“Instamarketing”:
A Content Analysis into Marketing on Instagram.
ABSTRACT

In this thesis a content analysis was conducted into the effectiveness of the marketing strategies used on twenty brand profiles on the mobile content social network Instagram. This subject is relevant because research into the usefulness of social media marketing is important. Furthermore, Instagram is a growing social network, and brands’ social media marketing managers are in desperate need of guidance when it comes to choosing strategies to implement. It was found that product representation brands and symbolic brands are prominent users of Instagram, and frequently use persuasion, self-efficacy, relational, emotion and symbolism strategies. Strategies marketers should use on Instagram are the organizing of themed photo contests and the awarding of a contest prize, the tagging of user photos to a brand related tag, and the showing of exclusive content. It is also important for a brand to clearly convey the brand’s identity, through a description of the brand’s activities in the feed profile, and making the brand name, product or other brand related events visible in the posted photos. It was concluded that it is important for marketers to fully commit to Instagram by showing exclusive content that cannot be seen on Twitter and Facebook, and find a balance between focusing on marketing on their feed and developing personal relationships with their followers.
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INTRODUCTION

Introduction.

“Social media isn’t the end-all-be-all, but it offers marketers unparalleled opportunity to participate in relevant ways. It also provides a launchpad for other marketing tactics. Social media is not an island. It’s a high-power engine on the larger marketing ship.” (Dickman, 2008). This quote by technology and marketing blogger and expert Matt Dickman shows us that in our day and age social media marketing is an essential part of a company’s marketing mix. As a consequence of the rise and success of social networks such as Facebook and YouTube, the exchange of information in everyday life is increasingly occurring online. It facilitated the transition from one-to-many to many-to-many communication. A social medium can be defined as a communicative medium that is aimed at or characterized by the interaction between participants or consumers of this medium (Kalamas, Mitchell & Lester, 2009). Several types of social network sites (SNS) can be discerned that are seen as social media. Pustylnick (2011) categorizes these into Pure Social Networks (Facebook), Grouped Social Networks (LinkedIn), Content Social Networks (Flickr), and Broadcast Social Networks (Twitter). Marketers are facing the challenge of adapting their strategies to fit marketing in social media. There have been numerous researches into the area of social media. According to De Valck, Van Bruggen and Wierenga (2009), social media marketing research has mainly focused on three areas so far: the motivations of people to participate in social networks, the ways companies can use online conversations between consumers to gather marketing knowledge, and the influence of so-called brand communities on the decision-making process of consumers. There is also a considerable amount of research into the marketing practices being performed on social networks such as MySpace and Facebook by different brands.
According to Tuten (2008) Facebook offers the most strategic values for brands, by placing targeted adverts on the profiles of users and sponsored messages on newsfeeds and letting brands create profile pages. Research by Wallace et al. (2009) shows that advertising on SNS does not directly affect a user’s purchase intention. However, it can encourage word-of-mouth (WOM) between users through viral marketing. Viral marketing is a combination of traditional Internet marketing (banners etc.) and new online marketing strategies such as in-game advertising, podcasts or branded profile pages. The goal of viral marketing is the creation of ‘buzz’ for a brand or a product. According to Palmer and Koenig-Lewis (2009), viral marketing is becoming increasingly important for companies. Influencing customer behavior through traditional marketing strategies is becoming less effective because of the rise of social media. Studies show that messages spread through online communities and social media are more believable and trusted than messages received through conventional media. For example, in 2008 a successful online campaign was launched for presidential candidate Barack Obama to reach the American voters in a new way. Obama’s online presence did not depend on traditional banners and adverts that would annoy the user. Social network sites such as Facebook and MySpace were used by creating profile pages, and posting personal photos, videos and messages from Obama himself. The goal was to create buzz around his character, and younger voters were effectively reached by the online campaign (Todi, 2008). This shows that non-traditional Internet marketing on social network sites can be a practical and effective tool to market a brand or a product by creating buzz.

Most social media marketing research has focused on MySpace and Facebook. However, content social network sites such as Flickr and YouTube are also commonly used by brands to market their products. Car-manufacturer Ford launched the “Ford Fiesta Movement” campaign to promote the new Ford Fiesta.
The company invited 100 people to use the car for six months, while they reported on their experiences on social network sites such as Twitter, MySpace, Facebook and YouTube. The videos uploaded on YouTube were viewed more than 640,000 times, evidence that (user-generated) marketing content can spread rapidly in social media (Dilworth, 2009). There has been little research into the specific use of content social networks as a tool for non-traditional Internet marketing. Users can publish content in the form of photography or videos. Regardless of the fact there is little information made public about the user, these networks can be compared to more traditional social network sites such as, for example, Facebook. The similarity is found in the possibility to respond to the content that is being shown. Users can also choose to follow one another and become online friends. Marketing in content social networks cannot be compared to traditional Internet advertising strategies such as the placing of banners and targeted advertising. However, Pustynick (2011) claims that the publishing of photos and videos on a branded profile page in content social networks can successfully enhance the consumer’s brand awareness. The advantage of content social networks is that, because they are solely meant for sharing photos and videos, they are suitable for smartphones. The photo sharing application Instagram is a mobile content social network. In this thesis the use of Instagram as a marketing tool will be researched.

**Instagram.**

Instagram is a free application for the iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and Android and is as such unique in its’ kind. It is a platform for the sharing of photos with other users. Photos can be taken directly with the application, or uploaded from the existing photo library of the phone. One of the most distinctive features is the fact that the photo is cropped into a square, after which a filter can be added before uploading the photo to a user’s profile. There is also the possibility to upload the photo to other social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter.
On Instagram, users ‘like’ each others’ photos and comment on them. Users can also decide to follow the profiles of other users. Instagram was launched in October 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, and was named App of the Year by Apple Inc. in 2011. As of April 2012 Instagram counted over 30 million accounts. In April 2012, Mark Zuckerberg’s Facebook acquired Instagram and its’ employees for 1 billion dollars in cash and stock (Rushe, 2012). Instagram’s success can be credited to the fact that it is more than a platform for sharing photography and views into users’ daily lives. After a year and a half, a close-knit community has formed in which business contacts and friendships are made easily. Instagram’s success has also caused brands to flock to the social network. Marketers from well-known brands such as General Electric and Starbucks set up their own successful streams. However, because of the unique way in which content is shared; by sharing time-and-location specific snapshots, traditional advertising strategies were not as effective. Newer and relatively unknown brands such as Warby Parker (prescription eyewear) needed new tactics to gain the attention of Instagram users (Beltrone, 2012). A number of users saw Instagram’s marketing potential, and joint forces to set up businesses dedicated to helping brands develop their Instagram marketing strategies and reach a considerable amount of users. Among these businesses is The Mobile Media Lab, founded in New York City by high-profile Instagram users Brian DiFeo (@bridif), Anthony Danielle (@takinyerphoto) and Liz Eswein (@newyorkcity). They have worked with brands such as Delta (airline), Puma, Warby Parker and more recently Samsung. All three users with over 100,000 followers, DiFeo, Danielle and Eswein take sponsored photos of brand related products and events and post them on the brands’ or their own profiles. Because of the high amount of followers they have, many see one sponsored brand photo.
For example, when the New York Rangers; an ice hockey team sponsored by American airline Delta, played the Ottawa Senators in New York City’s Madison Square Garden, The Mobile Media Lab’s founders were among six noted NYC Instagramers who were paid by Delta to document the game. The agency that organized the event calculated that the photos taken by the Instagramers netted over 5.6 million impressions, the total number of photos multiplied by their total amount of followers (Beltrone, 2012). This tactic, called influencer marketing, is widely used on blogs, YouTube, and Instagram. Reaching as many users as possible is not the only goal brands have on Instagram. Warby Parker organized several so-called unpaid *instawalks* around New York City. Users were given Warby Parker frames on loan and asked to take and upload photos of them around the city. According to Warby Parker’s social media manager, the ultimate goal was to “create really great relationships with the people who show up. Not only do they become customers if they're not already, but they become really big advocates.” (Beltrone, 2012). This shows that Instagram is used by brands in many different ways, and it is of importance to research how exactly brands do this and if this has a relevant effect on user engagement.

**Research question.**

The research question of this thesis is: “Which types of brands use Instagram as a marketing tool, what are the marketing strategies that are used and which strategies are most successful?” To be able to answer this question, a content analysis of twenty brand feeds will be conducted. Through statistical analysis several hypotheses will be tested.

**Relevance.**

It is clear that Instagram is used by brands in many different ways and that research into marketing on (mobile) content social networks similar to Instagram is important.
The goal of this thesis is to find out which different kinds of brands use traditional strategies and if certain new tactics, like the use of user-generated content and showing exclusive content influences the amount of followers a brand has and the amount of likes and comments a photo gets. This research is relevant because in general, marketers are increasingly using social media to reach customers and market their products. An analysis of the marketing strategies that are used on Instagram gives us more insight into practical implications for brands using social networks, especially Instagram, for marketing purposes. Also, this research adds to academic research into the use of social media for marketing purposes.

I am interested in this subject, because I have been an Instagram user since the first month it was launched, and have made contact and friendships with different high-profile users who are working with brands. Through conversations with these users, it has become clear that many social media marketing managers who are in charge of the brand’s Instagram accounts, are in need of guidance when it comes to the effective use of Instagram. The concept of advertising on this mobile content social network is unique, because there are no possibilities to place traditional Internet advertising, like banners and targeted ads. This makes the analysis of the brands’ feeds interesting, and gives some original insights into the ways in which brands use Instagram.

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In this thesis I will use different theories regarding brand typology, traditional branding strategies and strategies for social media marketing. Firstly, I will divide the brands using Instagram into different categories according to the brand typologies of Ruud Boer (2011) and Giep Franzen (2009). Secondly, I will analyze the brands’ profiles and photos on Instagram to look for different branding strategies that are used to engage the consumer with the brand.
The Integrative Framework for Effective Communication by Bas van den Putte (2002) gives an overview of traditional branding strategies used in marketing campaigns. By using this framework, it is shown whether or not the traditional ways of marketing are used by brands on Instagram. Because of the differences between traditional media and the Internet, I will lastly use literature and theory on different social media and how to effectively set up a social media marketing campaign.

**Brand Typology Franzen.**

To make a distinction between brands that use Instagram, and to explore if different brands use different strategies, we first use Franzen’s (2009) brand typology. Franzen discerns four brand types. Firstly, there are product representation brands. These brands serve to make the identification of the product and the process of choosing this product as easy as possible for the consumer. They are strongly associated with a certain product category and/or specific product attributes. An example of a product representation brand is Yakult. Secondly, trust brands are brands of which the primary goal is eliminating or reducing feelings of risk, because the quality of the products cannot be assessed before purchasing them. Philips is a trust brand, for example. Thirdly, symbolic brands help consumers to express their personalities, lifestyles and values. These brands are mainly defined by the symbolic meanings they add to their products, and often fall into numerous product categories. Examples of symbolic brands are Burberry, Prada and countless other fashion houses. Lastly, there are relationship brands. Relationship brands are characterized by their identification with the problems and needs of their customers, and their attempts to develop and maintain a personal relationship with these customers. Starbucks is a relationship brand.
This brand typology is not unambiguous; brands can be a relationship brand, while at the same time adding symbolic meanings to their products. It is expected that relationship brands are most prevalent on Instagram, because social media are used to make connections with others, and communicate with them on a direct level. The main goal of relationship brands is to develop and maintain personal relationships with customers. The first hypothesis is: “Relationship brands are the most common brand using Instagram.”

**Brand Typology Boer.**

Ruud Boer (2011) sees brands in a different way. He discerns corporate brands, product brands and concept brands. According to Boer, a corporate brand is firstly associated with the organization and not with the product. Shell and General Electric are examples of corporate brands. They have products in different categories. Product brands are related to a product, and the organization behind the product is not always known. Red Bull and Pepsi are product brands that sell a single product. A concept brand is different entirely. The basis is not formed by a product or an organization, but by a certain idea or goal. The Body Shop, for example, promotes the idea that natural beauty is what is most important. Another example is Apple. Apple developed a concept; in this case a certain design idea, and continues to develop products that fit into this idea. Concept brands do not aim for a certain target group, but count on follower groups to develop when fans join the concept brand. Charities are also concept brands, when they advocate a certain idea like breast cancer awareness.

**Traditional Marketing Strategies.**

In the Integrative Framework for Effective Communication (2002), Bas van den Putte provides marketers with strategies meant for traditional marketing campaigns.
Van den Putte bases his model on a typology of Giep Franzen (1998), in which seven strategies can be distinguished. Each of these strategies is meant to reach a different goal. Van den Putte uses Franzen’s typology to make his own framework, also consisting of seven strategies. He discerns the persuasion strategy, the sales response strategy, the symbolism strategy, the self-efficacy strategy, the relational strategy, the emotion strategy and the variety strategy. The use of six of these strategies is analyzed in this thesis. The persuasion strategy is commonly used to convince a consumer to buy a brand’s product, and to enlarge the brand’s customer base. To be able to do this, the brand gives out (new) product information and applies branding strategies to increase the brand and product awareness of the consumer. Persuasion strategies are suitable for brands that exist within a single product category, and/or are strongly associated with certain product attributes. A second strategy that is expected to be suitable for product representation brands is the sales response strategy. This strategy is meant to encourage the consumer to immediately purchase the product after seeing the advertisement, or to gather information about the brand or the product. The main goal is to increase brand awareness. Because product representation brands try to market one specific product, the sales response strategy can be fitting. The second hypothesis is: “Product representation brands make prominent use of persuasion and sales response strategies.”

A brand uses the symbolism strategy to convey a certain lifestyle or identity. It is not about the marketing of the product, it is about conveying the brand’s image and personality. The brand will symbolize the social group the user aspires to belong to. Therefore, it is important that the advertisement expresses the lifestyle and personality the consumer wants to convey to others. Naturally, it is expected that symbolic brands will use the symbolism strategy. Other strategies that symbolic brands are expected to use are relationship and emotion strategies.
The goal of a relational strategy is to relate products to an identity by conveying a brand personality. Through the purchase of the product, the consumer reaches her or his own goals. The brand is seen as a person a consumer can relate to. Emotions strategies are applied when it is important to associate a product with certain emotions that are felt when using the product. This strategy is used to differentiate a brand from other brands when there are no functional differences between products. Slice-of-life scenarios are often applied when employing an emotions strategy. The third hypothesis is: “Symbolic brands predominantly use symbolism, relationship and emotion strategies.” It is expected that relationship brands also principally use symbolism, relationship and emotions strategies. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is: “Relationship brands predominantly use symbolism, relationship and emotion strategies.”

Lastly the self-efficacy strategy is discerned. The self-efficacy strategy is applied when a certain behavior is difficult to implement, for example the purchasing of an expensive product of which the quality cannot be assessed before obtaining. By showing consumers the behavior is simple to perform, they are encouraged to buy the product. In this analysis it is anticipated that trust brands use self-efficacy strategies to convince the consumer their brand is trustworthy and of good quality. To persuade the consumer of this, it is also expected that trust brands employ persuasion strategies. The fifth hypothesis is as follows: “Trust brands predominantly use persuasion and self-efficacy strategies.”

**Social Media Marketing Strategies.**

According to Thackeray et al. (2008), marketers have been using the Internet and interactive marketing for a long time as a promotional tool.
Banners, sponsorships, pop-ups or – unders, links, targeted ads and sponsored searches are Internet marketing strategies. However, because of the rise of social media such as Facebook and Instagram, marketers are beginning to find new ways to do marketing. This is called social media marketing. A social medium is a communication medium aimed at or characterized by the interaction between its’ participants or consumers (Kalamas, Mitchell & Lester, 2009). According to Pustylnick (2011), there are different types of social mediums, and Instagram is seen as a Content Social Network. By effectively using social media, brands get free publicity, which increases brand awareness and possibly brand loyalty. They can engage with their existing consumers and, perhaps, extend their customer base by reaching new people (Long, 2011). According to Gillin (2009), the rise of social media has not only ended one-sided communication between brands and their customers, but also pressured brands to engage consumers with the company. Therefore user engagement is a social media marketing strategy.

**User-generated Content.**

A user of a social medium can be engaged with the brand in different ways, which means there are different strategies that are employed. Firstly, brands encourage Instagram users to actively work together with the brand, by partaking in contests, campaigns and promotions. According to an editorial article on user-generated content (“A call for ‘User-Generated Branding’”, 2010) user-generated branding is the handling of all kinds of voluntarily created and publicly distributed brand messages undertaken by non-marketers. This constitutes original user comments, reviews, ratings and remixes with corporate messages, and even full artistic work. User-generated content is expected to lead to stronger and deeper relationships between brands and consumers, and more effective brand communities (Van den Bulte & Wuyts, 2007).
According to Sanderson (2007), user-generated content sites such as YouTube and Wikipedia have built significant brand equity in a short time due to their ability to interactively create content and value. By letting users participate in the creative promotional process he or she becomes an active participant. According to Shukla (2010), this cooperation leads to a better relationship between brand and consumer. The advantage of a better relationship is that it strengthens brand loyalty, which leads to a higher purchase intention (McKenzie et al., 2009). These promotional materials developed by consumers are seen as being more successful than traditional tactics according to Thackeray et al. (2008), because essentially they are made for and by the user. Fashion house Marc Jacobs organized a campaign on Instagram in which users could add their holiday-themed photos to a Marc Jacobs related hash tag. These photos were featured on a special Marc Jacobs website, and used as promotional material for the brand. It is expected that the use of user-generated content leads to more user engagement with the brand, and thus more likes, comments and followers, because they feel they are contributing something to the creative process (Thackeray, 2008). The sixth hypothesis is: “The use of user-generated content leads to more followers, likes and comments.”

Viral Marketing.

The use of user-generated content can also cause a photo to create buzz on Instagram. A strategy that brands should use to gain more followers on Instagram, and thus encourage more brand engagement, is influencer marketing. Thorne (2008) describes this as the finding of an influential person within a social medium to advertise for the product or the brand. Instagram’s Mobile Media Lab, mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, is an example of influencer marketing. Influential users take brand related photos and post them on their profiles, accompanied by a brand related hash tag. In return, the influencer may get paid, but this is not always the case.
On Instagram, anyone can be an influencer by posting, for example, a photo of a Starbucks product and adding a hash tag (#Starbucks) to it. Users search for keywords to find photos that fit into a certain category.

Marketers do not only use social media for traditional Internet advertising, but also to encourage users to create attention for a certain brand. This causes a greater brand exposure (Steinman & Hawkins, 2010). On Instagram, it is also possible to see which photos other users you follow, like. This way; by adding brand related hash tags to a photo and asking followers to do the same, a photo is seen by many Instagram users and consequently generates electronic word-of-mouth. Another way a brand creates viral marketing opportunities is by sharing Instagram content on other social networks such as Twitter and Facebook. Thus, it is expected that adding the possibility for a photo to generate buzz, leads to more followers and likes. The seventh hypothesis is: “The use of viral marketing opportunities leads to more followers, likes and comments.”

Exclusive Content.
Besides making use of user-generated content and creating viral marketing, the showing of exclusive interesting content is also advisable. Ibeh et al. (2005) state that successful online branding depends on giving customers a unique message and, consequently, unique content. As such, unique online content is essential for the creation of effective Internet branding. Content that is appealing to the customer could make them more prone to returning to a brand’s website and interact with the brand in a deeper way (Griffith et al., 2001); Taylor & England, 2006). Hanson (2006) encourages brands to let an expert, who has insight into the brand’s identity and knows about the brand’s customers, create the content. This way, customers are attracted and engaged more easily.
It is expected that offering exclusive, unique content on a brand’s feed on Instagram attracts and engages more users and therefore leads to more followers, likes and comments. The eighth hypothesis is as follows: “The showing of exclusive content leads to more followers, likes and comments.”

**Brand Interactivity.**

Another important aspect of successful online branding is interaction with the customer. It provides insight into the needs of a brand’s followers, which consequently leads to the developing of more personalized content. To be able to gain insight, it is first of all necessary for a user to feel engaged with a brand’s feed (Kierzkowski et al., 1996). This is done by letting the user create brand related content, offering exclusive content, or engaging with the user interactively. Research shows that a high level of interactivity leads to a perceived high level of customer personalization (Ghose & Dou, 1998; O’Keefe et al., 1998). Interactivity heightens customer’s attention levels, which facilitates the strengthening of brand relationships, and consequently increases customer satisfaction (Simmons, 2007). It is therefore expected that a brand’s high level of interactivity on a brand feed leads to more followers, more likes, and more user comments. The ninth hypothesis states: “More brand-to-user interactivity leads to more followers, likes and comments.”

**Brand Identity.**

Lastly, it is expected that the conveying of a brand’s values and identity leads to an increase in followers, likes and comments. Brand identity is defined by Aaker (1996) in the following way: “(Brand identity is) a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain.”. This set of brand associations entails the consistent use of brand colors and logo’s, according to Rowley (2009). Another aspect of brand identity is giving the consumer a clear description of what the brand entails.
The conveying of a brand’s identity is a vital part of the brand experience, which leads a customer to better understand a brand and its’ goals and values. A consumer learns more about a brand, and feels like they know and relate to the brand on a personal level. It is therefore expected that the clear conveying of a brand’s identity in a brand image leads to more followers, likes and comments. The tenth and final hypothesis is: “The clear conveying of a brand’s identity leads to more followers, likes and comments.”

METHOD

A content analysis was conducted on the mobile content social network Instagram. Content analysis is defined as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Bryman, 2001, p. 178), or “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages (Bryman, 2001, p. 178). This technique was chosen because the goal of this thesis is to look for the presence of brand strategy characteristics on a brand’s Instagram feed.

Twenty brand feeds were chosen, and 100 photos analyzed to identify possible existing brand strategy characteristics in these photos. These characteristics were operationalized in a codebook, divided into several brand and brand strategy categories: brand typology, traditional marketing strategies and social media marketing strategies. By doing statistical analyses, the expectations were accepted or rejected. Lastly, the research question was answered by interpreting the results of the analyses.
Sample.

Instagram is home to many brands. For this content analysis, twenty brand feeds were analyzed. Firstly, they were categorized into four quadrants that were discerned by Ruud Boer (2011). Boer makes a distinction between the type of service a brand offers and the type of target group. A brand sells products or services, meant for consumers or businesses. In this quadrant a total of 58 brands were categorized. These brands were found by browsing Instagram, and by using a brand list from the Instagram website. All 58 brands were categorized into the customer target group category of the quadrant. Out of these 58 brands, 38 were product brands, and 20 brands were service brands (see appendix B). Secondly, thirteen brands were randomly chosen out of the product category, and seven brands out of the service category. This was done by using an online randomizer. Thirdly, from every brand feed, five photos were chosen by selecting every first photo out of the first five rows (see appendix C). The sample solely consisted of photos that were posted by the brand on the brand feed. Lastly, these 100 photos were analyzed by using a codebook (see appendix A).

Coding.

A codebook was created that consisted of several categories. Brands were characterized based on two brand typologies. The extent to which the analyzed brands could be characterized by a certain brand typology was scored on a scale of 0 to 5. Trademarks of six different traditional marketing strategies from the Integrative Framework of Effective Communication (Van den Putte, 2002) were operationalized, one strategy was left out due to inapplicability. The 100 photos were either given a yes or a no as to whether they could be seen as concurring with a certain strategy. The same was done to the variables measuring social media marketing strategies.
These strategies were categorized into measurable variables that related to photo contests, brand interactivity, the use of user-generated content, the showing of unique content and viral marketing. Lastly, brand identity was measured by analyzing brand visibility (brand name or product visibility) in the photo and the accompanying title, the visibility of brand related people, events and locations in the photo and title, the use of brand colors and the use of a brand identity description in the brand feed’s profile. The results of the analysis were entered into SPSS 20 and several statistical analyses were carried out to be able to answer the research question.

Analysis.

The statistical analyses that were used in this thesis were means, standard deviations, and correlations. Correlations were used because it is not the goal of this thesis to find causal effects between variables, merely to find significant connections. These connections give marketers insight into the strategies that are possibly most important when using Instagram as a marketing tool.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Many social media marketing managers do not know what strategies to use to make the most out of Instagram’s marketing potential. In this thesis a content analysis was conducted to gain insight into the types of brands using Instagram, and the traditional and social media marketing strategies they implement to engage users and gain more feed followers, and likes and comments on posted photos.
Brand Types.

Franzen’s (2009) brand typology shows that there are four types of brands: product representation brands, trust brands, symbolic brands and relationship brands. It was hypothesized that relationship brands were more likely to make use of Instagram. Each of the 100 analyzed photos was given a score on a scale of 0 (no affiliation with the brand type characteristic) to 5 (very strong affiliation with the brand type characteristic). Results show that the hypothesis is rejected, because characteristics from product representation brands are prevalent on Instagram (see table 1).

Table 1.
Average scores of brand types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Product Representation Brand</th>
<th>Symbolic Brand</th>
<th>Trust Brand</th>
<th>Relationship Brand</th>
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<tr>
<td>N.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4,07</td>
<td>3,82</td>
<td>3,25</td>
<td>3,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Dev.</td>
<td>1,51</td>
<td>1,02</td>
<td>1,66</td>
<td>0,81</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Symbolic brands, like Burberry and Levi’s for example, want to convey a certain lifestyle and feeling to their audience through their products. According to Franzen (2009), they do this by showing visual advertising material. Therefore, a visually focused social medium like Instagram, in which people mainly use photos to show and tell others about their lives, is a suitable medium to use for a symbolic brand. Product representation brands, such as Pepsi MAX and Ben & Jerry’s, are also one of the two types of brands that are predominantly represented on Instagram. These types of brands use branding to market their products, to stand out from other brands in their product category. By posting photos containing the brand name or product on their feed, or by asking followers to tag their brand or product related photos to a brand hash tag, a brand uses Instagram’s visual marketing potential. The importance of visual material on Instagram explains why symbolic and product representation brands are the two most prevalent types of brands that use the social network.
Franzen’s brand typology is not unambiguous, which means that it is, for example, possible for a brand to be a relationship brand, but also give symbolic meanings to their products. Therefore there is an overlap between the amount of times different types of brands are represented on Instagram (see table 2). In this content analysis, twenty brands are analyzed. There are twelve relationship brands that also count as symbolic brands, and eleven relationship brands that count as product representation brands. Trust brand characteristics are relatively more rare than the other three types of brands.

Table 2.
Overlap between brands.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Product Representation Brand</th>
<th>Trust Brand</th>
<th>Relationship Brand</th>
<th>Symbolic Brand</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product Representation Brand (N = 14)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Brand (N = 8)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Brand (N = 14)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Brand (N = 14)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Traditional Marketing Strategies.*

According to Van den Putte’s Integrative Framework for Effective Communication, there are six traditional strategies that brands use for advertising. These six strategies are the persuasion, sales response, symbolism, relational, self-efficacy and emotion strategy. Every analyzed photo possibly contains characteristics of a certain strategy, and is scored as such on a scale of 0 to 1 (0 = No, 1 = Yes). In the sample that is analyzed in this content analysis, the most used strategy is the emotion strategy.
Other commonly used strategies are the symbolism strategy and the sales response strategy.

The self-efficacy strategy, relational strategy, and persuasion strategy are relatively rare on Instagram (see table 3).

Table 3. Average scores traditional marketing strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>0,17</td>
<td>0,31</td>
<td>0,64</td>
<td>0,25</td>
<td>0,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.Dev.</td>
<td>0,18</td>
<td>0,13</td>
<td>0,31</td>
<td>0,22</td>
<td>0,24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A brand can use characteristics from more than one advertising strategy to market their products. Therefore, it is possible that different strategies are combined together more often than others. According to the results, the persuasion and self-efficacy strategy are often used simultaneously. The fact that a brand uses the self-efficacy strategy to persuade a consumer to adapt to a certain behavior explains why the persuasion strategy is combined frequently with the self-efficacy strategy. The self-efficacy strategy is also joined with the symbolism strategy and the relational strategy. Lastly, the symbolism and relational strategy are commonly paired together (see table 4).

Table 4. Correlations between traditional marketing strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasion Strategy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0,54***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0,25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Response Strategy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0,32***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolism</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0,32***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0,25**</td>
<td>0,47***</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is expected that product representation brands mainly use persuasion and sales response strategies, and trust brands predominantly use persuasion and self-efficacy strategies. Symbolism, relational and emotion strategies are principally employed by symbolic brands, and relationship brands market their products or services with symbolism, relational and emotion strategies. However, none of the expectations accord with the results of the analyses (see table 5).

Table 5. Correlations between brand types and traditional marketing strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Product Representation Brand</th>
<th>Trust Brand</th>
<th>Symbolic Brand</th>
<th>Relationship Brand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>0,54***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0,25**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0,47***</td>
<td>0,31***</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>- 0,25**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- 0,34***</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| * | . Sign. = < 0,10 |
| ** | . Sign. = < 0,05 |
| *** | . Sign. = < 0,01 |
According to the results, product representation brands use persuasion, relational and emotion strategies, and do employ sales response strategies. Product representation brands are characterized by being strongly associated with a certain product category or product attributes. A persuasion strategy that is commonly applied to encourage consumers to purchase the product, is branding (showing the product or brand name). For example, Pepsi MAX, a product representation brand, uses branding on their feed. The logo of the brand and the brand colors are present in almost every analyzed photo (see photo). This shows the use of the persuasion strategy on Pepsi MAX’s Instagram feed. Relational strategies are defined by the connecting of products to a certain brand identity or personality. According to the analysis, Ben & Jerry’s, for example, tries to incorporate their slogan “Peace, Love & Ice Cream” into the photos they post on Instagram. They do this by showing photos of carefree daily occurrences in which people enjoy their ice cream. The brand relates the product to peace and love, and shows consumers they should associate the brand with these terms. When using the emotion strategy, a brand associates the product with a certain emotion that is caused by the use of the product. In the case of Ben & Jerry’s for example, photos show people that look happy because they are enjoying Ben & Jerry’s ice cream. This way, the consumer relates a feeling of happiness to the brand.

Trust brands use other strategies. They try to reduce or eliminate feelings of risk, because the quality of the brand or product cannot be assessed before purchasing the product. It was hypothesized that trust brands predominantly employ persuasion and self-efficacy strategies.
Self-efficacy strategies are used when there is a need to convince a consumer of his or her ability to perform a certain behavior. According to the results, however, trust brands do not have a single strategy they predominantly apply. More so, they combine different strategies to market their product. This is because trust brands exist in many product categories. In the analysis, brands such as BMI Baby and the Gansevoort Hotel in New York City are categorized as trust brands. Airlines and hotel chains are different brands with different goals, and pick characteristics from every type of strategy. Symbolic brands help consumers to express their personalities, lifestyles and values, by adding symbolic meanings to their products. The symbolism, relational and emotion strategies seem most fitting when promoting a symbolic product. According to the results, symbolic brands mostly use symbolism strategies and self-efficacy strategies. Symbolism strategies are applied when it is necessary for a brand to convey a certain identity or lifestyle. It is not about showing the product; it is about showing a brand’s image. Symbolic brands like Burberry and Marc Jacobs are expensive, high quality fashion brands that present their products with a high-class lifestyle. By showing photos of models and celebrities wearing the brand’s clothing, they let the consumer know that there is a certain identity and lifestyle that comes with the purchasing of the brand’s products. The use of the self-efficacy strategy is explained by the fact that, by showing users the lifestyle they could have when wearing a certain outfit, they are encouraged to buy the product and also engage in this lifestyle.

Relationship brands are described as brands that identify with the problems and needs of their customers, and their attempts to develop and maintain a personal relationship with these customers. It was expected that relationship brands mostly use symbolism, relational and emotion strategies. However, it is shown in the results that these brands use persuasion and self-efficacy strategies.
Out of the twenty brands analyzed in this content analysis, fourteen are also seen as relationship brands. An example is Starbucks. On Instagram, Starbucks is a brand that asks users to tag photos of their Starbucks beverages to the #Starbucks hash tag. They also use branding, which is where the persuasion strategy comes in (see photo). The self-efficacy strategy is found on the feed of non-profit organization charity:water. Self-efficacy strategies are suitable for charities because people need to be shown how their donations can benefit those in need of clean water, in the case of charity:water. On the organization’s brand feed, photos are shown of people in Africa who benefit from clean water provided for them by the organization.

**Social Media Marketing Strategies.**

Social media marketing strategies constitute the use of user-generated content, brand-to-user interactivity, the organizing of photo contests, the showing of unique content and creating the possibility for a branded photo to go viral. It was expected that the use of these strategies helps brands to gain more followers, likes and comments.

**Followers.**

There are several strategies that, when implemented, possibly lead a brand to gain more followers (see table 6). The first is the organizing of photo contests, the adding of a contest theme and the subsequent giving out of prizes to the winner. Users have an incentive to follow a brand closely, because they are given the opportunity to participate in a contest and win a prize that is related to the brand. Though, it is imaginable that when a brand gains followers, more contests are organized.
Surprisingly, the showing of the winning photo and the mentioning of the winner on the brand’s feed lead to a decrease in amount of followers. This is an unexpected result, because making winners known to other brand followers leads to a bigger exposure for these users as well. There is no theoretical reason that explains this result, and is as such seen as a coincidental occurrence. Asking users to tag their brand related photos to a hash tag is a second strategy a brand can implement to gain more followers. Tagging photos broadens the reach of a brand on the social network. More users see the photos, and more people find out the brand has a feed on Instagram. Consequently, if they like the brand and the brand feed, these users will follow the brand on Instagram. Another strategy brands implement on their feed is showing upcoming products that give users a sneak peek into the future. Because of the exclusivity of the content, this is a unique incentive for Instagram users to follow a brand. This result shows that exclusivity is an important concept when developing a strategy, which explains why the sharing of Instagram content on Twitter and Facebook leads to a lower amount of followers. The brand’s fans do not see the benefit in following a brand in multiple social media outlets, because the same content is shared. Lastly, the adding of tags that show the location or the event where the photo was taken possibly reduces the amount of followers. This is an unexpected result, because the adding of tags leads a photo to be more widely available and seen on Instagram. An explanation for this is found in the possibility that more followers lead a brand to add more hash tags to a photo.

Table 6. Correlations between social media marketing strategies and amount of followers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Interactivity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Contests</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Contest Theme</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Winner Feed</td>
<td>- 0.44***</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Winner Mention</td>
<td>- 0.44***</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Prize</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Content Tag</td>
<td>0.29***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Feature</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Behind the Scenes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Future Products</td>
<td>0,54***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Sharing Social Networks</td>
<td>- 0,20**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Tags</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Tags</td>
<td>- 0,25**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Tags</td>
<td>- 0,47***</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Sign. = < 0,10  
** Sign. = < 0,05  
*** Sign. = < 0,01

**Likes and Comments.**

When implementing social media marketing strategies, this should also lead to more likes and comments for a brand’s photo (see table 7 and 8). The strategies are employed are the organizing of a photo contest, and consequently using a contest theme, the adding of brand related tags to user photos, and the showing of content concerning future products. The arranging of a photo contest and using a theme also leads to more followers, which explains why a photo gets more likes and comments when applying this strategy: more followers lead to more likes and comments. The adding of brand related tags to user photos gives a brand photo more likes because it is seen in more places than just the brand’s feed. The photo’s reach becomes higher and consequently gains more likes and comments. The showing of content that involves future products is an incentive for users to like and comment on a photo, because of its’ uniqueness. Showing exclusive content is therefore seen as a strategy that increases user engagement.

There are several strategies that lead to a decrease in likes and comments. Brand-to-user interactivity does not cause a brand to get more likes on their photos. In general, being interactive with followers is seen as a strategy that encourages user engagement. However, brand interactivity is a strategy that is used in the comments section of a photo’s feed, and as such does not directly influence the amount of likes a photo receives.
Unexpectedly, brand interactivity does not influence amount of comments either. Sharing Instagram content on social networks Twitter and Facebook makes the photos not exclusive to Instagram. Because showing exclusive content is an important strategy to use to increase user engagement, this explains why sharing on other social networks leads to a lower amount of likes and comments. Adding branded tags, or tagging the event or location that is shown in the photo is a strategy that encourages user engagement. However, it does not encourage users to give photos more likes or comments in the analyzed sample. There is no theoretical explanation for this occurrence, because adding hash tags to a photo leads to a bigger reach, and more users who see the photo. This result is therefore seen as coincidental.

Table 7.
Correlations between Internet marketing strategies and amount of likes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Interactivity</td>
<td>-0.20*</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Contests</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Contest Theme</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Winner Feed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Winner Mention</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Prize</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Content Tag</td>
<td>0.31***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Feature</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Behind the Scenes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Future Products</td>
<td>0.56***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Sharing Social Networks</td>
<td>- 0.17*</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Tags</td>
<td>-0.25*</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Tags</td>
<td>-0.51***</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Tags</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Sign. = < 0.10
** Sign. = < 0.05
*** Sign. = < 0.01

Table 8.
Correlations between Internet marketing strategies and amount of comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Interactivity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Contests</td>
<td>0.36***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Contest Theme</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Winner Feed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Winner Mention</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Prize</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Content Tag</td>
<td>0.29***</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
User Feature | - | -
Content Behind the Scenes | - | -
Content Future Products | 0,53*** | 100
Content Sharing Social Networks | - 0,17* | 100
Brand Tags | - | -
Event Tags | - 0,51*** | 36
Location Tags | - 0,45*** | 100

*. Sign. = < 0,10
**. Sign. = < 0,05
***. Sign. = < 0,01

**Brand Identity.**

It is expected that the conveying of a brand’s identity on their feed, by using brand colors in the photos, making the brand visible and showing brand related people, events and locations in the photo and the title, increases user engagement, and thus followers, likes and comments.

**Followers.**

Showing brand related events in the photo leads a brand to gain more followers. Followers are interested in brand related happenings, and want to see these events represented in the brand’s photos. Next to this, it is possible that giving a brand identity explanation in the brand’s profile section, in the form of a slogan or brief description of the brand’s activities, enhances the brand’s follower numbers. It is important for people to understand what a brand tries to convey, because this will improve the way in which a user experiences the brand. Making the brand visible in the title of the photo negatively influences number of likes and comments. A user may feel like a brand tries to sell the user something by naming the brand or the product in the title of the photo. Consumers usually do not like it when they feel they are trying to be persuaded, and this explains why there are less likes and comments when a brand visibility in the title is high.

Table 9.
Correlations between brand identity variables and amount of followers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r.</th>
<th>N.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Color Use</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Visibility Photo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likes and Comments.

When researching the role of the conveying of brand identity on a brand’s feed, it is found that the brand being visible in the photo increases likes and comments. Brand visibility entails the brand name, logo or product being visible in the photo. The possibility of photo brand visibility leading to more likes and comments is ascribed to the fact that a user most likely will be a fan of the brand, and likes seeing the brand represented in the photo they are liking or commenting on. However, the same brand visibility in the title accompanying the photo, by naming the brand or the product, lowers amount of likes and comments. The naming of brand related events leads to a decline in likes and comments, and the mentioning of brand related locations in the title to a decrease in likes solely. There is no theoretical explanation for this, but it is possible that again this has to do with users not liking superfluous information that makes them feel like the brand is trying to persuade them. Lastly, the mentioning of a description of the brand’s identity or activities is a strategy that, when implemented, positively influences the number of likes and comments. This similarity in results shows that conveying brand identity in a clear and precise way leads to more user engagement.

Table 10.
Correlations between brand identity variables and amount of likes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r.</th>
<th>N.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Color Use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Visibility Photo</td>
<td>0,22**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Visibility Title</td>
<td>- 0,23**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11.
Correlations between brand identity variables and amount of comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand-related Variable</th>
<th>r.</th>
<th>N.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Color Use</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Visibility Photo</td>
<td>0,24**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Visibility Title</td>
<td>- 0,18*</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Related People Photo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Related People Title</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Related Events Photo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Related Events Title</td>
<td>- 0,32*</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Related Locations Photo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Related Locations Title</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Identity Profile</td>
<td>0,22**</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*. Sign. = < 0,10  
**. Sign. = < 0,05  
***. Sign. = < 0,01

SUMMARIZING CONCLUSION & PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This thesis gives insight into the strategies that influence amount of followers, likes and comments on a brand’s feed. The research question of this content analysis was: “Which types of brands use Instagram as a marketing tool, what are the marketing strategies that are used and which strategies are most successful?”. To find an answer to this question, ten hypotheses were formulated based on several used theories.
The first five hypotheses concern brand types and traditional marketing strategies. It is hypothesized that relationship brands use Instagram more often than symbolic, product representation brands and trust brands. This hypothesis is rejected because; there are more product representation brands, trust brands and symbolic brands on Instagram than relationship brands. The second to fifth hypotheses are related to the types of traditional marketing strategies these brands use. None of the hypotheses are entirely accepted. Product representation brands mainly use persuasion, relational and emotion strategies, by applying branding, making the emotional connectedness with the brand most important, and using slice-of-life scenarios in their photos. Symbolic brands use symbolism and self-efficacy strategies. The brands express their own and the consumers’ core values, and frequently use models to show the product. They have ideological values, and try to convince the user to adapt to a certain behavior. Relationship brands are prone to using persuasion and self-efficacy strategies, while trust brands do not use any strategy more than others.

Hypotheses six to ten concern the use of social media marketing strategies leading to more followers, likes and comments. The use of user-generated content, viral marketing opportunities, showing exclusive content, brand-to-user interactivity, and the conveying of brand identity are expected to have a positive influence on user engagement. According to the results, marketers who want to increase user engagement on Instagram have to organize themed photo contests and consequently award a prize, let users tag their brand related content to a brand tag and show exclusive content involving future products. These strategies are seen as having the most influence on amount of followers, likes and comments. There are also several strategies that have a negative influence. The most important surprising result is the sharing of Instagram content on Twitter and Facebook leading to less user engagement.
This result shows that marketers have to choose between showing exclusive content on Instagram and increasing their reach on other social networks. If they want to fully commit to marketing on Instagram, they should focus on showing exclusive content, for this will give followers an incentive to stay engaged with the brand.

A brand should also give followers a clear description of the brand’s identity and values, by using the profile section on the brand feed, and making the brand name, product or brand related events visible in the photo they are posting. They should not give followers a reason to feel uncomfortable with their brand advertising, however, by also naming the brand name, product or other brand related subject in the title accompanying the photo. It is clear that marketers have to find a balance between showing persuasive advertising and developing personal, informal relationships with their followers on Instagram.

**LIMITATIONS**

This content analysis has several limitations. It cannot be said with certainty that the results that were found are causal effects. For example, it is possible that a brand will only organize photo contests once they have a certain number of followers, instead of organizing photo contests leading to a higher amount of followers. However, it is not the purpose of this thesis to find causal effects. This exploratory content analysis is simply meant to find significant connections between variables as such. For causal relations to be found, a content analysis of more brand feeds and more photos is necessary. Because brands are just recently starting to use Instagram for marketing purposes, there is a relatively small amount of brands available for analysis at this point. Future research should be done further down the line, when there are more brands and these brands have more followers. At that point, marketers know more about the marketing strategies that are effective and have more experience implementing them.
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doi:10.1057/bm.2010.30


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Appendix A.

*Codebook.*

**CODEBOOK CONTENT ANALYSIS BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM**

**BRAND TYPOLOGY DE BOER**

1. **TYPE OF BRAND**

   1. **Corporate brand**
      
      A brand that spans an entire company (which can also have underlying disparate product brands). One primarily thinks of the brand, secondarily of the product.

      1.1. Is the brand name the same as the company name?
      
      1. Yes.
      2. No.
      3. Not applicable.

      1.2 Does the brand have multiple product brands?
      
      1. Yes.
      2. No.
      3. Not applicable.

   2. **Product brand**
      
      One primarily thinks of the product the brand is connected to, and doesn’t necessarily know the company behind the brand.

      2.2 Does the brand consist of a single product?
      
      1. Yes.
      2. No.
      3. Not applicable.
3. **Concept brand**

One primarily thinks of the main ideas the brand stands for and is possibly a ‘fan’ of the products of this brand.

3.1 Does the brand have an abstract concept or idea (like breast cancer awareness) they try to convey to the consumer, rather than products?
1. Yes.
2. No.
3. Cannot determine.
4. Not applicable.

2. **TYPE OF TARGET GROUP**

*Target group of the brand.*

2.1 What is the main target group of the brand?
1. Consumers
2. Companies (B2B)
3. Cannot determine.
4. Not applicable.

3. **TYPE OF OFFER**

*Service the brand delivers.*

3.1 Does the brand mainly deliver products or services?
1. Mainly products.
2. Mainly services.
3. Cannot determine.
4. Not applicable.
BRAND TYPOLOGY FRANZEN

TYPE OF BRAND

0 = no affiliation with characteristic
1 = very little affiliation with characteristic
2 = little affiliation with characteristic
3 = more than average affiliation with characteristic
4 = strong affiliation with characteristic
5 = very strong affiliation with characteristic

Product Representation Brand

4. Does the brand serve to make the identifying and the process of choosing the product as simple as possible?
   1. Yes.
      1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
   2. No. → 0
   3. Cannot determine → 6

5. Is the brand strongly associated with a certain product category and/or specific product attributes?
   1. Yes.
      1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine

Trust Brand

6. Is the primary goal of the brand the reducing or eliminating of feelings of risk before purchasing the brand?
   1. Yes.
      1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
   2. No. -> 0
3. Cannot determine -> 6

7. Is the quality of the brand/product difficult to estimate before the purchase?
   1. Yes.
      1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine

Symbolic Brand

8. Does the brand help to express a consumer’s values, personality, lifestyle and values?
   1. Yes.
      1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine

9. Can the brand be defined by the symbolic meanings it attaches to their products?
   1. Yes.
      1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine

Relationship Brand

10. Can the brand be characterized by the identification with the problems and needs of their customers?
    1. Yes.
       1 [___][___][___][___][___] 5
    2. No.
    3. Cannot determine

11. Can the brand be characterized by their attempts to develop and maintain intimate personal relationships with their customers?
    1. Yes.
TRADITIONAL BRANDING STRATEGIES
Strategies used for traditional media.

Persuasion strategy
Goal: the conveying of instrumental advantages of a brand, the increasing of interest in a brand and the creating of credibility.

12. The use of people who present the product:
   0. No
   1. Yes.

13. The showing of product demonstrations.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

14. The use of comparisons to other products.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

15. The use of user experiences.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

16. The use of expert representatives.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

17. The conveying of new product attributes that will bring value to the consumer.
   0. No
   1. Yes.
18. The use of branding: the showing of the package of the brand or product, with the brand name.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

**Sales response strategy**
Goal: the immediate purchase of a brand or product by the consumer after seeing the advertisement.

   0. No.
   1. Yes.

20. Repetition in advertisements.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

21. No aesthetic standards, when it comes to color or other formal characteristics.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

**Symbolism strategy**
Goal: the development of a symbolic meaning of the brand, the brand serves primarily to let consumers express themselves.

22. The brand expresses the brand’s and consumer’s core values.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

23. Users of the brand recognize each other by using the brand: “one of us”.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

24. Little to no product information.
0. No.
1. Yes.

25. *The brand has an inherent meaning, advertisement and brand are the same.*
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

26. *The use of stimuli with which the user can identify (actors, jargon, models, musicians).*
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

**Self Efficacy Strategy**
Goal: the simplification of the implementing of a certain behavior that seems difficult for the consumer.

27. *Shows how the brand/product can make life easier.*
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

28. *The brand has ideological values, such as charities.*
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

29. *Brand/product is meant to express identity of consumer.*
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

30. *Brand/product is meant to reach goals or values.*
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

**Relational Strategy**
Goal: the developing or strengthening of the relationship with the consumer, by emphasizing brand involvement and emotional connectedness with the brand.

31. The brand is connected to human traits that are seen as positive.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

32. Makes use of light humor, gimmicks, surprise effects and suspense.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

33. The design and tone of the message is more important than the contents of the advertisement.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

34. The most important aspect is the possibility of attaining personal goals of the consumer.
   0. No.
   1. Yes.

Emotion Strategy
Goal: the development of associations between the brand and a certain feeling.

35. The use of images that arouse emotion in the consumer.
   1. Yes.
   2. No.

   1. Yes.
   2. No.

37. Products that are meant to enjoy, or have a function in societal communication.
   1. Yes.
   2. No.
38. Product categories in which there is little difference between different brands.
   1. Yes.
   2. No.

39. Fitting for brands that already have a strong brand positioning.
   1. Yes.
   2. No.

SOCIAL NETWORK BRANDING STRATEGIES

40. BRAND VISIBILITY PHOTO
Is the brand visible in the photo?
   0. No.
   1. Yes, the brand name is visible in the photo.
   2. Yes, the logo of the brand is visible in the photo.
   3. Yes, (one of) the brand’s product(s) is visible in the photo.
   4. Yes, both the brand name/logo and the product are visible in the photo.

41. BRAND VISIBILITY TITLE
Is the brand mentioned in the title?
   0. No.
   1. Yes, the brand name is mentioned in the title.
   2. Yes, (one of) the brand’s product(s) is mentioned in the title.
   3. Yes, both the brand name and the product are mentioned in the title.

42. SETTING PHOTO
Is the photo in a natural setting, where the product would be used in daily life?
   0. No.
   1. Yes.
   2. Cannot determine.
   3. Not applicable.

43. BRAND COLOR USE
Does the brand predominantly use the brand colors in this photo?
People
The visibility of a person/people in the photo.

44. PEOPLE PHOTO
Are there people in the photo?
0. No.
1. Yes.

45. PEOPLE VISUAL
Are these people visually connected to the brand?
Determined by looking at contents of photo.
0. No.
1. Yes, they are employees working for the brand.
2. Yes, they are models used to advertise the brand/product.
3. Yes, they are consumers of the brand/product.
4. Cannot determine.
5. Not applicable.

46. PEOPLE TEXTUAL
Are these people textually connected to the brand?
Determined by title accompanying the photo.
0. No.
1. Yes, they are employees working for the brand.
2. Yes, they are models/celebrities used to advertise the brand/product.
3. Yes, they are consumers of the brand/product.
4. Cannot determine.
5. Not applicable.

Events
Happenings in the photo connected to brand.

47. EVENT PHOTO
Was the photo taken at a special event?
0. No.
1. Yes.
2. Cannot determine.

48. EVENT VISUAL
Is the event visually connected to the brand?
Determined by content of photo.
0. No.
1. Yes, it is an event sponsored by the brand.
2. Yes, it is an event hosted by the brand.
3. Yes, the brand’s product(s)/service(s) is/are used in the event.
4. Yes, other reason:…………………………
5. Cannot determine.
6. Not applicable.

49. EVENT TEXTUAL
Is the event textually connected to the event?
Determined by title accompanying the photo.
0. No.
1. Yes, it is an event sponsored by the brand.
2. Yes, it is an event hosted by the brand.
3. Yes, the brand’s product(s)/service(s) is/are used in the event.
4. Yes, other reason:…………………………
5. Cannot determine.
6. Not applicable.

50. Is the event tagged?
Tagged by a hashtag (#...)
0. No.
1. Yes.
2. Not applicable.

Location
The location where the photo was taken.

51. LOCATION PHOTO
Is the location of the photo outside or inside?
   0. Inside.
   1. Outside.
   2. Cannot determine.

52. LOCATION VISUAL
Is the location in the photo visually connected to the brand?
Determined by looking at content of photo.
   0. No.
   1. Yes, the location is the brand’s headquarters or other office connected to the brand.
   2. Yes, the location is a store of the brand.
   3. Yes, the brand is connected to an event happening at this location.
   4. Yes, the brand’s product(s)/service(s) is/are used at this location.
   5. Cannot determine.

53. LOCATION TEXTUAL
Is the location in the photo textually connected to the brand?
Determined by title accompanying photo.
   0. No.
   1. Yes, the location is the brand’s headquarters or other office connected to the brand.
   2. Yes, the location is a store of the brand.
   3. Yes, the brand is connected to an event happening at this location.
   4. Cannot determine.

54. TAG LOCATION
Is the location tagged by a hashtag or a geotag?
0. No.
1. Yes, the location is tagged by a hashtag.
2. Yes, the location is tagged by a geotag.
3. Yes, the location is tagged by a hashtag and a geotag.

55. TAGS PHOTO
Are there other tags added to the photo?
Tags are keywords about the photo preceded by a hashtag (#).

0. No.
1. Yes.

56. TAGS BRAND
Are these tags connected to the brand?

0. No.
1. Yes, they tag the brand name.
2. Yes, they tag the product name.
3. Yes, they tag the brand and product name.
4. Yes, they tag a photo contest hosted by the brand.
5. Yes, other reason.
6. Not applicable.

57. NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS
The amount of people that follow a brand on Instagram.
[____________]

58. NUMBER OF LIKES
The amount of people that like a photo on Instagram.
[____________]

59. USER COMMENTS
How many (user) comments are in the photo’s comment feed?
[____________]

60. BRAND COMMENTS
Is the brand/product name mentioned in the first 20 user comments?

0. No.
1. Yes, the brand is mentioned in the comments.
2. Yes, the product is mentioned in the comments.
3. Yes, both the brand and product are mentioned in the comments.

61. BRAND INTERACTIVITY
Does the representative of the brand who’s in charge of posting photos interact with users in the comment feed?

0. No.
1. Yes.
2. Cannot determine.

62. PROFILE
Does the brand mention a brand related description in their profile?

0. No.
1. Yes, the brand mentions a brand slogan.
2. Yes, the brand mentions the brand’s identity.
3. Yes, the brand mentions a description of the brand’s work and activities.

63. LINK PROFILE
Does the brand link to a brand related website in their profile?

0. No.
1. Yes, the brand links to the official website of the brand.
2. Yes, the brand links to another website linked to the brand.

64. USER CONTENT
Does the brand ask users to tag their brand related photos to a certain brand related tag?

0. No.
1. Yes.
2. Cannot determine.

65. USER FEATURE
Does the brand feature users’ photos on their feed?
0. No.
1. Yes.
2. Cannot determine.

66. PHOTO CONTESTS
Has the brand organized photo contests on Instagram in the past 12 months?
0. No.
1. Yes.
2. Not applicable.

67. CONTEST THEME
Has the brand given users a theme during the last photo contest?
1. Yes.
2. No.
3. Cannot determine.
4. Not applicable.

68. CONTEST WINNER FEED
Was the winning photo of the last photo contest featured on the brand’s Instagram feed?
1. Yes.
2. No.
3. Cannot determine.
4. Not applicable.

69. CONTEST WINNER MENTION
Was the winner of the contest mentioned on the brand’s feed?
1. Yes.
2. No.
3. Cannot determine.
4. Not applicable.

70. CONTEST PRIZE
Does the winning user win a prize?
   1. Yes.
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine.
   4. Not applicable.

71. CONTENT BEHIND THE SCENES

*Non-official photos that show how work is done in the brand company.*

Does the brand show behind the scenes content?
   1. Yes.
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine.

72. CONTENT FUTURE PRODUCTS

Does the brand show photos of new upcoming products on their Instagram feed?
   1. Yes.
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine.

73. CONTENT SHARING SOCIAL NETWORKS

Has the brand shared Instagram content on the brand’s Facebook and Twitter pages in the past two months?

*(Determined by reference to Instagram below the shared photo on Facebook wall, and link to Instagram photo on Twitter page.)*
   1. Yes.
   2. No.
   3. Cannot determine.
Appendix B.

List of Brands (analyzed brands in blue).

Consumers – Products.

1. 7 For All Mankind
2. Alexander McQueen
3. Audi
4. Balenciaga
5. Banana Republic
6. Ben & Jerry’s
7. Bonobos
8. Burberry
9. Christian Louboutin
10. DKNY
11. Elie Saab
12. Evian
13. Ford EU
14. GAP
15. Gucci
16. H&M USA
17. Hermès Paris
18. Jimmy Choo
19. Kanon Vodka
20. Kate Spade NY
21. Levi’s
22. Marc Jacobs
23. Michael Kors
24. Moschino
25. Nanette Lepore
26. Nike
27. Oscar De La Renta
28. Pepsi MAX
29. Proenza Schouler
30. Puma
31. Red Bull
32. Sharpie
33. Starbucks
34. Stella McCartney
35. Tiffany’s
36. Tory Burch
37. Warby Parker
38. Zac Posen

Consumers – Services.

1. MTV
2. ASOS
3. Barneys NY
4. BMI Baby
5. Bergdorfs
6. Charity:water
7. Delta
8. FEED projects
9. Gansevoort
10. General Electric
11. Heal the Bay
12. Henri Bendel
13. Neiman Marcus
14. NH Hoteles
15. Oceana
16. SAKS Fifth Avenue
17. The Standard
18. Tmobile
19. Urban Outfitters
20. W Hotels NYC