategy, ICT and business organization (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 16). Evidently, for Internet companies, it is a prerequisite to assure its technical structure or technology usages in the position of supporting the business model or improving it.

Osterwalder (2004, p. 18 - 19) also mentioned a business environment is, by and large, a significant factor in the business model’s evolution in a company. Besides the ever-changing technologies and their applications in every aspect of a business, consumption side is as well a significant player in the business model generation.

Osterwalder (2004, p. 42) brought up a set of nine interrelated blocks broken down from four essential business model issues - product/services, customer interface, infrastructure management and financial aspects.

As Vargo & Lusch (2006) proposed previously, the companies no longer sell products instead they offer value propositions to co-created value for customers. Osterwalder (2004, p. 48) solidified this by acknowledging the rapid change of technologies primarily in the digitized businesses which encourage product innovations. He also said that the value proposition is “the first of the nine elements of the business model ontology” (p. 48) and it articulates the value created for consumers by offerings (Chesbrough, 2007).

It is not just about the products, and it is about solving the consumers’ problems or how the items are packaged and offered to fulfill their unmet needs (Kambil et al. 1997). Value proposition makes a business compare to the competitors’ and innovate their existing value proposition or bundles of services for a specific customer segment efficiently (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010), and this differentiated business leads customers to purchase from this firm instead of others (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 50).

Osterwalder (2004, p. 53) elaborated that there are different types of value propositions based on various attributes, essentially, the value propositions should make customers feel more convenient or solve their problem(s) as Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010, p. 16) said “It seeks to solve customer problems and satisfy customer needs”. A company’s value proposition is the most crucial element in the marketing messaging (Shewan, 2018), and it tells the prospects to choose the company over its competitors by crystal clear message, not buzzwords or ambiguous information (Shewan, 2018).

Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010) explained that “[e]ach value proposition consists of a selected bundle of products and/or services that caters to the requirements of a specific Customer Segment” (p. 22) and some might be wholly original and innovative while others might be some advanced or improved version of the existing products or services (Osterwalder, 2004). Common starting points for value

propositions are newness - no similar offerings, performance - better product or service, customization - mass customization or co-creation, superior design, brand - personal status or fear of missing out, price and convenience (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010).

From a pricing point of view, free business models are deployed that they balance their financial sheet by advertising and classified ads like free daily newspaper and online news portal (Osterwalder, 2004). After the outbreak of dot.com bubble, many digital news outlets learned the unsustainability of such business models, a freemium strategy, for instance, was especially beneficial for those with cost business models and ads alone not covering the cost such as New York Times (Wilson, 2010).

The logic of freemium as a pricing strategy is to get customers hook by the free versions and further to convert them into subscribed or paying customers (Teece, 2010) just as New York Times offers free content to standard users but also get severe and frequent customers to pay for other features like augmented reality news and customized fitness advice (Williams, 2018).

From a brand point of view, on the one hand, a powerful brand to state the personal status like wealth or taste such as Rolex (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) which might attract high-end consumers. To the other end of the spectrum, FOMO - fear of missing out has been a buzzword for a while.

“The ubiquitous feeling has always been there. However [...] the explosion of social media has launched our young people headfirst into the FOMO experience. Now we have the ability (or curse) to easily see what all our peers are doing all the time. There’s no escaping it, really.” (Hobson, 2018, para 2 - 3)

To make a brand unforgettable and prevalent in people’s lives is to make a value proposition as it is already.

According to Osterwalder (2004), from a life cycle perspective, the value proposition can be fit into the creation phase in which a dual process takes place to co-create value for consumers, or the purchase phase, or the consumption phase in which customers' needs are met or in the transfer phase (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 54 - 56). Though the value proposition can be inserted in any of these stages, it is not necessary for all of them.

Customer interface includes "choice of the target customers, the channels through which it gets in touch with them and the kind of relationships the company wants to establish with its customers" (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 60). It describes how and to whom it delivers its value proposition, which is the firm's bundle of products and services." (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 60)

The customer is the most critical part of any business model, and without a group of customers, no business can actually work (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). Target customers, as Osterwalder (2004, p. 60) said it "is all about segmentation", and it could start with a simple categorization - business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) in which customers in each category "share common needs, common behaviors and other attributes" (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) . In this case, he also said it helps define through which channel the value proposition can be delivered.

Segmentation may facilitate a niche product or service achieve success as well as grow a niche market (Winter, 1984). In the context of the digital era, Hagel III and Armstrong (1997) divided the virtual communities into a few sections as follows:

- Communities of the transaction which includes the interactions between one another with an emphasis on user-generated content;
- The interest which brings together participants on a personal level;
- The fantasy where they create new personas and relationships around specific topic or experience that often leads to a deeper personal connection. (Hagel III & Armstrong, 1997).

Osterwalder defines channels as “the connection between a firm's value propositions and its target customers,” and these channels facilitate the delivery of value propositions either directly via website or sales force or indirectly via intermediaries (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 63).

As Osterwalder (2004, p. 65) said that the customer's buying cycle is one way of studying a channel:

“The cycle is divided into four phases, namely the customer's awareness (e.g. promotions), the evaluation of his needs and the matching to the company's value proposition (e.g. sales force), the moment of purchase (i.e. the actual transaction and fulfilment), and after sales (e.g. maintenance).”

He also mentioned the possibility of overwriting the customer buying cycle when a channel is one of the value propositions already. Channels are used for various purposes in a business model. Either communication, either distribution or sales, they are important elements for user experience (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). According to Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010), the channels can be designed to raise brand awareness, facilitate customer evaluation, enable the transaction, deliver value proposition and provide after-sale customer service.

Customer relationships are “the lifeblood of all businesses” according to Osterwalder (2004, p. 71). Hamel and Ruben (2000) mentioned the positive feedback effect by usage of ICT tools to create insights for supporting the activities as mentioned above. With the assistance of IT, it facilitates the relationship between a company's value proposition, target customer segments, distribution channels and the actual customer interactions (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 59).

Directly speaking, this component aims to acquire more customers, sell more products to the customers and retain the existing customers (Grant & Schlesinger, 1995) in the digitally complicated context. Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010) concluded these intentions as customer acquisition, customer retention and upselling. Both of them believe the relationships between the company and its customers play a crucial role in customer experience.

There are different mechanisms of relationships such as personal assistant, automated services, community and co-creation (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). One commonly adopted mechanism is personalization, which often becomes a recommending system to suggest products or services to specific customers (Osterwalder, 2004, p. 74). Amazon, for example, using sophisticated algorithms to recommend products based on their historical behaviors.

Osterwalder (2004) also mentioned that brands, as another relationship mechanisms, are pivotal in generating sustainable advantages over competitors. It can be achieved through marketing and branding activities (Osterwalder, 2004).

What makes any business model lasting is the revenue stream. There are again various strategies regarding the revenue generation. Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010) name a few for instructions like subscription fees.

Multi-Sided Platform

The multi-sided platform, as the name suggests, should have at least two sides in this platform. The platform, in this scenario, acts as an intermediary to facilitate the two groups of participants to interact or communicate (Armstrong, 2006). Furthermore, the platform needs to “compete for business from both groups” (Armstrong, 2006, p. 1). He gave examples like academic journals in which exist two common practices - one is the audience pay for reading the publications while successful authors can publish for free; the other is the authors need to pay a fee to publish while the readers can access to the publications free of charge.

A service-oriented platform example was mentioned by Armstrong (2006) in the same publication. He said in the dating service, each side of the audience cares more about the number of other sides and one side’s growing number could have a positive impact on the other. Therefore, often is the case that one side is subsidized to attract the other side which could be more beneficial to the platform (Armstrong, 2006).

These are the pioneers of the now called multi-sided platform. But not all businesses deliberately start from it. Amazon is one of them. Hagiu and Wright (2015) said that Amazon started as a pure retailer to sell books and it transformed into something more along its development by allowing “third-party sellers to trade directly with consumers on its website (p. 2).”

There are two key features to be identified as a multi-sided platform according to Hagiu and Wright (2015, p. 5):

1. They enable direct interactions between two or more distinct sides.
2. Each side is affiliated with the platform.

In simple words, they explained that direct interactions distinguish multi-sided platform from resellers or vertically integrated companies which have significant control over the pricing, marketing and other aspects of the system. Affiliation, on the other hand, means the two or more sides of the participants have to be in direct relation to the platform to get interacted by one another to have network effects across groups (Hagiu & Wright, 2015).

For both sides' number are important indicators to the other side, getting both sides on the platform is essential (Evans, 2003). Because the decreasing in either side could have adverse effects, Evans thinks one way to avoid such situations is to offer free service to the users or even paying them to get users, which is a typical case at the beginning of a multi-sided platform.

Methodology & Analytical Framework

In the light of the theories, the thesis proposed a visual content-centric and digital technology enabled research framework inspired by the one proposed by Kannan in digital marketing in 2017.

Conducting the primary case study, assisted by interviews with employees from different departments: head of customer success, marketing manager, and AI engineer to have an all-around insight, the thesis intends to shed light on the digital

visual storytelling in terms of marketing strategy as well as the future implications in this field.

Theory

Before the elaboration on the approaches, it is beneficial to know why this thesis embraces an in-depth case study as a serious research method (Yin, 1981) and what academic ground the proposed framework stands on.

Conventionally, case studies are considered merely as a pilot study to generate hypothesis instead of general theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006). However, it is a viable approach to generate educated real-world business activities surrounding a specific topic by in-depth case study.

There are various research strategies in social science studies. Yin (1981) mentioned that an experiment strategy, similar to natural science, manipulates one variable while controlling other variables, which separates a phenomenon from its context on purpose; a historical strategy, on the other hand, is used when the on-site observations or interviews cannot be collected as corroboratory evidence (Yin, 1981). With above being said, case studies strategy has its own territory.

Flyvbjerg (2006) acknowledges the value of the case study by comparing its role in human learning claiming that context-dependent knowledge makes experts whilst context-independent knowledge generates beginners only, which further solidified Yin (1981)'s opinion that case study excels at examining a contemporary phenomenon incorporating its real-life context especially when the context and the phenomenon is not evidently separable.

Surveys are the complementary approach to answer questions from a frequency aspect yet case studies can focus on answering "how" and "why" (Yin, 1981). Therefore, based on the proposed research question - "How to engage the audience better and more efficiently in the social and mobile-powered world" - in the thesis, case studies are the more appropriate strategy (Yin, 1981) primarily for the purpose

of learning something from a real-world case and improving the existing strategy or business operations.

Established companies cannot reveal as much information as the atypical ones do (Flyvbjerg, 2006). After that, Tattoodo, as a niche market-focused startup, was analyzed more in-depth in the thesis. If the visual digital storytelling marketing strategies can be implemented to enhance the brand awareness and user engagement in its operation, it might be enlightening for a broader range of firms who have more prominent or less niche audience, that is, if it is valid for Tattoodo, it is valid for many cases.

Of course, making a case study in this thesis does not mean demising the value of rule-based or context-independent knowledge according to Flyvbjerg (2006), he explained that given the fact that social science is not expert at producing general, context-independent theory, the thesis tends to offer concrete, context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006) in the industry as something to learn from.

Qualitative Approach

When it comes to explanatory purposes, there are two designs: one is a single-case design which is often applied as a disconfirming role to test theory (Neale & Liebert, 1980); to the contrary, the other design is multiple-case which requires individual case studies and the collection of the conclusions to confirm certain phenomenon (Yin, 1981). The former seeks for extreme cases to deny the result, the latter, on the other hand, typical not necessarily representative cases to replicate results (Patton, 1980).

Therefore, this thesis aims to generate trends in the visual digital storytelling with a marketing focus through multiple cases and empirical evidence. Moreover, besides the evidence research from documents, a comprehensive examination of a single case study - Tattoodo, an online publishing multi-sided platform, to demonstrate how it can be done with the hope of offering some implications for those who want to explore the same aspects.

Yin (1981) explained that three or four cases are sufficient for this type of case studies design and conclusions can be generalized or synthesized from the proven cases. Therefore it is valid to conduct such an approach for a general purpose despite case studies' inability in generalization (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

This thesis was based on the empirical evidence in multiple cases which are known for their successful user engagement experiences to general industry trends. From that sense on, the thesis conducted a comprehensive case study on a single case to provide implications on the process. Flyvbjerg (2006) said case studies could be valuable in the knowledge accumulation process and for scientific innovation (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The thesis followed an explicit design (Yin, 1981), which means empirical research and interview processes were guided by the proposed analytical framework shown in Figure 8 in this thesis.

Participatory Observations

Unlike outsider researcher as Walsham (1995, p. 77) stated that:

The main disadvantage of this role is that the outside researcher will not be present on many occasions, and will not get a direct sense of the field organization from the inside[...] the researcher may sometimes be debarred from access to certain data and issues which are regarded as too confidential or sensitive to be shared with outsiders.

The author is one of the student employers in the case study entity - Tattoodo. Thus the author has an inside insight on the company and is not "debarred from confidential or sensitive issues" (Walsham, 1995, p. 77).

However, Walsham (1995) also objectively pointed out that due to the direct stake of the person, the interviewee might be more guarded to express honest or completely honest opinions. Nevertheless, the author chose this method to get insights and minimize the impact of the personal stake by explicitly explaining the purpose of the

research and forming questionnaire guide in the way of assisting the company's business model.

The interviews are conducted to complete the participatory observations. For the author is not experiencing the whole journey of the company since the beginning, some information was missing during the documentation and archived data research both inside and online. The thesis conducted interviews with the head of customer success - Jens Nielsen, marketing manager - Paula Zeikmane and AI engineer - Dennis Mickey Jensen who has worked at Tattodo for more than half of the company evolution, plus published documentations from AI engineer Goran Vusikic who worked on the AI neural network for image recognition at Tattodo.

Noticeably, to correct the interpretation or misinformation during the data collection, especially the interview transcript, instead of serving merely as a courtesy to the cooperated interviewees (Yin, 1981), the thesis offered a summary of findings, perspectives, and opinions for the informants to review.

Proposed Analytical Framework

Since the commercial use of the internet and World Wide Web, the business landscape has transformed tremendously (Kannan & Li, 2017). Especially with the emerging of various social channels, such as Facebook and Instagram, the one-way communication between companies and consumers has long gone (van Dijck, 2009). Corporations nowadays have to acknowledge the essential role of the digital relationship with customers (Phillips, 2015).

Kannan and Li (2017) also brought up the value of digital technologies like artificial intelligence, deep learning in shaping the future digital marketing field. Evidently, the prevalence of visual content in marketing has been witnessed by major players like Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and even the previously known for text-only Twitter. Against this backdrop of digital business, the thesis proposed a framework based on Figure 7.

Kannan and Li (2017) proposed the framework, which gives focus to the touchpoints in the process of marketing with the highlight of potential digital technologies utilization. His research indicates that the interaction between digital technologies and customer-related elements offers input from the search engine, social media, user-generated content, two-sided platforms and so on, which shape the actions or strategies of the firms. Actions bring outcomes and create value like a brand, relationships, customer acquisition & retention and so on. (Kannan & Li, 2017)

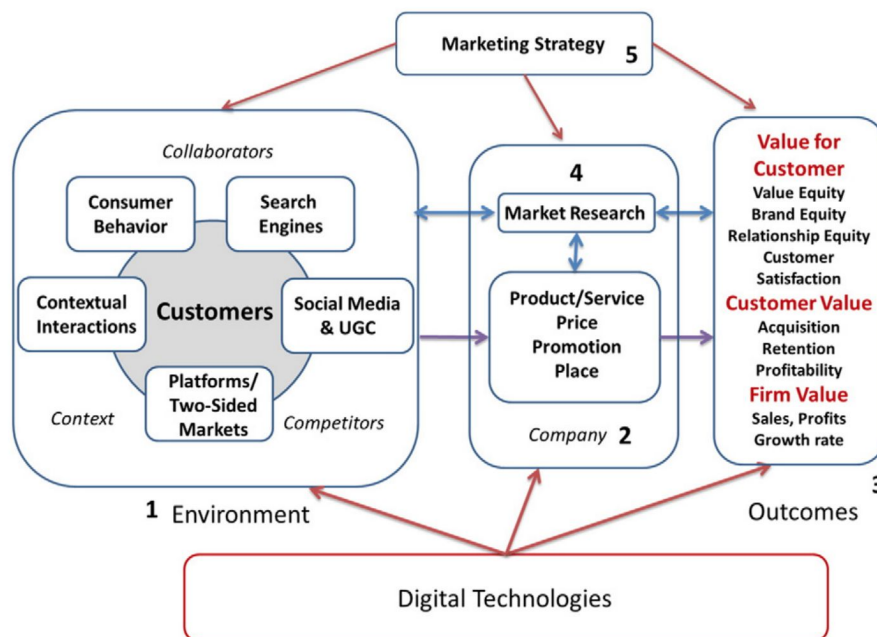


Figure 7 - The Framework For Research In Digital Marketing By Kannan (Kannan & Li, 2017)

However, this thesis embraces service-dominant logic by Vargo and Lusch (2004) that ditches the traditional five C's - customers, collaborators, competitors, context, and company perspective, instead it highlights the co-creation process and value propositions. Therefore, the proposed framework in Figure 8 put customer relationships and value propositions in the center and integrated with a multi-sided platform context.

With the implications from the theoretical background discussed previously, the proposed analytical framework starts with business model canvas (Osterwalder, 2004) in terms of the customer interface.

Customer relationships and value proposition from Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder, 2004) are put in the center as the core elements to analyze. They also draw inspirations from the service-dominant logic in marketing, highlighting the essential opinions - co-creation and value propositions - in the paper by Vargo & Lusch (2010). Two pillars - marketing strategy and digital technologies - are acted as the two drivers to enhance the brand awareness and customer engagement. Given the specific case study in this thesis, it is under the context of a multi-sided platform.

With various marketing strategies, ranging from tactics to digitization, the thesis opted from a visual digital storytelling perspective to discuss what are the engaging content and how the engaging visual content can contribute to the better relationship management between the platform and the customers. As for the other pillar, digital technologies, in this thesis, primarily refer to the applications of artificial intelligence tool in the visual content recognition and chatbot in the social context.

Evidence consolidation is categorized by the elements in the graph from observation evidence, empirical research, documentation evidence and interview evidence. By interviewing the developers and marketing manager in the company, the thesis wishes to shed light on the process of implementing such digital marketing strategy, the pros and cons of it as well as their contribution to a better business model for the company.

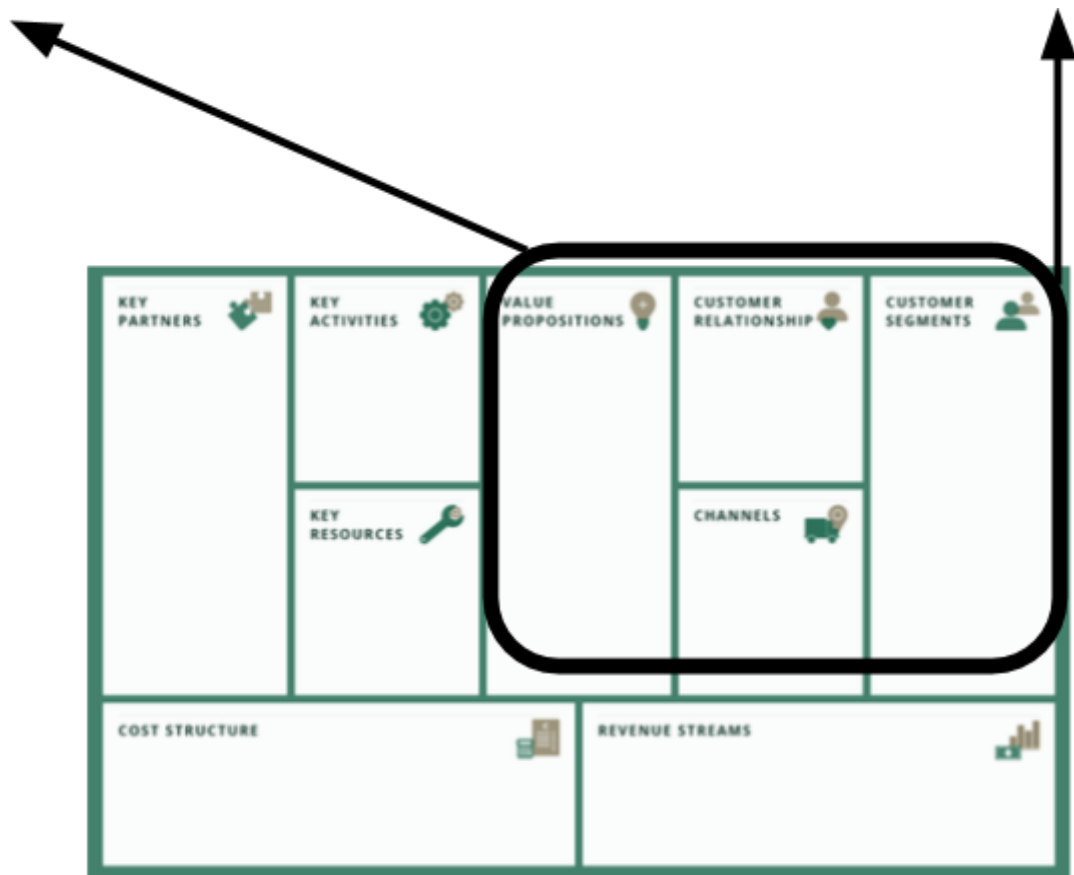
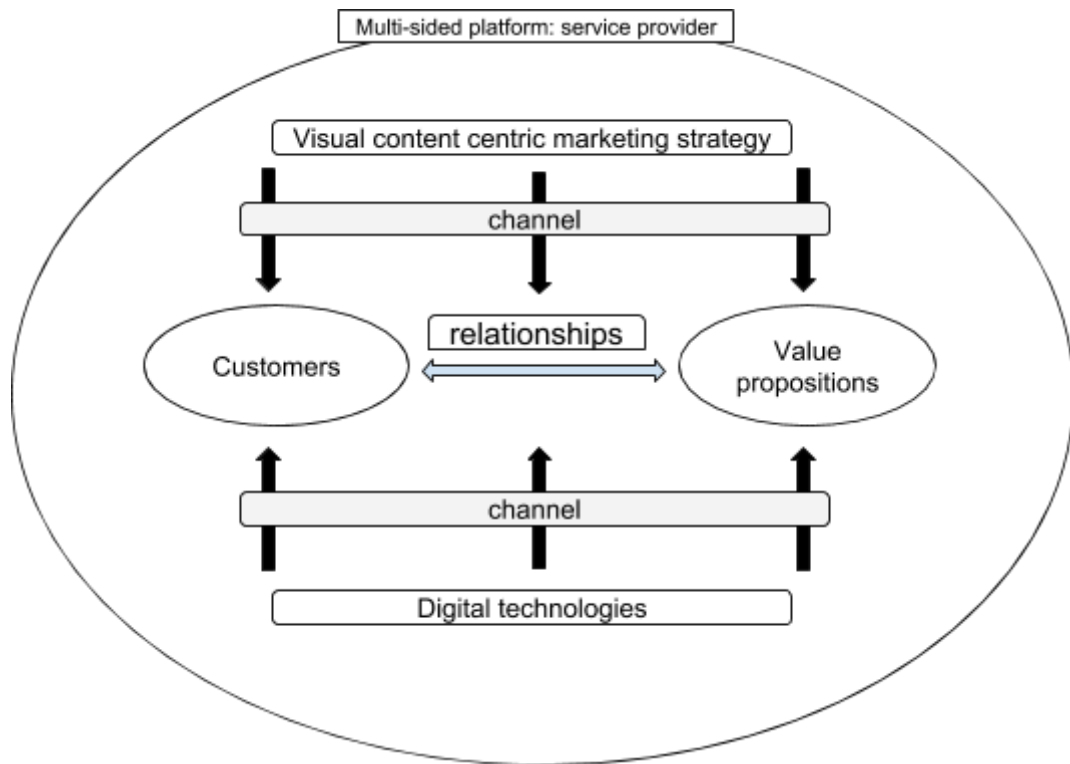


Figure 8 - Proposed Analytical Framework

The proposed analytical framework primarily retains the “marketing strategy” and “digital technologies” sections in Figure 7. However, Kannan’s model highlights the process of insights generations through interactions between the two sections and the customers to optimize the value propositions. They less focus on the value delivery process and entirely left out the channels in which the value propositions are embedded and passed on to the customers even if they actually made the channels as part of the attachments to the customers.

Nevertheless, the thesis explores the strategic way of conducting an efficient marketing strategy. Therefore, value delivery channels are crucial elements to study. Thus the author set the channels apart to be a category to analyze. Moreover, the thesis focuses on the service-oriented platform, so the customer relationship is used to replace the two sections of customers and companies from Figure 7. More importantly, despite the omission of the user-generated content, multi-sided market, social media as shown in Figure 7, the proposed analytical framework factually integrated these into the channels.

Mostly, the two analytical frameworks share the same elements. However, Figure 7 is a general framework for the majority to refer to as Kannan and Li planned initially. The proposed analytical framework in Figure 8 tried to highlight those that are critical in this type of analysis.

The thesis conducted the in-depth case study to reveal as much information as it could get in this Tattodo atypical case. Of course, in no way, the thesis tried to narrow it down to only one way of conducting the process. Thus, there was without many summaries in the end. For summarizing cases might be counterproductive, and only beginners learn from reduced formulas yet experts learn from a number of real-life cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006), being said, the thesis aims to provide implications and future agenda in the field of visual digital storytelling, to reduce into a list of best practices is not what the author wants to achieve.

Case Analysis

Tattoodo

Tattoodo was founded by renowned tattoo artist and TV personality Ami James, Danish entrepreneurs Johan Plenge and Mik Thobo-Carlsen (Techcrunch, n.d.). It started with the web portal - Tattoodo.com, which according to Deloitte's Tattoodo ApS Annual Report 2012/13 is "the world's first social marketplace for tattoo designs, and offers custom and exclusive tattoo designs."

According to Techcrunch's Lawler (2013), it was initiated because Plenge wanted to get a tattoo yet could not find a design he liked, after that he felt there was no trustworthy and reliable place for people to browse and search quality designs. According to Thobo-Carlsen, there are 150 million monthly searches for tattoos on Google, and 40% millennials in the United States got at least one tattoo (Tattoodo, 2016). These suggested the widespread interest in tattoos and possible lack of destinations to meet needs (Liles, 2013). The business idea became evident after looking into the data.

In the very beginning, Lawler (2013) said Tattoodo had a peer-to-peer marketplace where artists could sell their tattoo designs in the website, on the other hand, customers could start a contest to request a desirable design from artists. With the mutual communication between artists and customers, a quality design would be the outcome, and customers could use the design to a local tattoo shop which Tattoodo would also help suggest in its tattoo shop recommendation list (Greg, 2013).

Tattoodo would charge a small commission for each successful transaction as the marketing manager Paula Zeikmane (personal communication, July 17th, 2018) explained in the interview. She said that the initial idea of being the marketplace of tattoos is somewhat hard to be scalable because every contest the tattooers initiated required more than one artists to participate and the commission Tattoodo charged was too little to sustain the idea. At the same time, head of customer

success of Tattoodo said they noticed the click-baiting articles in their website, which were published on the Facebook page received increasingly tremendous attention. Tattoodo thus gradually faded out the marketplace and started its business transition (P. Zeikmane, personal communication, July 17th, 2018).

Thus they started to redirect its business model to content marketing, which was based on quantity, not quality to bring traffic into the platform to attract advertisers (P. Zeikmane, personal communication, July 17th, 2018). Nielsen (personal communication, July 16th, 2018) said this transformation was very dependent on the single social media channel - Facebook to drive traffic and the revenue from the sponsored content was again hard to maintain and scale due to the niche audience and not enough relevant advertising brands to be sustainable.

Similar to BuzzFeed's business model evolution, after the traffic growth, Tattoodo started to go beyond clickbait content and produced quality images based recommendation articles and tattoo artist interviews (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018). BuzzFeed, well-known for its viral and click-baiting content structure, as well started its serious journalism soon after its stabilized traffic in 2012 (McBride, 2017). Tattoodo, on the other hand, also focuses on the existing users from the communities now to produce more quality content like videos and articles to feature them in order to maintain the good customer relationships (P. Zeikmane, personal communication, July 17th, 2018).

Clickbait is "something (such as a headline) designed to make readers want to click on a hyperlink especially when the link leads to the content of dubious value or interest." (Clickbait, 2018) BuzzFeed is known for successful adoption which leads its viral business core. Clickbait is often used to specifically referring to the attention-grabbing headlines (Chen & Rubin, 2017). Frampton (2015) said "a new word that has become synonymous with online journalism," and it constantly is criticized for shallowness, misleading, and prevalence (para. 4).

Forward, in 2015's annual report, Deloitte (2016, p. 11) reported Tattoodo's primary activities are "facilitating digital interaction between all stakeholders of the tattoo industry, and it operates an independent media platform, a marketplace, and

booking facilitation for tattoo professionals.” and it remains so up to the day of the thesis. Eventually “Tattoodo will build a one-stop tattoo destination for the industry,” and it should be the first thing a tattooer will think of if he or she wants to get a tattoo as Zeikmane said in the interview.

“Customers become more and more impatient especially nowadays they have to many access to too many distractions. With tattoo itself as a visual product”, marketing manager Zeikmane talked about the visual content,”Tattoodo try to produce more visual-based content or rather interpret an article or an interview in video form.” With a couple of investors of media backgrounds like AOL Content and Consumer Brands president Jimmy Maymann, Pluto TV CEO Tom Ryan, Tattoodo focused on content, visuals and artists interviews to be a digital hub for all things tattoo-related (Butcher, 2016). By the time of 2015, the two-year-old web portal already reached 10 million monthly visitors (Kloster, 2015). Its mobile application was launched in 2016 aiming to offer users tattoo inspirations by displaying a handpicked curated gallery of quality images (Irishmirror, 2016).

Also at the same time as business focus switching, the platform used its click-baiting viral content to fast gain fan base on Facebook. Nielsen said that it was done by sharing articles from website to drive traffic to the website, vice versa, it was attracting netizens to the Facebook page as Nielsen (personal conversation, July 16th, 2018) said in the interview,”It was never a good idea to put all eggs into one basket.”

Soon after the Facebook win, Tattoodo noticed most artists are on Instagram to share their portfolio. The design of Instagram makes it convenient for artists to showcase their works. It made more sense for Tattoodo to show the presence there as well. Factually Tattoodo also has Twitter, Tumblr and Pinterest accounts to complete its digital presence. However, due to the limited resource as a startup, Tattoodo could not be able to prioritize these social channels (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

Arguably the most significant tattoo community in the world, now Tattoodo boasts its web portal which attract 15 million to 20 million monthly visitors (Loeck, 2016),

mobile application of more than 2 million registered users including more than 150,000 tattoo artists worldwide in a short two years, Facebook official page with 17 million fans and 200 million unique monthly user reach (Tattoodo, 2016), Instagram official account with 2 million followers, Pinterest account with 118,000 followers as well as its global industry network with top 100 tattoo artists being Tattoodo ambassadors. According to Business Insider, content views is an essential parameter for Tattoodo and two billion content views across its digital channels are something worth mentioning (Loeck, 2016).

Facebook's client executive Olof Laurin said: "The Tattoodo Facebook page has the highest level of engagement I have ever seen." Apparently, Tattoodo's social channels have already become significant assets themselves and became part of its value propositions (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018).

Tattoodo, as a two-sided platform, host both tattoo artists and tattooers. From the business model point of view, there should be: two B2B and B2C, former one for tattoo artists and their tattoo shops shown in Figure 9, the latter one for tattooers who love tattoos and want to get tattoo(s) shown in Figure 10.

On this platform, there are tattoo artists who manage their tattoo shops on Tattoodo, and they are the group who are continually looking for new customers to get a tattoo at their shop. So, of course, there are tattooers who like tattoos and would like to get a tattoo, and they are the group who browse tattoo inspirations on Tattoodo and might stumble upon their favorite tattoo shop there.

As previously discussed in the theoretical background, in the multi-sided platform, there could be only one side paying for the service depending on the two groups' cost (Armstrong, 2006). Also, often is the case that one side is subsidized to attract the other side which could be more beneficial to the platform (Armstrong, 2006).

Up till the day of this thesis, the business model in Figure 9 of charging subscribed tattoo shops which are managed by tattoo artists is the one in operation. The business model has been gradually implementing yet not entirely.

In Figure 10, the proposed value proposition is the brand itself as a social hub for tattoo lovers to immerse themselves into the tattoo-related world, unlike the value proposition for tattoo artists, it has not yet garnered revenue stream yet.

Marketing manager Zeikmane explained in the interview that Tattodo wants to attract more tattooers to the platform to book a tattoo appointment through it so charging from them would be discouraging since they would be the one who pays to the artist whom Tattodo would charge from.

Therefore, in this thesis, the business model based on tattoo artists and their shops is foremost the study subject. The possible business model of standard users - non-artist users, will, however, be mentioned as a complementary part for the whole case study.

There were several transitions in Tattodo's business models as mentioned above. Firstly, it started itself as the first marketplace for the tattoo community with the possibility of purchasing tattoo designs online. Simultaneously, on the web, the blog section was always active and got more and more traffic with the help of the Facebook page (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

Secondly, the scalability problem of the original business model was redirected to content marketing with the apparent results from click-baiting. Thirdly, the media content marketing path was hard to be consistent with the limitation of the niche market audience unavoidably narrowed down the clients' advertisements possibilities.

Therefore, the company decided to stay focusing on the artists and tattoo shops which are the current business model. In this way, the multi-sided platform acts as the bridge between tattooers' tattoo demand and artists' tattoo supply so that either party can get the optimal result out of it.

extra features such as being featured in Tattoodo's social channels, personal account manager to assist their bookings and social insights for their accounts.

Because of the ensured 20 million monthly visitors' traffic across all the channels, increasing the visibility of the artists is the second value proposition. As previously mentioned, the Facebook and Instagram of Tattoodo have been engaging fans worldwide with an accumulated 19 million followers (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018). The channels themselves become assets to help tattoo artists extend their social outreach. Thirdly, based on the essence of the tattoo industry, lead generation for the tattoo shops is something natural to propose as a value and many subscribed tattoo shops renewed their subscription month by month for this feature (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

To extend on the essence of the tattoo industry, at the moment, tattoo shops or artists, successful or not, are mostly doing it in a self-branding method, which means they have their Instagram or Facebook (in some cases both). Some might have websites (mostly poor quality), and certainly, they have their email contact for booking request which is almost the only way for them to get potential customers. As for direct customers, it is highly up to word of mouth, yet not necessary electronically.

"Word of mouth acts as a credible source of information " (De Chernatony, 2010, p. 212) in service brands which rely on customer recommendations and experiences. Especially, a typical service consumption process happens in this order: "sold, then simultaneously produced and consumed." (De Chernatony, 2010, p. 212)

For instance, De Chernatony (2010) stated that a legal consultancy package is sold before the consumer can consult, then the consumer meets with the lawyer to consume the prepaid service while producing the service with the lawyer. It is not hard to tell that the consumer is inseparable from the process. It is not a one-way road instead that the value is factually co-created.

So in this self-branding case, the typical customer journey is the customer hears about the artist or sees his or her tattoo somewhere, then he or she embarks on the

Instagram or Facebook to search to get the email and finally start consulting for a possible tattoo from the artists. It is not difficult to tell that to get potential customers heard is the hardest part.

Compared to the conventional word of mouth which refers explicitly to oral communication in person. Electronic word of mouth, as the name suggests, is interpersonal communication online or through the internet (Kremers & B, 2017). With the new media maturing and booming, it is fair to say that electronic word of mouth became a powerful and tricky marketing force (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). On the one hand, it has a viral potential for the network effects; on the other, individuals can actively shape the conversation without the physical appearance in the dialogue.

However, in the Tattoodo case, as an arguably biggest tattoo community network, can undoubtedly utilize the electronic word of mouth as well as taking into account the co-creation with tattooers. A typical user journey in Tattoodo community should be spotting the artist in the platform, requesting a consultation with the artist through the internet and simultaneously producing and consuming the tattoo on site. After the complete process, a rating will be given by the consumer in the community. A closed loop, thus, is produced.

Therefore, it sticks to its “tattoo inspiration” value, offering premiere content which attracts customers, that is, whenever they want to get a tattoo, they are most likely to go to Tattoodo for inspiration. In a mixed pool of artists’ tattoo images, different styles are displayed as inspirations for tattoo lovers. Each image is tagged with its artist and tattoo shop.

Eventually, the image sparkles desire in customers and both parties get connected by one click. The entire process of discovering and purchasing is the perk of being one multi-sided platform for a specific niche market because any activities take place inside of the platform are tattoo-related and have higher potential to turn into profit.

Back to the value proposition, all in all, the tattoo artists gain visibility in Tattodo directly against the potential tattoo customers, unlike Instagram or Facebook which has a broader focus (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018). Therefore, subscribed tattoo shops and their artists will have access to premiere feature in the home feed in the web portal and mobile application, promotion in Facebook and Instagram as well as better communication with the customers.

On the side, Tattodo also produces TV shows for Facebook based on its engaging official page. It is truly for generating extra income, moreover, a branding method to expose the brand by standing on top of a social giant.

To deliver the value propositions, social media channels besides being value propositions also play the role of delivering them. So do Tattodo website and mobile application. As for the proposed customer relationships, Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010) explained the motivation mechanism: customer acquisition, customer retention and upselling. In Tattodo's business model, it achieves customer maintenance by the personal account manager and acquires & retains new users by building a stronger brand.

To sum it up, in order to make the B2B business model work, most importantly, Tattodo needs to retain the traffic and stably gain new users to maintain its appeal to the tattoo artists and tattooers. Moreover, it should offer better customer experience to subscribed tattoo artists to satisfy their expectation of the service as well as better user experience to tattooers to achieve positive word of mouth to gain larger user base (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018).

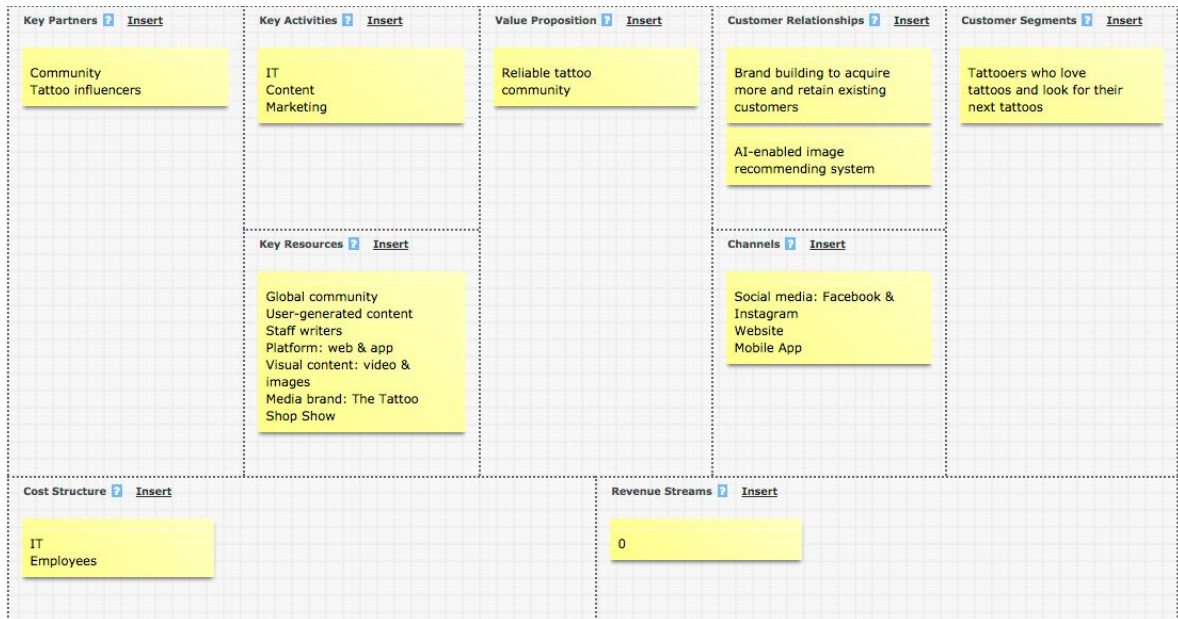


Figure 10 - Tattodo Business Model, Tattooers (B2C)

At the moment, the business model of tattoo lovers (B2C) is still sketchy to the extent that a clear value proposition for tattooers yet not planning to generate revenue from them yet. It shares many compositions with the business model of tattoo artists, but the user experience should be highlighted since Tattooers are the ones which consist of more than 90% of the users.

Nonetheless, the B2C business model is a great contributor to the business model of tattoo artists. Qdaily's journalist Xu (2017) interviewed tattoo artists in the industry, and all confirmed that a platform needs to attract enough tattooers to be appealing to the artists. Zeikmane also aligned with such a concern that Tattodo needs to maintain and acquire more tattooers to be able to attract more paid tattoo artists, so there is no point to charge tattooers.

From mobile application statistics alone, out of 2 million registered users, only 150,000 artists, leaves a majority of the rest as potential customers. Basically, the former business model is counted on this one. By offering an exceptional experience can tattoo lovers also known as tattooers be attracted, furthermore, can Tattodo attract more tattoo artists to subscribe for the sake of making the business model work.

In a nutshell, this case has been narrowed down into a case of branding Tattoodo itself and offering better user experience to tattooers and better customer experience to tattoo artists, that is, how to strategically implement social strategy and digital technologies to achieve the purpose of electronic word of mouth and better experience among users.

Visual Centric Marketing Strategy

Scientifically, people retain 65 percent of information with image compared to 10 percent without after three days of receiving it (Sumo Group, n.d.).

With easier access to multiple information channels, social media, and official websites, consumers are experiencing information overload with one single product, and therefore within the limited attention span, and they will digest information on a selective basis (Sumo Group, n.d.).

Researchers have found out that brains process visuals 60,000 times faster than text in the comparable situation (Pant, n.d.), which explains why the visual contents are consistently growing. Yes, visual content speaks volume. Whether a 7-second vine clip, an Instagram story, a photographic image, a tweet with an image, an infographic or a meme, the trend had started since long, and it does not show any sign of slowing down (Pant, n.d.). Actually, the visuals have always been favored in marketing for its capability of passing more information to the crowd. Furthermore, the stability and speedup in the mobile Internet solidifies the trend and truly brings the topic onto the focal stage.

In social media, tweets with images get 150 percent more retweets than ones without (Sumo Group, n.d.). “[T]here were 7,162 Tweets in a single second” can be shown in text. Yet when it is displayed like in Figure 11, it is concrete and more astonishing (DeMeré, n.d., para. 18).

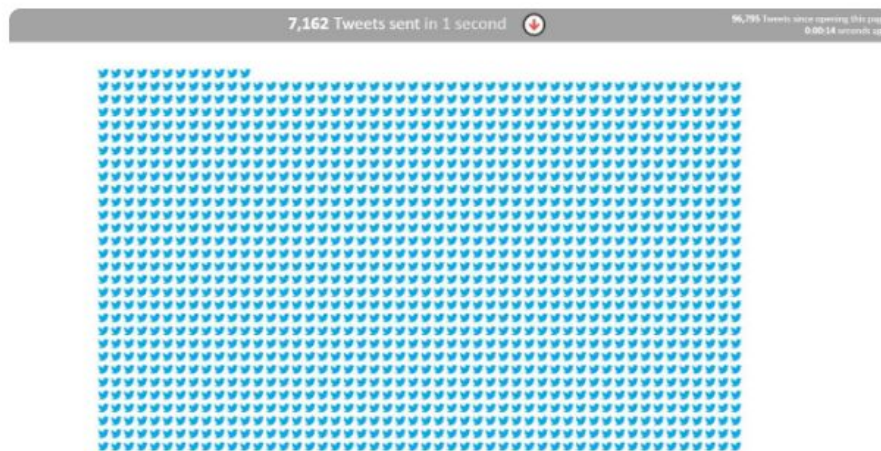


Figure 11 - Internet Live Stats Tweets Per Second (DeMeré, n.d.)

According to MarketingProfs, customer testimonials with full-name and photo receives 102.5% higher conversion than the others (Forer, 2018). Interestingly enough, when text and video are both accessible, 59% of senior executives would watch videos rather than read text according to Forer (2018). Same results can be found in the consumption side that four times as many consumers prefer watching a video about the product to reading about it (Mawhinney, n.d.). Even using the “video” in the subject line in emails can boost open rate by 19% and click through by 65% (Mawhinney, n.d.).

Cisco projects that video content will represent 80% of global internet traffic by 2019 (Mawhinney, n.d.). By following the lead, Tattodo started its video content shift in 2017 with a dedicated team producing different types of video content for social use. Simultaneously, in the light of Facebook users spending three times more time in watching live videos than traditional ones according to Mawhinney (n.d.). Tattodo started live tattooing videos which consistently scored more than 100,000 views with some over 1 million views.

Looking into a broader range of businesses, traditionally text-heavy industry such as the journalism industry have adopted video content since long and live streaming news video has become an essential part in major news outlets such as BBC, ABC, CBS and more.

In the new media industry, a good example can be found in the transition of BuzzFeed's business models. Formerly recognized as a clickbait and listicle viral content platform, BuzzFeed has successfully transformed into a diversified revenue streams business model which gives studio production significant weight in its revenue generation model (Peretti, 2017).

BuzzFeed's long-form video TV show *You Do You* Season 1 launched in 2015, "remained in the No. 1 spot on the TV chart for a full week" (Spangler, 2016, para. 5). The same practice can be found in Tattodo's directly sold TV reality show on Facebook Watch - *The Tattoo Shop* premiered in March 2018. Besides the weekly episode, a weekly live episode was broadcasted (Bryant, 2018). With the combination of eight episodes of traditional video content and seven episodes of emerging live content, the show received 21 million views in total (until May 2018) according to its Facebook Watch Show page.

It was not merely an impulsive decision that Tattodo stopped text-heavy content strategy in early 2017. As Ryan (2016) said in his book that content should be relevant to the audience, they should be able to interact with customers and engaging as well. With so much traffic pouring into the platform, little went to the text-heavy section and customers prefer visual content because most of them have the short attention span (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

It was based on the mainstream trend in video content and visual marketing with the not satisfying article performance throughout the channels (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018). The thesis analyzed the content on Tattodo's Facebook and Instagram channels to discuss social channel strategies.

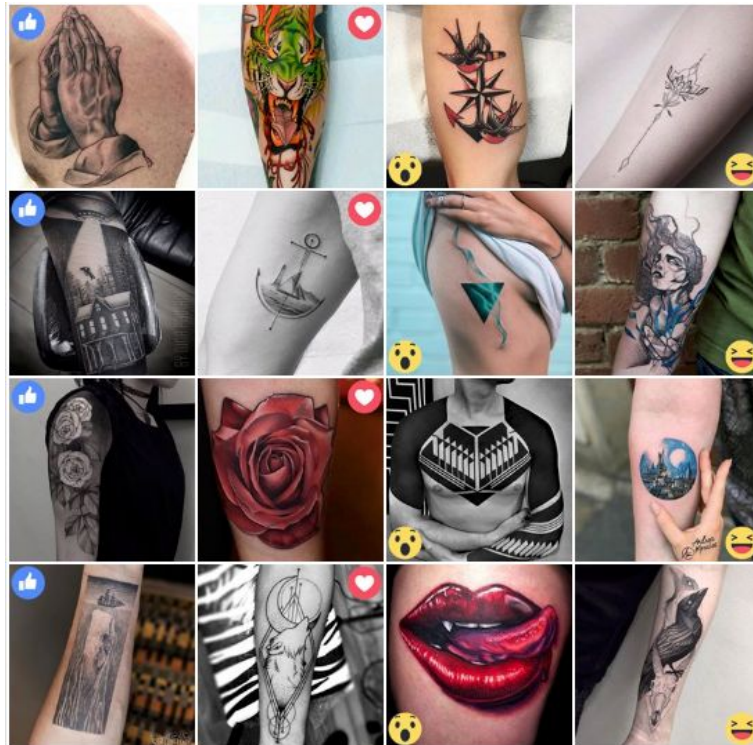


Figure 12 - Tattoodo Facebook Emoji Reaction Campaign

(Source: Tattoodo Instagram Account)

Besides the regular posts of tattoo images, it has specific guerrilla campaigns as well in Figure 12 where unlike conventional collages, Tattoodo made use of emoji reactions to encourage viewers to select their favorite tattoo. Such interactive and straightforward tricks stayed a long time till Facebook banned the clickbait behaviors.

Emoji originated in Japan in 1999, according to Wikipedia (2018, para. 1), they “are ideograms and smileys used in electronic messages and web pages” and became a trend since 2010. Emoji is similar to emoticons but they are pictures instead of typography, and they could be specific objects, weather, facial expressions, food, animals and many more. (Wikipedia, 2018). Due to its vivid expressiveness, digital generations adopt them into daily conversations.

Guerrilla campaigns coined initially by Jay Conrad Levinson in 1984, are now defined as “an advertising strategy that focuses on low-cost unconventional

marketing tactics that yield maximum results” in marketing strategy (Creative Guerrilla Marketing, 2015, para. 1).

Such campaigns received fantastic interactive results. Viewers are used to double tapping to express “like” on Instagram, and the selected emoji reaction leveled up the game to let them “comment” with a tap. Engagement is provoked by a simple visual trick.

Aside from well-made video contents, there are also live videos which attracted nearly a thousand comments and hundred shares in Figure 13. Unlike post-production clips which boast their cinematic effects, the charm of this type of content is viewers can get real-time involvement and expect real-time response between tattoo artists and tattoo lovers. No time difference makes it more surprising and relatable than the post-production videos (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018).

Moreover, Nielsen (personal conversation, July 16th, 2018) mentioned that Facebook was favoring live stream more in its algorithms. Whenever a person initiates a live video, his or her followers will receive a notification, and it has higher possibility to show up in their feeds. Due to the algorithm behind it, live stream videos tend to have more engagement than conventional ones.

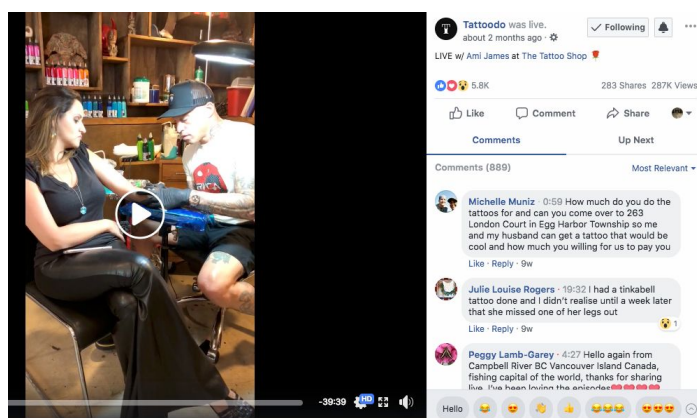


Figure 13 - Tattoodo Facebook Live Video Post

(Source: Tattoodo Official Facebook Page)

It is an excellent example of two-way communication in the digital era through live streaming (Agius et al., 2018). It is able to host a Q&A session, product demonstration, customer inquiries as well as interviews like Agius et al. (2018) discussed. Especially with the assistance of big social giant like Facebook, the re-shaping of the social interaction is no longer solely controlled by posters and audience (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018). The manipulation from the channel or platform should be of great attention obviously.

Nevertheless, Tattoodo has three types of in-house video productions: Inkounters, Blinks, and Sessions. Inkounters are the video of tattoo lovers sharing their tattoo stories. The rest two are tattoo artists doing tattoos, and the former is in a flash form thus short, generally in 20 seconds; the latter is a more communicative session.

From the statistics shown in Figure 14, short videos within one minute received most views and more engaging (J. Nielsen, personal communication, July 16th, 2018), which corroborates the trend in the media industry like Tasty, a food-making brand under BuzzFeed, sharing tutorial short videos. Noticeably, even if falling into the same category of interviews, Inkounters which focus on tattooers' telling their tattoo stories in the interview in the street, got more engagement than Sessions which are about interviewing tattoo artists in the tattoo studio.

Viewers tend to filter commercial information automatically and care more about fellow tattoo lovers when it comes to social sharing. They can relate to them and appear to engage more voluntarily. Psychologically proved, the content with a more personal touch like National Geographic's Instagram feeds (Mangles, 2018) positively grab more attention.

The similar proof can be found from another perspective. Tattoodo created one private Facebook group right after the premiere of The Tattoo Shop Show. The protagonist psychology provoked positivity in the community. Since March this year, it has 11,611 members and averagely 60 posts per day inside of this clique. Through observations, members are mostly tattooers who are engaging with their fellow tattooers.





Video content can be of great value to a brand even if it might actually be under Facebook's belt. In 2017, Tattoodo produced a web TV series - The Tattoo Shop for Facebook Watch. Despite the post-production episodes, Tattoodo created a weekly campaign in which a tattoo client says yes to a tattoo designed and decided by the Facebook community. The co-creation inside of a TV series turned a one-way communication into a dual process again.

The entire process of the show leveraged social participation from casting to airing. Right before its filming, the crew started an online tattooers' casting, inviting all the tattooers who want to get a tattoo at The Tattoo Shop to book a consultation through Tattoodo.com or Tattoodo mobile application to tell their stories. By this way, each episode featured a tattoo collector who cast via Tattoodo.

The multi-platform storytelling happened when the casting of tattoo clients for the show started. Videos of reality show stars shoutout for casting clients spread in all Tattoodo's channels. The artists in the show might be static, and the clients are definitely not. By co-producing each episode's story with the client, The Tattoo Shop became an immediate success with million views.





Inkounters 13 videos - Updated about a month ago ▶ Play All

Inkounters showcases unique stories behind the tattoos of collectors we've interviewed around the world.

 <p>London Inkcounter - Alex's Bodysuit 388K views - April 23</p>	 <p>Inkcounter - Tobias' Traditional Tattoos 412K views - April 29</p>	 <p>Inkcounter - Eugene's Magellan Inspired Piece 335K views - May 12</p>	 <p>NYC INKcounter - E Edge Tattoos 143K views - April</p>
---	--	--	--

BLINKS 23 videos - Updated about a month ago ▶ Play All

Tattoodo's BLINK series gives a brief peek into an artists session from first lines to final reveal.

 <p>BLINK - In progress Tebori sleeve by Takashi Matsuba, Brooklyn, NY 2.5M views - April 29</p>	 <p>BLINK - Tibetan Style Dragon Head by Yoni Zilber 2.3M views - April 20</p>	 <p>BLINK - Realistic Black & Grey Portrait by Rocky Burley 1.5M views - April 22</p>	 <p>BLINK - 'Straight E Beau Brady 1.4M views - April</p>
--	--	--	---

SESSIONS 4 videos - Updated about a month ago ▶ Play All

From first lines to final reveal, Tattoodo's SESSIONS gives an exclusive peek into the process of making permanent works of art.





 <p>SESSIONS - Royal Tattoo's Henning Jergensen's Epic... 180K views - April 1</p>	 <p>SESSIONS - Antony Flemming at The London Tattoo Convention 203K views - June 3</p>	 <p>SESSION - Claudia De Sabe at The London Tattoo Convention 78K views - May 23</p>	 <p>SESSION - Chris C Mondial Du Tatoua 383K views - June</p>
--	--	---	---

Figure 14 - Three Types of Videos from Tattoodo

(Source: Tattoodo Official Facebook Page)

Statistically speaking, one-quarter of the web portal traffic come from Tattoodo's social channels - Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest - and in the very beginning of the firm, the referral traffic from Facebook was even higher. However, along the way of the branding activities through various social channels, Facebook shared less and less traffic whilst organic traffic grew higher, which explains the network strategy which builds up a strong brand by being reputable in various existing social channels where users are already on.

Instagram, another social channel of Tattoodo's, is known for sharing quality tattoo images. Commonly known for its image tagging feature, adding the tattoo artist in the image indicates its owner. Other tags can be used for the commercial purpose such as tagging Tattoodo App shown in Figure 15. Hashtags are the searching keywords or topics in Instagram. By adding multiple hashtags, one can gain exposure in various searches.

Despite the commonness between Facebook and Instagram, Instagram, for its pure visual value and image-based social reputation, became the most valuable asset for Tattoodo in spite of Facebook's absolute advantage from followers' sheer number as Nielsen (personal conversation, July 16th, 2018) commented that most artists are already on Instagram though not necessarily on Facebook. Those artists are doing self-branding with little help from outside. The authority reputation of Tattoodo grabs their attention.

Compared to Facebook, Instagram has a more visual impact, and Facebook is spammed and flooded with advertisements, articles, videos and so on. People start to use Facebook for chatting with friends and families and checking events to name a few, while they consider Instagram as a way of showing lifestyle or portfolio per se (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018)

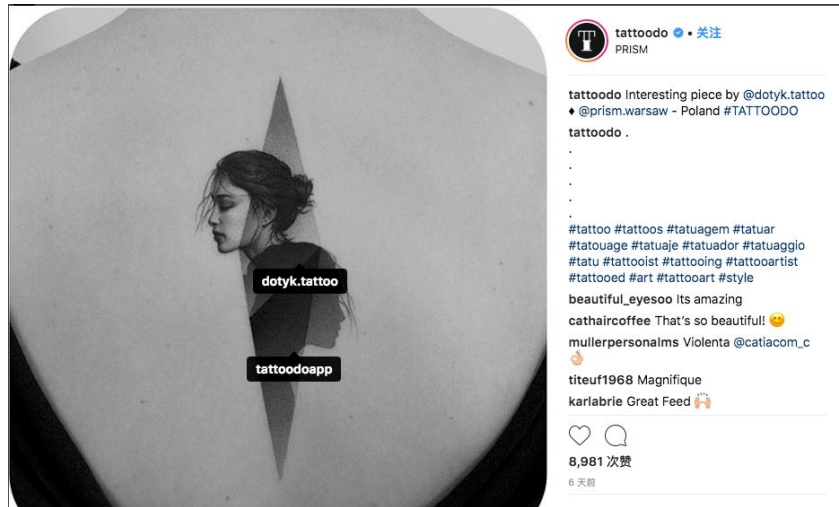


Figure 15 - Tattoodo Instagram Post Sample

(Source: Tattoodo Official Instagram Account)

By observation, the most significant thing is in the comment section. A similar post from both Instagram and Facebook, Instagram tends to have more people tagging friends shown in Figure 16, even though Facebook has the same function yet not widely observed. Electronic word of mouth, thus, spreads extensively through the massive network.

With the attributes of scalability and high speed of diffusion, a significant number of tattoo artists confirmed that being featured in the Instagram is the most attractive thing for them to subscribe the service (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).



Figure 16 - Electronic Word of Mouth in Instagram, Tattoodo

(Source: Tattoodo Official Instagram Account)

However, corrupting the reputable social channels in order to cash in on poor quality tattoo artists who subscribed to the service is no doubt unsustainable. Facebook with its unbeatable social position, it gained more and more responsibility towards society. It becomes more and more complicated to take control over the published content (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

“What works today might not work in another. Facebook changed its algorithms constantly that Tattoodo can no longer get its previous performance on this channel.” Nielsen said, Tattoodo, after many discussions, decided to put most ads in the Facebook channel yet be selective towards Instagram ads to minimize the corruption in all social channels (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018). Nurturing various channels become pivotal in this case when a small company needs to cash in on their existing users but too risky to do it entirely.

Nowadays users demand dual communication more and better. Instagram has a few interactive features in its Instagram Story shown in Figure 17, which not only interactive but informative. Interestingly enough, despite all images tagging “TattoodoApp,” still an astonishing percentage of 64% Instagram followers had no clue of the product. The 2 million application users and 2 million Instagram followers share no big chunk of users.

As previously explained, Instagram has better branding value for tattoo artists and shops. Factually speaking, it works the same for branding Tattoodo itself. Creating marketing campaigns to support the electronic word of mouth is a common practice.

According to Brand24, for social reach and user engagement purpose, encouraging people to share a dedicated hashtag is effective. Carlsberg Group used the trick to invite blogger and influencers to support such campaigns, especially with photos to deepen the emotional bond and successfully achieved the annual sales goal in only four months (Chrzanowska, n.d.).

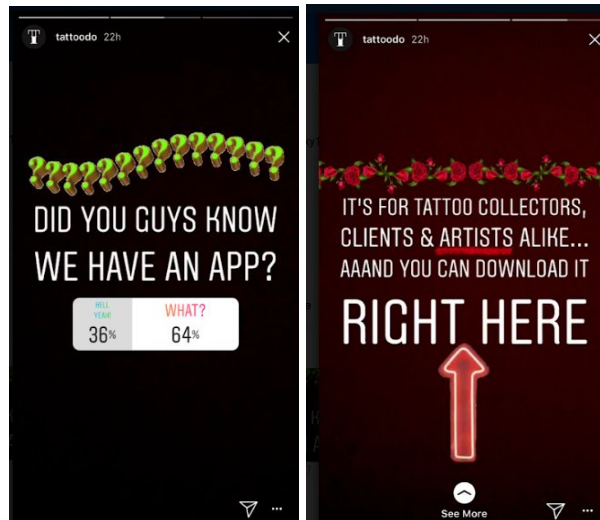


Figure 17 - Interactive Instagram Story, Tattoodo

(Source: Tattoodo Official Instagram Account)

In the light of the electronic word of mouth practices, a Tattoodo ambassador program was developed on the base of electronic word of mouth. It gathers a group of top tattoo artists from almost all continents on the planet. They boast a loyal fan base on Instagram and together generate a massive followers' network online. Each artist is asked to post an image with Tattoodo tag and hashtags. Now almost one million images (till July 2018) are curated under the hashtag of Tattoodo on Instagram alone. Excluding content generated from Tattoodo account, 940,000+ images are from either Tattoodo ambassador generated images or other user-generated content.

What's more interesting, Pinterest, another well-known visual focus social channel, is a top traffic drive for Tattoodo in spite of the low-maintenance from the brand. Tattoodo initially created the account and had 5,578 pins in total. After three years of no update, it remained top traffic driver to the brand. Compared to its Twitter account, which Tattoodo uses to share its published articles, Twitter did not do much help in this visual-based business.

Social search emerged while more and more people started to search and ask for opinions regarding one service or product before the purchase (Chrzanowska, n.d.). As Marissa Mayer, Vice President of Google's Search Products and Users Experience, "any search aided by a social interaction or a social connection" which

happens almost daily, she said people are “trying to leverage that social connection [...] to get a piece of information that would be better than what” people would come up on their own (Ryan, 2016, p. 243).

Airbnb, a multi-sided platform connecting people who rent out their apartments with lodgers, set an example of responding smartly. Chrzanowska (n.d.) wrote that a Yahoo Sports Journalist - Dan Wetzel tweeted a joke about poor hotel condition in Sochi and Airbnb replied with an accommodation offer among other offers solving similar Sochi Winter Olympics hotel problems.

In the light of this, Tattoodo tries to show up in relevant forums, websites and communities to optimize the social presence by contributing quality tattoo images, city tattoo shop guides and recommending good tattoo artists with backlinks to its web portal.

Some time ago, when still with a rather broad traffic focus, Tattoodo Facebook page shared articles from the web portal, which was a significant source of traffic. Now bearing business in the heart, the Facebook page is accountable for lead generation for the subscribed tattoo shops. Near 50% of the online bookings come from the single source (P. Zeikmane, July 17th, 2018).

However, with the commercial infusion in the Facebook page, such as subscribed tattoo shop advertising, the fanbase is slightly decreased. It is foreseeable given the psychology of users who tend to filter blatant and intrusive advertisements (Winsauer, 2016). People do not necessarily hate ads, but they hate bad ads truly as Winsauer (2016) explained that the frequency and relevance of ads are genuinely important. Therefore, a good mixture of inspiration and commercials is pivotal to Tattoodo’s business (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018). As a result, Tattoodo places click to action and conversion-related advertising onto its Facebook page and stays true to the “tattoo inspiration” business core value in Instagram which only hosts premiere visual content for maintaining the reputation (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

By analyzing the cause of such difference, it becomes clear that despite the common ground of being social and engaging, social channels need different strategies. Especially for visual-centric service, it is a rather vivid trend that Instagram takes over the branding purpose, and it is valued greater among users at least among tattoo artists (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018).

However, due to the enormous user base on Facebook, it still plays a significant role from the business perspective (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018). Most tattoo shops might not have a website, but they tend to have a Facebook page where people can search and find the entity to look for business information like working hours. To the other end, Instagram, presents itself in a digital portfolio way, which have a direct visual impact. Content should be consistent on all channels, but the strategies should be differentiated.

Despite the fact that the many promotional activities for paid tattoo shops take place on Facebook, there are half of the lead generations happening within Tattoodo's website and mobile application. It is enlightening for the team to notice that at least half of the lead generations were brought by Tattoodo's well-branded reputation across various channels instead of Facebook paid advertisements (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018). How to work more on the users on the website and mobile application is something user-experience related, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Visual content has played a crucial role in Tattoodo's growth. Besides the click-baiting articles, actually engagement on Facebook came from image posting. Even after the launch of the mobile application, users spend the most time on scrolling the images (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018). Of course, due to the essence in the industry actually being visual, it is sensible to implement and opt to visual channels and strategies. Yet the several redirections indeed came from a slew of initiatives. By monitoring the traffic sources, any company should have a better perspective of what is working and what is not.

Nowadays, businesses are all-round turning digital. It is an inevitable trend which disrupted many industries like journalism and media. Service brands have to take

into account various social platforms which give space for customer communication. The increasing complication in the social media channels pushes companies to spread their attention across multiple channels. Instead of passively reacting to the crowd, they might as well be active join the conversations by showing presence in where their audience is. For the visual content trend in the marketing field and most cases, limited resources from one company, wisely distributing themselves onto visual platforms is one way to build up a visual digital world revolving a brand strategically.

Digital Technologies in Visual-Driven Content Marketing

Besides the goods branding, a service-dominant logic is considered uniquely by scholars. Vargo and Lusch (2004) believe that operant resources, such as knowledge and skills, which can produce effects and multiply the value of the resources are primarily appreciated; and the value in the service is co-created with the consumers and their relationships.

Tattoodo, as a multi-sided platform hosting both tattoo artists and tattoo enthusiasts, primarily plays a bridge role to connect suitable artists with people who are looking for tattoos. It serves tattoo artists with the targeted audience based on their preferred styles and geographical locations. There is no traditionally concrete product involved but a communicative service provided. With the widespread usage of social media among customers, social listening is a common practice when it comes to service branding (De Chernatony, 2010).

Moreover, Vargo and Lusch (2010) acclaim that all businesses are in service and goods are the distribution mechanisms for service provision. Nowadays, it is far from enough to have a good product to win over consumers. They said that an accompanied service proposition is more than necessary. Consumers are expecting beyond the functional aspect and service is core in the user experiences.

De Chernatony stated one major challenge any service brands face is it is difficult to evaluate its offering. Unlike physical goods which have size, color, material, sturdiness and so on, service is most likely to be intangible. Therefore, the brand

should make tangible the intangible, such as uniforms, decorations, reception appearance (De Chernatony, 2010, p. 223) and interactions with customers (Chrzanowska, n.d.).

What are tangible to the customers are what help build up the brand. A great example can be found in the success of Haidilao Hot Pot in China, as a restaurant, the chain store brings the eating experience to the next level. It offers table games, massages and manicures to awaiting customers all free of charge and encourages employees to customise various entertainment to the customers, such as “staff resembling rhythmic gymnasts who twirl ribbons of dough into noodles that they plunge into bubbling pots of broth on diners’ tables” (“This Restaurant Chain”, 2017 April 26, para. 7).

Digital technologies are implemented to enhance the customer experience and to build up a better customer relationship. In spite of its essence of selling beverages and food, Starbucks is known for its unique service. It implemented artificial intelligence in My Starbucks Barista App which integrated Amazon Alexa so that customers can skip the long queue and order coffee by messaging or voice (Zaidi, 2017). Another example is from Spotify's social bot in its Facebook page, not only for search but for recommendations in terms of the user's mood (Kim, 2017).

According to HubSpot research, people showed interest in buying items from the social network (Kim, 2017). Facebook as one of the biggest social network in the world is no doubt the place to be for the experiment of chatbot. Tattodo started its chatbot test-out on both its Facebook official page and website since 2018 (J. Nielsen, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018), which significantly altered the one-way communication. Every day, hundreds of conversations are initiated by users from Facebook and web portal in Figure 18.

Chatbots are implemented to optimize automation, defined as

“programs built to automatically engage with received messages. Chatbots can be programmed to respond the same way each time, to respond differently to messages containing certain keywords and even to use

machine learning to adapt their responses to fit the situation.” (Sprout Social, 2018, p.1).

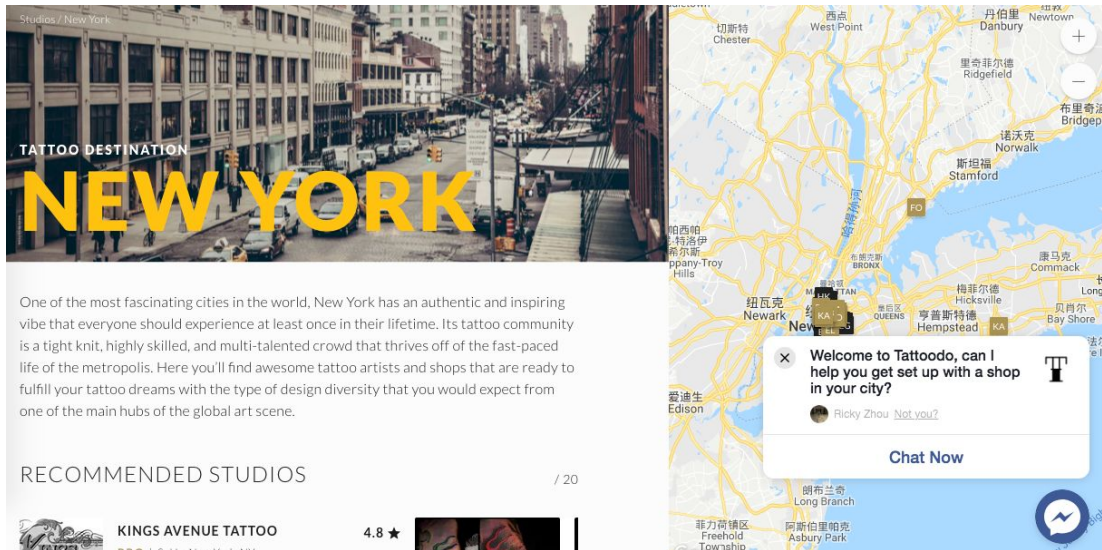


Figure 18 - Chatbot In The Tattoodo Web Portal

(Source: Tattoodo Official Web Portal)

Chatbot leverages existing chatting mediums, in this case, Messenger from Facebook, to receive and automatically respond to messages (Sprout Social, 2018). In the same report, Sprout Social (2018) mentioned that according to Facebook, 56% of people prefer messaging to calling customer services which generated 2 billion monthly messages between customers and businesses (Lloyd, 2018).

More than half of the people are more likely to shop in businesses which they can message to (Sprout Social, 2018). A more direct proof can be found in Google search data that the volume of “chatbot” search grew 19 times in the last five years according to Sprout Social (2018).

The charisma of chatbots is that they have the potential to utilize the existing social media channels to simplify work (Sprout Social, 2018). According to Sprout Social website, businesses can lower the cost by fewer customer service staffs while customers can expect a more prompt response. Chatbots are a great tool to streamline customer journey by offering immediate response through consulting, purchase and after-sales care (Sprout Social, 2018).

With a careful and precise plan of setup, chatbots can be of great importance to help generate leads and revenue by cutting down human cost. Yet it can happen only when businesses invest time and energy to get the hands dirty learning from their attempts.

However, despite many conversations through the social chatbot, Tattoodo did not get much out of it. Few real leads were generated (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018). It is thought-provoking but understandable to a certain extent. As Nielsen (personal conversation, July 16th, 2018) commented in the interview that the initial idea of doing such testing was to allow users to have a more natural connection with Tattoodo in order to firstly know about their communication needs and secondly build up a better relationship with them.

Declared by Vice President of Facebook Messenger David as overhyped, social chatbots went out of sight after 2017 (Lloyd, 2018). Lloyd said that It is such a fantastic business tool, but few businesses know how to take advantage of it. After all, it is a journey to pay for the development of such a tool, only implementing and integrating it in the website or application is far from enough as Lloyd (2018) said. He also mentioned that success is not guaranteed, if not carefully planned, it might end up with counter productivity.

For the trial of the social chatbots are so vaguely designed that no specific streamlined customer service was defined, the conversations lead nowhere and still take up resources to respond daily without getting many benefits. Nielsen (personal conversation, July 16th, 2018) agreed that it is a time consuming and experimenting process, thus Tattoodo limited the chatbots only on the tattoo shop destination page shown in Figure 18 and Facebook official page to get more relevant conversations in order to cut down manual operations. Two social chatbots are implemented to users who are in the tattoo destination page which all the tattoo shops are listed geographically and who are visiting Tattoodo's Facebook page to identify the actual sources (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 16th, 2018)

Customers nowadays expect a better experience as well as less trouble of getting what they want, and sometimes they might not even know they want it until they are served. The crowd is craving for faster and better service with more personalization (Lloyd, 2018). Therefore, it definitely takes time to finally be able to cash in from the investment on social chatbots. Businesses should leverage on the data retrieved from and stored in the conversations to optimize the customization (Lloyd, 2018).

One side note regarding the chatbot is despite the essence of being an online robot, and it is not necessarily one. Having some human touch in the chatbots' planning could make the customers' more satisfied and engaging (Lloyd, 2018). Customers are after all humans who would cherish interpersonal connection.

There is not enough stress on that implementing digital technology alone will not guarantee immediate success, but the attempt is a great start. A similar case can be found in different scenarios.

Amazon officially opened its Amazon Go, a cashier-less store in Seattle early this year (Chin, 2018). However, a similar concept chain store - BingoBox, had opened more than 200 cashier-less convenient stores in 29 cities around China in 2016 (Horwitz, 2018). As Horwitz explained that "China is both ahead of and behind Amazon in cashier-less stores," technology-wise, Chinese startups are no competition to Amazon regarding artificial intelligence and computer vision; expansion-wise, BingoBox leveraged on existing technologies to achieve the goal though moving towards Amazon's image recognition (Horwitz, 2018).

BingoBox, an AI-powered convenient store brand, started itself as a low-fi design (Horwitz, 2018). Compared to Amazon Go, it adopts RFID (Radio-frequency identification) on each item, and it still needs customers to check out manually. However, in recent releases, it has developed an AI-powered image recognition system to optimize automation (Shen, 2017).

Low-fidelity, also known as low-fi or lo-fi, is

“a quick and easy way to translate high-level design concepts into tangible and testable artifacts. The first and most important role of lo-fi prototypes is to check and test functionality rather than the visual appearance of the product.” (Babich, 2017, para. 11)

In the same report, Babich (2017) explained the advantages of such a strategy which boasts its inexpensiveness, time-saving, and clarification, that might partially explain why Amazon can possibly launch an advanced product while the counterpart startups opt for a more straightforward version even if sharing the same concept.

Chen Zilin, founder, and CEO of BingoBox, said in the interview that “with more stores opening” they are “able to collect a larger amount of data to train” their AI solution (Shen, 2017, para. 5). It is not about being perfect to launch a digital technology, implementing itself is a start to perfect it (P. Zeikmane, personal conversation, July 17th, 2018) and to offer a better customer experience.

Tattoodo, started its artificial intelligence journey in 2017 when two developers - Goran Vuksic and Dennis Micky Jensen realized they “spend a lot of time and effort on classifying the tattoo pictures that are uploaded” (Vuksic, 2017, para. 3). Vuksic said there were 346,000+ uploaded images in the system and the community member who uploaded it can add the caption under the image with hashtags. Apparently, the hashtags the person added are arbitrary, and most times even no caption added. Only 100,000 images were properly classified (Greene, 2017). Therefore, Vuksic and Jensen decided to build “a neural network to recognize and classify different tattoo styles (and later, motifs)” (Vuksic, 2017, para. 4). For classification is really important for the business core, by doing it can Tattoodo create personalized feeds for the users in the community.

Tattoo styles are historical, ranging from traditional style with bold line and bright color since the 1700s, realistic style since 1950s to tribal style as the oldest in the world and many more contemporary styles (Rebecca, 2018). Motifs, on the other hand, are common objects or patterns like anchors, eagles, birds, ocean among others. in the tattoo industry.

As Dennis Jensen said in the interview that “Everything in regards to tattoos are so subjective, so relying on members to classify their own content solely, was a bad idea, so having AI classify based on general conceptions is extremely helpful, as it provides our members with a better experience.”

It is fair to say unless being a tattoo collector, tattoo artist or true enthusiast, majority of members in tattoo community might not be aware of all styles and they are merely visually responding to what they encounter in the image pool. They like specific pictures without even knowing what style it is nor does it matter to them. However, it does matter to the business.

Such an AI solution could be a significant boost in terms of customer journey by suggesting artists to follow and recommending tattoos from the database (Schweitzer, 2017). He stated the trained model shown in Figure 19, can significantly help with the uploading process as well by suggesting hashtags.

As previously explained, customers sometimes do not know they want it until they are served with it. Most images are not categorized correctly, the users who like specific styles cannot get proper image recommendations, thus no optimal experience. With the AI-powered solution, which is fed with “data-sets with images representative of different tattoo styles” (Greene, 2017, para. 2), “Vuskic explained that “When you show an interest in an artist, a particular style or motif, the system figures it out and offers you more suggestions of that type of art.” (Schweitzer, 2017, para. 6)

Nielsen (personal conversation, July 16th, 2018) pinpointed the challenge of Tattoodo is the difficulty of distracting the users to migrate from where they are already on - the established channels like Instagram to the Tattoodo application. The branding initiatives on various social channels apparently made people download, install and try out the application.

However, the way to set Tattoodo apart from other social channels is ambiguous or non-existent even. The stress of Instagram’s broad focus could only bring attention to Tattoodo. Especially as a booking platform and a social community, users might

book at Tattoodo but once the conversion is done, it is not easy to bring them back to the platform, such AI solutions can offer something fun and unique experience (D. M. Jensen, Email conversation, July 24th, 2018). Only excellent user experience can hold the attention from them and go further to achieve the business goal.

Therefore, as an online community, exploring and using cutting edge technologies helps Tattoodo grow and give it extra nodge on the market (D. M. Jensen, Email conversation, July 24th, 2018). Digital technologies are here to improve the customer experience by providing more relevant and more personalized service while branding strategies are used to enhance brand awareness.

Besides the AI application in Tattoodo's visual business and proven adoption in other image recognition cases, more visual-related digital technologies are in the frontier of the companies' priorities.

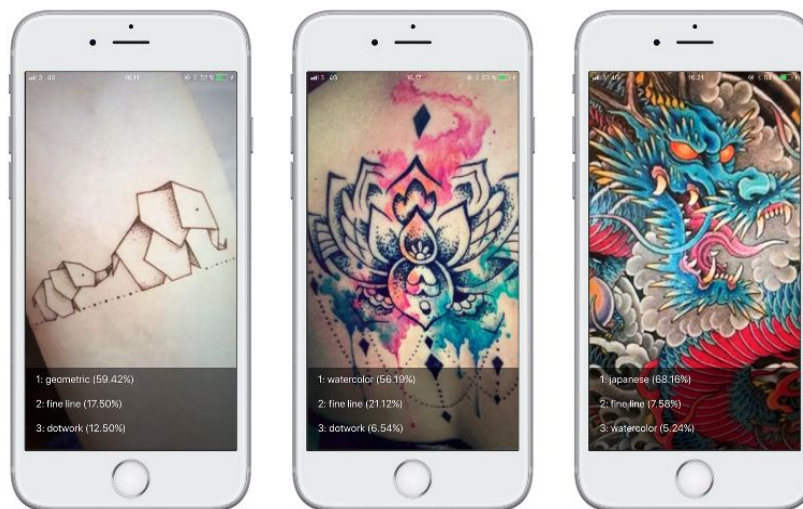


Figure 19 - AI-Powered Image Recognition System, Tattoodo (Vuksic, 2017)

In July 2018, Facebook launched its augmented reality (AR) advertisements, offering AR tool to a selected group of fashion brands and makeup brands to test out (Ha, 2018). Earlier the same year, New York Times introduced its immersive news view tool - AR to “bridge between the digital world and the physical one” (NYT, 2018) as part of the value proposition for subscribed users. Aside from this, Facebook also launched video creation kit for advertisers to come up with clips more

comfortable with existing images in the light of one-third of customers preferring video as a medium for discovering new products (Ha, 2018).

Immersive experiences are provided by virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) technologies, which set people inside of a virtual environment with an authentic vision of the surroundings (O'Donnell, 2018). Jensen (Email conversation, July 24th, 2018) revealed in the interview that Tattodo is working on using Augmented Reality with the phone camera to project the tattoo on the skin, which would be integrated into the mobile app for users to try on different tattoos before getting a real one.

As discussed in the previous chapter that half of the lead generation happened within Tattodo's website and mobile application, digital technologies are here to enrich Tattodo's product to offer exceptional user experience which other social media channels cannot offer. Only in this way, a functional multi-sided platform can be sustainable and profitable.

Above all, it is not hard to spot that digital technologies like AR, VR, chatbots are of great help in terms of improving the user experience. However, implementing these technologies alone cannot guarantee success (immediately). It is vital to incorporate with existing value delivery channels and take into account each channel's attributes and most importantly, the customer journey to be able to reach the optimal effects of these tools.

Findings and Discussions

It has long passed the one-way communication formula with the ubiquitous use of social media. Consumers now are able to shout out to companies and proactively shape companies' images without much interference from the companies.

It is a common practice to spread the digital content throughout multiple channels. It is no longer a strategy, and it somehow becomes a normality and a necessity to leverage various established social channels to maximize branding effects.

Media and journalism companies, which wish to cash in on advertisements, are no longer able to compete with duopolies - Facebook and Google that take away most ads spendings. By leveraging the existing established social channels like Facebook, Youtube, Pinterest and many more, accompanied with advanced digital technologies like chatbots, artificial intelligence, media companies might be able to break into a new business path to survive the competition.

Media companies seem to transform into something beyond merely providing content, and instead, whether offering any traditional service or not, they adopt a service mind which aims to offer a better user experience by implementing digital technologies in order to enhance brand awareness and improve customer relationship.

Companies with a limited resource set like the startup - Tattoodo needs to implement efficient social strategies by prioritizing social channels. By looking into traffic sources, Tattoodo developed a network of social presence with a set of selected channels - Facebook, Instagram & Pinterest (newly brought onboard after statistics analysis). Based on the channel's attributes, customized strategies and initiatives should be developed. Either visual-oriented channel or not, though factually is the case, establishing a co-creation process is essential. It was done by initiating a dedicated hashtag "Tattoodo" which generated almost a million pictures, tag or inviting the audience to co-produce a project like The Tattoo Shop Internet TV series.

Considering that the essence of the digital environment is dynamic, one should always look out for splitting eggs into different baskets. Following the trend of each social channel is the way of survival such as Facebook favors live video, in this case, Tattoodo often started live videos to communicate with the audience even infused it as part of the Facebook Watch Show to brand not only the show but also the Tattoodo brand.

With many influencers from the industry on Instagram, Tattoodo developed an ambassador program to establish its reputation via electronic word of mouth by asking them to use Tattoodo hashtag and tag. The program is robust that many

users do recognize Tattoodo as a destination for quality tattoos. It is also part of the strategy to not corrupt this channel while redirecting ads in Facebook where the content is harder and harder to take over control because of the constant algorithms change.

As a service-oriented multi-sided platform, it eventually needs transactions. Tattoodo's website and mobile application offer online consultation booking system most importantly, it actually offers or plans to offer one-stop tattoo service which means from tattoo images viewing, inspiration seeking to artists finding and booking. Eventually, Tattoodo will be a destination where people who need a new tattoo will use without encountering it in the social media to trigger the transaction.

The branding on various social channels is after all an activity to establish the reputation as a one-stop tattoo destination. What will make a difference for its business is to learn how to retain those who are already on Tattoodo's website and its mobile application. Digital technologies play crucial roles. Artificial intelligence in images classification could suggest relevant hashtags to users, recommend more similar style tattoos and introduce potential tattoo artists and more. It would be something set Tattoodo apart from other channels. Social chatbots, on the other hand, could efficiently cut down human cost and improve customer relationships though only by well-designed ones.

However, branding alone cannot ensure business just like implementing digital technologies alone will not guarantee better customer relationships. Making attempts and learning from the trial and error process is the only way to achieve goals.

Conclusion

In the context of the multi-sided service-oriented platform, branding awareness is best enhanced by electronic word of mouth. To efficiently achieve the deployment, one should build a network of social presence revolving the brand by engaging in various social media channels where the users are already on. In many cases, with

limited resources, companies have to prioritize the social media channels based on the traffic statistics.

Often are the cases, companies are facing a dynamic digital business environment with limited resource. Companies should establish their reputation through a strong network of social presence by prioritizing resource on various visual-oriented social channels. Taking into account the dynamics and attributes of different social channels, one should develop different initiatives with the purpose of contributing to an overall positive electronic word of mouth by a robust network of digital influencers and encouraging co-creating projects with the users.

However, branding is an activity, not the purpose. To be able to make a multi-sided service-oriented platform functional eventually, well-designed digital technologies setting the company apart from its competitors like AI and social chatbots should be implemented to offer a better user experience to firstly retain the existing customer and secondly acquire more users by positive electronic word of mouth among customers.

Bibliography

AdAge. (2012, July 24). INTEL/TOSHIBA'S 'THE BEAUTY INSIDE' NABS CYBER GRAND PRIX AT CANNES. Retrieved from <http://creativity-online.com/work/intel--toshiba-the-beauty-inside-trailer/28559>

Agius, A., Dave, N., Kakkar, V., Vasileva, T., Totka, M., & Savannah Louie. (2018, July 05). 5 Brands That Prove Live Video Is The Future of Content Marketing. Retrieved from <https://www.jeffbullas.com/live-video-content-marketing/>

Alexander, L. (2018). What Is Digital Marketing? Retrieved from <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/what-is-digital-marketing>

Armstrong, M. (2006). Competition in two-sided markets. *The RAND Journal of Economics*, 37(3), 668-691.

Babich, N. (2017, November 27). Prototyping 101: The Difference between Low-Fidelity and High-Fidelity Prototypes and When to Use Each. Retrieved from <https://theblog.adobe.com/prototyping-difference-low-fidelity-high-fidelity-prototypes-use/>

Ballantyne, D., & Varey, R. J. (2006). Introducing a dialogical orientation to the service-dominant logic of marketing. *The service-dominant logic of marketing: Dialog, debate, and directions*, 224-35.

Bryant, T. (2018, March 09). Facebook's New Show Lets Viewers Pick Tattoos For People. Retrieved from <https://nylon.com/articles/facebook-watch-the-tattoo-shop>

Butcher, M. (2016, February 02). Tattoodo Raises \$2.5M For Content And Commerce Tattoo Lifestyle Hub. Retrieved from <https://techcrunch.com/2016/02/02/tattoodo-raises-2-5m-for-content-and-commerce-tattoo-lifestyle-hub/>

Buzzfeedpress. (2018, May 07). BuzzFeed Names Lauren Dolgen As Head Of BuzzFeed Studios. Retrieved from https://www.buzzfeed.com/buzzfeedpress/buzzfeed-names-lauren-dolgen-as-head-of-buzzfeed-studios?utm_term=.aiyAAX9dr6#.kwZAAAdVN12

Chen, Y., & Rubin, V. L. (2017). Perceptions of Clickbait: A Q-Methodology Approach. In Proceedings of the 45th Annual Conference of The Canadian Association for Information Science/L'Association canadienne des sciences de l'information (CAIS/ACSI2017), Ryerson University, Toronto, May 31-June 2, 2017.

Chen, Tsai. 2015. "The Persuasive Effectiveness of Mini-Films: Narrative Transportation and Fantasy Proneness." *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 14 (January/February): 21–27.

Chernatony, Leslie de, Malcom McDonald, and Elaine Wallace. 2010. *Creating Powerful Brands*. Fourth Edition. London & New York: Routledge.

Chesbrough, H. (2007). Business model innovation: it's not just about technology anymore. *Strategy & leadership*, 35(6), 12-17.

Cheung, C. M., & Thadani, D. R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model. *Decision support systems*, 54(1), 461-470.

Chin, D. (2018). Amazon and China are leading the trend of cashier-free stores | Seattle Trade Alliance. Retrieved from <https://www.seattletradealliance.com/blog/tda-blog/post/amazon-and-china-are-leading-the-trend-of-cashier-free-stores>

Chrzanowska, N. (n.d.). 12 Powerful Ways Social Listening Can Help Your Business. Retrieved from <https://brand24.com/blog/12-powerful-ways-social-listening-help-business/>

Clickbait. [Def. 1]. (2018, July). In Merriam Webster Online, November 19, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/clickbait>

Cohen, H. (2012). Database documentary: from authorship to authoring in remediated/remixed documentary. *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research*, 4(2), 327-346.

Constantin, J. A., & Lusch, R. F. (1994). *Understanding resource management*. Oxford, OH: The Planning Forum.

Creative Guerrilla Marketing. (2015, July 08). What Is Guerrilla Marketing? Retrieved from <http://www.creativeguerrillamarketing.com/what-is-guerrilla-marketing/>

Day, G. S., & Montgomery, D. B. (1999). Charting new directions for marketing. *The Journal of Marketing*, 3-13.

de Burgh-Woodman, H. (2018). *Advertising in Contemporary Consumer Culture*.

De Chernatony, L. (2010). *Creating powerful brands*. Routledge.

Deloitte. (2014). *Tattodo ApS Annual report 2012/13 (Rep.)*.

Deloitte. (2016). *Tattodo ApS Annual report 2015 (Rep.)*.

DeMeré, N. E. (n.d.). The Power of Visual Storytelling: 15 Stunning Examples to Inspire You. Retrieved from <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-storytelling-examples>

Digital training academy. (n.d.). Content marketing case study: How Intel and Toshiba got an audience of 70 million with social storytelling. Retrieved from http://www.digitaltrainingacademy.com/casestudies/2015/03/content_marketing_case_study_how_intel_and_toshiba_got_an_audience_of_70_million_with_social_storytelling.php

Dixon, D. F. (1990). Marketing as production: The development of a concept. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 18(4), 337-343.

Evans, D. S. (2003). Some empirical aspects of multi-sided platform industries. *Review of Network Economics*, 2(3).

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 12(2), 219-245.

Forer, L. (2018, February 26). Five Reasons People Are Wired for Visual Marketing [Infographic]. Retrieved from <https://www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/2018/33632/five-reasons-people-are-wired-for-visual-marketing-infographic>

Frampton, B. (2015). Clickbait: The changing face of online journalism. BBC News, 14.

Grant, A. W., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1995). Realize your customers' full profit potential. *Long Range Planning*, 28(6), 125-125.

Greene, T. (2017, August 25). These programmers taught an AI how to understand tattoos. Retrieved from <https://thenextweb.com/artificial-intelligence/2017/08/25/these-programmers-taught-an-ai-how-to-understand-tattoos/>

Greg. (2013, June 14). Wish There Was A 99designs For Tattoos? Check out Tattodo. Retrieved from <http://arcticstartup.com/wish-there-was-a-99designs-for-tattoos-check-out-tattodo/>

Grimbly, S. (2000). *Encyclopedia of the Ancient World*. Taylor & Francis, p. 78

Gummesson, E. (1994). *Relationship marketing: its role in the service economy*.

Ha, A. (2018, July 10). Facebook is testing augmented reality ads in the News Feed. Retrieved from <https://techcrunch.com/2018/07/10/facebook-ar-ads/>

Hagel III, J. and A. Armstrong (1997). *Net Gain: Expanding Markets through Virtual Communities*. Boston, Harvard Business School Press.

Hagiu, A., & Wright, J. (2015). Multi-sided platforms. *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, 43, 162-174.

Hamel, G., & Ruben, P. (2000). *Leading the revolution* (Vol. 286). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Hobson, N. (2018). The Science of FOMO and What We're Really Missing Out On. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ritual-and-the-brain/201804/the-science-fomo-and-what-we-re-really-missing-out>

Horwitz, J. (2018, January 22). China is both ahead of and behind Amazon in cashier-less stores. Retrieved from <https://qz.com/1185081/amazon-go-china-is-both-ahead-of-and-behind-amazon-in-cashier-less-stores/>

Huysen, A. (1986). *After the great divide: Modernism, mass culture, postmodernism* (Vol. 399). Indiana University Press.

Irishmirror. (2016, May 19). Not sure what kind of tattoo to get? New app will help find your inkspiration. Retrieved from <https://www.irishmirror.ie/lifestyle/technology/not-sure-what-tattoo-get-8007658>

Jenkins, H. (2001). Convergence? I diverge. *Technology review*, 104(5), 93.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. NYU press.

Jenkins, H. (2006, October). Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century (Part One). Retrieved from http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2006/10/confronting_the_challenges_of.html

Jenkins, H. (2007). Transmedia Storytelling 101. Retrieved from http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html

Jenkins, H. Ford, S. & Green, J. (2013). *Spreadable Media. Creating Value and meaning in a networked culture*.

Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative science quarterly*, 24(4), 602-611.

Kambil, A., Ginsberg, A., & Bloch, M. (1997). *Rethinking Value Propositions*. New York.

Kannan, P. K. & Li, Hongshuang (2017). Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 34(1), 22-45.

Kim, L. (2017, May 18). 10 Fascinating Facts About Chatbots. Retrieved from <https://www.inc.com/larry-kim/10-fascinating-facts-about-chatbots.html>

Kim, L. (2017, June 30). 10 Examples of How Brands Are Using Chatbots to Delight Customers. Retrieved from <https://www.inc.com/larry-kim/10-examples-of-how-brands-are-using-chatbots-to-delight-customers.html>

Klara, R. (2014, September 29). How a Topless Mermaid Made the Starbucks Cup an Icon. Retrieved from <https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/how-topless-mermaid-made-starbucks-cup-icon-160396/>

Kloster, T. (2015, May 18). Tattoodo.com has 10 million visitors a month. Retrieved from <http://www.nordicstartupbits.com/2015/05/19/tattoodo-com-has-10-million-visitors-a-month>

Knowles, J. (2001). The role of brands in business. *Brands: Visions and Values, Uksip Series, Chichester & New York: Wiley*, 21-90.

Konzal, A. W. (2011). *Entertainment Architecture: Constructing a framework for the creation of an emerging transmedia form* (Doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology).

Kotler, P. (1967). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning and Control*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kremers, B., & B. (2017, February 16). Electronic Word Of Mouth presents a window of opportunity for businesses. Retrieved from <http://www.buzztalkmonitor.com/blog/electronic-word-of-mouth-presents-a-window-of-opportunity-for-businesses/>

Lady Blue Shanghai, Dior, 2 Jan. 2011, Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oepfkpkxjmA>

Lake, L. (2018). Learn Why Branding Is Important When It Comes to Marketing. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/why-is-branding-important-when-it-comes-to-your-marketing-2294845>

Lambert, J. (2013). *Digital storytelling: Capturing lives, creating community*. Routledge.

Lawler, R. (2013, November 12). Threadless Makes Strategic Investment In Tattoodo, Which Is Kind Of Like Threadless... For Tattoos. Retrieved from <https://techcrunch.com/2013/11/12/tattoodo-threadless/>

Liles, K. (2013). Designed For Permanent Success, Tattoodo Draws 100K Facebook Fans In Just 7 Weeks. Retrieved from <https://www.killerstartups.com/startup-spotlight/tattoodo>

Ling, R. (2014). Theorizing mobile communication in the intimate sphere. *The Routledge companion to mobile media*, 32-41.

Lloyd, B. (2018, March 02). The Future of Chatbots for Social Media. Retrieved from <https://www.falcon.io/insights-hub/topics/social-media-strategy/the-future-of-chatbots-for-social-media/#/GEN>

Loeck, S. (2016). This Danish startup is digitally disrupting the \$50 billion tattoo industry - and it's already huge. Retrieved from [https://nordic.businessinsider.com/danish-startup-tattoodo-has-raised-\\$4-million-for-digitalising-the-\\$50-billion-industry-of-tattoos-2016-10](https://nordic.businessinsider.com/danish-startup-tattoodo-has-raised-$4-million-for-digitalising-the-$50-billion-industry-of-tattoos-2016-10)

López, J., & Potter, G. (Eds.). (2005). *After postmodernism: An introduction to critical realism*. A&C Black.

Mangles, C. (2018, June 12). Storytelling is the future of Content Marketing strategy in 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.smartinsights.com/content-management/content-marketing-strategy/storytelling-content-marketing-strategy/>

Mawhinney, J. (n.d.). 42 Visual Content Marketing Statistics You Should Know in 2017. Retrieved from <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy>

McBride, K. (2017, March 15). Three lists about BuzzFeed's serious journalism. Retrieved from <https://www.poynter.org/news/three-lists-about-buzzfeeds-serious-journalism>

McCarthy Jerome, E. (1960). *Basic Marketing-A Managerial Approach*. Irwin, Illinois.

Neale, J. M., & Liebert, R. M. (1980). *Science and Behavior An introduction to methods of research* Prentice-Hall. Inc. USA, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Newberry, C. (2018, March 19). 4 Lessons Any Brand Can Learn from Nat Geo's Social Media Success. Retrieved from <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-lessons-national-geographic/>

NYT. (2018, February 02). Your Guide to Augmented Reality in The Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/02/01/sports/olympics/nyt-ar-augmented-reality-guide.html>

O'Donnell, B. (2018, February 22). Driving Immersive Experiences in Virtual and Augmented Reality. Retrieved from

<https://blog.westerndigital.com/driving-immersive-experience-virtual-augmented-reality/>

Osterwalder, A. (2004). *The business model ontology: A proposition in a design science approach*.

Osterwalder, A., & Pigneur, Y. (2010). *Business model generation: a handbook for visionaries, game changers, and challengers*. John Wiley & Sons.

Pant, R. (n.d.). *Visual Marketing: A Picture's Worth 60,000 Words*. Retrieved from <https://www.business2community.com/digital-marketing/visual-marketing-pictures-worth-60000-words-01126256>

Patton, M. Q. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Beverly Hills.

Peretti, J. (2017, December 13). *Building Out Our Multi-Revenue Model*. Retrieved December 19, 2017, from <https://www.buzzfeed.com/jonah/9-boxes>

Phillips, E. (2015). *Retailers scale up online sales distribution networks*. *The Wall Street Journal*.

Rebecca. (2018, April 04). *A Beginner's Guide: Popular Tattoo Styles Briefly Explained*. Retrieved from <https://www.tattoodo.com/a/2016/02/a-beginner-s-guide-10-tattoo-styles-explained/>

Ryan, D. (2016). *Understanding digital marketing: marketing strategies for engaging the digital generation*. Kogan Page Publishers.

SÁNCHEZ, L. (2017, November). *What transmedia storytelling is and how to apply it to your digital campaigns*. Retrieved from <https://www.wearemarketing.com/blog/what-transmedia-storytelling-is-and-how-to-apply-it-to-your-digital-campaigns.html>

Schweitzer, A. (2017, September 29). *How AI Can Help You Find the Perfect Tattoo* | NVIDIA Blog. Retrieved from <https://blogs.nvidia.com/blog/2017/09/29/find-the-perfect-tattoo/>

Service business (n.d.) In *Business Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/service-business.html>

Shen, T. (2017, September 28). *BingoBox unveils new AI tech for its unmanned stores*. TechNode. Retrieved from <https://technode.com/2017/09/28/bingobox-unveils-new-ai-tech-for-its-unmanned-stores/>

Shewan, D. (2018). 7 of the Best Value Proposition Examples We've Ever Seen. Retrieved from <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2016/04/27/value-proposition-examples>

Snyder, G. (2017, May 01). How The New York Times Is Clawing Its Way Into the Future. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/2017/02/new-york-times-digital-journalism/>

Spangler, T. (2016, July 06). BuzzFeed Notches TV Comedy Hit With 'You Do You' Series on iTunes. Retrieved from <https://variety.com/2016/digital/news/buzzfeed-you-do-you-series-itunes-1201809471/>

Sprout Social. (2018). The Complete Guide to Chatbots in 2018. Retrieved from <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/topics/chatbots/>

Sumo Group, Inc. (n.d.). What Makes Visual Storytelling Marketing So Effective? Retrieved from <https://sumo.com/stories/visual-storytelling-marketing>

Tattoodo. (2017, November). Want to get tattooed by the MIAMI INK CREW?! Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/tattoodo.com/videos/1572428706198121/>

Tattoodo. (2016). Tattoodo Intro Deck [Key]. Copenhagen.

Techcrunch. (n.d.). Tattoodo profile. Retrieved June, 2018, from <https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/tattoodo#section-overview>

Teece, D. J. (2010). Business models, business strategy and innovation. Long range planning, 43(2), 172-194.

The Drum. (2017). BuzzFeed and NowThis to begin delivering VR content as part of Samsung partnership. Retrieved from <http://www.thedrum.com/news/2017/06/13/buzzfeed-and-nowthis-begin-delivering-vr-content-part-samsung-partnership>

This Restaurant Chain Wants to Bring Chinese Hotpot to the World (2017, April 26), Bloomberg News. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-26/spicy-soup-from-china-tempts-foreign-palates-as-chain-expands>

Thobo-Carlson, M. (2014, December 27). How Tattoos Went From Subculture to Pop Culture. Retrieved from

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/mik-thobocarlson/how-tattoos-went-from-sub_b_6053588.html?guccounter=1

Toro-Jarrín, M. A., Ponce-Jaramillo, I. E., & Güemes-Castorena, D. (2016). Methodology for the of building process integration of Business Model Canvas and Technological Roadmap. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 110, 213-225.

Van Dijck, J. (2009). Users like you? Theorizing agency in user-generated content. *Media, culture & society*, 31(1), 41-58.

Vargo, Stephen L., and Robert F. Lusch. 2004. 'Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing'. *Journal of Marketing*, 1–17.

Vargo, S. L., & Lusch, R. F. (2008). From goods to service (s): Divergences and convergences of logics. *Industrial marketing management*, 37(3), 254-259.

Vargo, Stephen L., Robert F. Lusch, Melissa Archpru Akaka, and Yi He. 2010. 'The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing: A Review and Assessment'. *Review of Marketing Research* 6 (2): 125–167.

Verhoef, P., Van Doorn, J., & Beckers, S. (2014, August 01). Understand the Perils of Co-Creation. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2013/09/understand-the-perils-of-co-creation>

Vuksic, G. (2017, August 25). AI and Tattoos: How We Built a Neural Network for Tattoo Style Recognition. Retrieved from <https://blog.tattoodo.io/ai-and-tattoos-how-we-built-a-neural-network-for-tattoo-style-recognition-6e641df99a05>

Walsham, G. (1995). Interpretive case studies in IS research: nature and method. *European Journal of information systems*, 4(2), 74-81.

Whitbread, D. (n.d.). The Copenhagen Post - Danish News in English. Retrieved from <http://cphpost.dk/news/business/danish-startup-tattoodo-inks-its-mark-on-an-old-industry.html>

Wikipedia. (2018, July 10). Emoji. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoji>

Williams, R. (2018, February 05). New York Times introduces AR digital storytelling. Retrieved from <https://www.mobilemarketer.com/news/new-york-times-introduces-ar-digital-storytelling/516294/>

Wilson, F. (2010, January 21). Fred Wilson: New York Times Freemium Strategy Is A Good One. Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/fred-wilson-new-york-times-freemium-strategy-is-a-good-one-2010-1?r=US&IR=T>

Winsauer, E. (2016, September 12). New Data on Why People Hate Ads: Too Many, Too Intrusive, Too Creepy. Retrieved from <https://www.vieodesign.com/blog/new-data-why-people-hate-ads>

Winter, F. W. (1984). Market segmentation: A tactical approach. *Business Horizons*, 27(1), 57-63.

Pitt, L., Berthon, P., & Berthon, J. P. (1999). Changing channels: the impact of the Internet on distribution strategy. *Business Horizons*, 42(2), 19-28.

Women's Tales, 2018. Retrieved from http://www.miumiu.com/en/women_tales/15/film?cc=IT

Xu, J. (2017, December). 文身师灵感和生意何来？一家哥本哈根公司想解决这个问题. Retrieved from <https://www.qdaily.com/articles/48215.html>

Yin, R. K. (1981). The case study as a serious research strategy. *Knowledge*, 3(1), 97-114.

Yin, R. K. (1981). The case study crisis: Some answers. *Administrative science quarterly*, 26(1), 58-65.

Zaidi, D. (2017, October 13). Starbucks Bot Steps Up The Coffee Experience – Chatbots Magazine. Retrieved from <https://chatbotsmagazine.com/starbucks-bot-steps-up-the-coffee-experience-2dfa1d16976d>

Zimmerman, E. W. (1951). *World resources and industries: A functional appraisal of the availability of agricultural and industrial materials*. Harper and Row.

Zott, C., & Amit, R. (2010). Business model design: an activity system perspective. *Long range planning*, 43(2-3), 216-226.

Appendix

Interview with head of customer success of Tattodo - Jens Nielsen

1. How long have you been working at Tattodo? In which position?

JN: I have been in Tattodo's for 4 - 5 years already. I started as an intern when there were only four or five persons in the office. After graduation, I started full time, and now I work as the head of customer success.

2. In 2013 and 2014, Tattodo maintained its marketplace section as people can purchase design from artists afar, why changed?

JN: We stopped the marketplace idea, because we saw the rising traffic and potential in the blog, the written articles and stuffs. So the marketplace became inferior in the company and in the end we did not see the need to invest in it anymore. If we use the marketplace, actually we notice the scalable problem. It was not ideal for scalability from a business point of view.

3. What are Tattodo's value propositions for the tattoo artists and tattooers?

JN: For artists, the artists can display their production to the broad audience who really like tattoos. That is one thing. Another thing is they can actually get contacted by those audience directly. So more business more client for them via our service. Because our market is niche unlike the Instagram who has broad focus.

4. What do you think make the tattoo artists want to subscribe our service?

JN: Because our brand and image is really strong and reputable within the industry and they can get more clients and exposure. Most artists said that being featured in the Instagram is the most attractive thing for them to subscribe the service

5. From my observation, Tattodo has always been active in branding itself as a trustworthy and reliable brand to maintain the decent reputation, what have they done to follow the light?

JN: Mainly on Instagram and Facebook, sharing quality photos and connecting with really good artists through the Internet. This initiative is really giving us really strong electronic word of mouth which contributes a lot to our reputation.

6. Tattodo used to focus on articles production. What changed? Why they stopped the text content production? What direction they switched to focus now?

JN: By that time, we focused on onboarding brands and people and write articles about them instead of the artists. At the same time we started to build the app actually to define the users who really are interested in the tattoos. Now we focus on the artists and app, where we can see the potential and consistency.

7. Out of all the video forms, it seems BLINKS performed best, is it partially because the time length is the shortest?

JN: The short form definitely helps.

8. The live video streaming scored high views, what do you think is the reason?

JN: There are some Facebook new algorithms I believe. I think Facebook wants to focus on this part so they help promote it also. Of course, there are something regarding the interactions and flexibility in such sessions. Because people can actually interact with people in real-time. People tend to be more engaging in such videos.

9. Why artists value Instagram more than Facebook in terms of being featured?

JN: I think it's because of the form of Instagram. It's more visual and the way it presents appeals to artists. And artists really depend on Instagram to grow their fanbase and show their portfolio. Because we have a very quality gallery in our Instagram and two million followers. That's why we get a lot of people requesting being feature in our account. They are tagging us and following us as well. They are on Instagram mostly compared to Facebook.

10. Tattodo now uses Facebook to generate lead for subscribed studios, is it the main source? What's the percentage of the bookings come from it?

JN: Because Instagram and Facebook all under Facebook and they use the same ads manager, so we post on both platforms concerning ads. However, we tend to keep the organic posts which we post the paid users on Facebook. Because we really do not want to corrupt the image and reputation we built up on Instagram, so we try to limit the ads in Facebook. On Facebook's part, it is really difficult to navigate for us. Cuz it is hard to follow the strategy there, What works today might not work in another. Facebook changed its algorithms constantly that Tattodo can no longer get its previous performance on this channel. The other thing is we do realize it is not that wise to put all eggs in one basket.

11. Tattoodo almost spared all ads from its Instagram account. What's the reasoning behind it?

JN: As I said before, there are way more artists on Instagram and we have good reputation on this platform, so we decided to not corrupt this channel. Instagram takes over the branding purpose, and it is valued greater among users at least among tattoo artists. And artists asking for being featured on our social channels, so we think we should use Facebook. Facebook already really is spammed with ads. The other thing is as a startup, it is always a trial and error process that we have limited resources, we have to start something as well as stop something, prioritizing based on data is important. We realized the complication of the big channels like Facebook, it is too risky to set up a solid strategy to work for even a short while, the re-shaping of the social interaction is no longer solely controlled by posters and audience.

12. What are the difficulties the company faces in the customer engagement and branding?

JN: We are onboarding tattoo shops and artists who have Instagram or Facebook or both. Because the more shops paid, the more corruption we did on our social channels. So the biggest challenge for us is to drive the value they expect by not using our social channels that much but using our brand. In terms of users is to show them the value of using Tattoodo. Because they are on Instagram, and to get them on us we have to differentiate us from others. So that is the other challenge.

13. What role do you think the visual content marketing plays in the growth of Tattoodo?

JN: In the very beginning, we did not put much efforts in Facebook. But we have a section called blog in the website, and Facebook published articles and we see so many people actually got enlightened. That was the moment we put more efforts on Facebook. Instagram was after Facebook. The ambassador program started after our Instagram. This is a very helpful initiative to help us grow the fan-base and reputation. We onboard the famous artists in the industry to give us good word of mouth. Visual content is vital to our business for sure. We noticed users spending a lot of time of browsing the tattoo images. That is also our goal for app, we try to make them visual and inspirational. We built the app for mutual communication, because the high engagement on Facebook made us aware that people want to share not just artists. They want to be involved in the process of creating a tattoo or contributing to the community.

14. What do you think could be the future of visual content marketing?

JN: Besides the really quality visual content, digital technologies concerning the visual content is a great way to improve experiences. Augmented Reality or Virtual Reality or the AI we are working on are all the possible near future.

15. Tattoodo implemented social chatbot earlier this year, why did they do it? How did it work?

JN: We did it since beginning of this year to let users talk with us easier. It is a way to retain them and communicate easier whether they need a tattoo or a studio nearby or random topics and so on. We try to lead them to the tattoo shop if they need a tattoo, that is the value we want to offer and they might need. In the beginning, it was a lot of conversations like hundred messages. But the conversations lead nowhere and still take up resources to respond daily without getting many benefits. So now we only limiting the bots in the destination page where we know we can be helpful. By analyzing the needs of each type of users, we can streamline the user journey to help users to get value on Tattoodo.

16. What could be the future use of social chatbot in Tattoodo?

JN: After streamline the customer journey, Tattoodo's social chatbots can definitely help a lot in terms of lead generation and cost saving. And we can truly offer things other platforms won't be able to offer. Digital technologies like this can really help enhance the user experience.

17. The AI learning in images, what could it possibly bring for Tattoodo's user experience?

JN: Really important for customer experiences. And users can see relevant images and inspirations and relevant artists and shops.

Interview with marketing manager of Tattoodo - Paula Zeikmane

1. How long have you been working at Tattoodo? In which position?

PZ: I have been working at Tattoodo for 3 years already, starting as a student worker and I joined full time in December 2017. And now I am the marketing manager, my tasks vary from day to day.

2. In 2013 and 2014, Tattoodo maintained its marketplace section as people can purchase design from artists afar, why changed?

PZ: In the very beginning, they wanted to do a marketplace like 99designs just for tattoos and I guess they couldn't attract enough for both sides. To make it work, one contest requests more than two artists to join. And Tattoodo took commission from each transaction. The commission was really low to make the business profitable. It needs a lot deals. On side of this, there's our blog to drive traffic to the website. However, the articles drive traffic to the blog instead of the marketplace. So it was not really generating more transactions. So we decided to run content marketing thus for each article we have different pricing banners, places. We can cash in on the pay-per-click or pay-per-view. That model died in a couple of months, since we realized the management team want something last longer and more consistent because based on the ads business model nowadays are dying in general, the Facebook and Google are taking most ads profit instead of small media. It is unrealistic to limit Tattoodo to only a media web. After that, it is the booking platform. It is a two-sided platform that we just need to match the customers with a tattoo artist. It is a subscription based model that we charge the monthly basis from artists to promote their shops and their portfolio. For users themselves, so far it's free for them cuz we want to make it appealing to them and they are the ones who are going to pay to the artists.

3. What are Tattoodo's value propositions for the tattoo artists and tattooers?

PZ: We need to bring value to both sides as a multi-sided platform to make them use it and keep using it. It is about user acquisition and user retention. Acquiring them is easier than retaining them. Making them using it is more difficult than we had expected, especially tattoo is not something you purchase on a daily basis. Once you get one, it might take long to get another one. The value proposition for tattoo artists is to expose them to the targeted audience, and more bookings and consultation sessions for them. Since we present us as a reputable place for tattoos. So we try to onboard the quality ones first so the artists will feel exclusive and special in a way. We want to build a one-stop booking platform for getting new tattoos. For tattooers, we offer tattoo inspiration as a value proposition. They get inspired by browsing the tattoo images and get tattoo artists they like. Tattoodo will build a one-stop tattoo destination for the industry and whenever you want a tattoo, you are going to us.

4. What do you think make the tattoo artists want to subscribe our service?

PZ: Our social presence is really big with two million followers on Instagram and 17 million on Facebook. That is one main reason that the artists want cuz we have solid exposure for them. We brand ourselves as a full-service one-stop booking platform.

5. Tattoodo used to focus on articles production. What changed? Why they stopped the text content production? What direction they switched to focus now?

PZ: We used clickbait as a traffic driver so we really focused on quantity not quality. The articles' performance is not always satisfying. Now we only focus on those we are on our platform. So we write articles about ambassadors or paid shops to increase chance for them to get more bookings. Now we mostly have video and visual contents since the world is switching to a more video and visual direction. Because people are lazy to read and people are busy, so we think videos are a good form to display the content we want to show the audience.

6. Tattoodo now uses Facebook to generate lead for subscribed studios, is it the main source? What's the percentage of the bookings come from it?

PZ: Now we promote mostly on Facebook that is why a big amount of lead generations come from it. But from a long term perspective, we should focus on our platform, and Facebook, Instagram, Google are places where people spot us but the transactions should take place inside our platforms either website or mobile app. So we can sell premiere products to them like spots in the home feed, discovery feed and so on. In general less than 50% come from Facebook. And 50% is organic from our platforms.

7. Tattoodo almost spared all ads from its Instagram account. What's the reasoning behind it?

PZ: Actually, we have really significant presence on social channels that these channels become part of our value for the users. I think now people are on Facebook mainly using it to chat with friends or attend events. Facebook is so spammed and trashed with various kinds of content, that people are slowly dividing platforms like Instagram is more about visuals and Twitter is for opinions and words and Facebook is for chatting and events. And contents on Facebook are harder and harder to reach the audience yet on Instagram is not the case. However, we have 17 million followers on Facebook, and still a bigger chance to get known if promoted. For us, since we so far need to promote ads, we better mix a good chunk of quality and inspirational content together with it.

8. What are the difficulties the company faces in the customer engagement and branding?

PZ: People are not so engaging inside our platforms as our website and app. The experience is not optimal yet. But people are engaging in our social channels where we deeply deploy the visual content.

9. What role do you think the visual content marketing plays in the growth of Tattoodo?

PZ: Visual content is crucial for us because tattoo is a very visual. Customers become more and more impatient especially nowadays they have to many access to too many distractions. What we lack is from digital technology side, that we need to implement good tools to improve user experience. Visual is what we need to stay reputable, but the technicals are what we can retain people. And images are not enough, videos or motion pictures, anything but static images.

10. Tattoodo implemented social chatbot earlier this year, why did they do it? How did it work?

PZ: There are many conversations initiated through the launching period. But the quality was not that good. At least not many real lead was generated out of it. Now we have two social chatbots, one on Facebook, the other on our website just to make it easier to see where it comes from. It will definitely take time to eventually make something great out of it. It is a learning curve but it is definitely worth it for us to start such projects.

Interview with AI engineer - Dennis Micky Jensen

1. How long have you been working at Tattoodo? In which position?

DJ: I've been working at Tattoodo since March 2016, so a bit over 2 years. I was hired as a DevOps and Backend engineer, but now also as am AI engineer.

2. What are you working on at the moment?

DJ: I'm currently in the midst of upgrading our Elastic Search engines, and are working on the project plan for our next big AI project which we received funding to. That includes using style transfer on existing tattoos and using Augmented Reality with the phone camera to project the tattoo on your skin.

3. Do you agree visual content is a great asset for Tattoodo's success and what triggered the AI project?

DJ: I totally agree. We found a problem that AI could help solve.

4. Why is it helpful to develop the Artificial Intelligence for Tattoodo?

DJ: Everything in regards to tattoos are so subjective, so relying on members to classify their own content solely, was a bad idea, so having AI classify based on general conceptions is extremely helpful, as it provides our members with a better experience.

5. What do you think are the difficulties for the company in terms of customer engagement and branding? How can what you are working on make a difference in it?

DJ: It's difficult because of the mix as a booking platform and somewhat a social media. For users looking for inspiration, once converted to a booking, they are hard to make them come back.

With the new AI feature, we can provide a useful and more fun experience for our members.

6. How can the digital technologies contribute to Tattoodo's business model?

DJ: It can contribute in many ways. As our core product is somewhat purely technical, there is basically no limits to what we can experiment with, with a relatively quick feedback loop.

7. What role do you think the digital technologies plays in the growth of Tattoodo?

DJ: As we are mainly a online community, exploring and using cutting edge technologies helps us grow and gives us that extra nodge on the market, so it plays a huge role.

8. What do you think could be the future of digital technologies in visual content storytelling?

DJ: Definitely mixing up AI and Augmented Reality. People are running around with so much processing power in their pockets which only 10 years ago was completely unheard of. Harnessing that processing power makes you able provide vivid and complex features/experiences, and maybe even soon holograms.