

Module 1. How did social media reach this relevance in sports?

Unit 1.1 Introduction

Especially when it comes to the topic of social media in sport, an enormous development has been driven forward and carried out in recent years. Consider what classic media work used to mean and to what extent –reduced to target group-specific communication– that will take place in 2021 is, on the one hand, questionable in a certain way, but opens up many new paths and opportunities for the sender of the respective message. At that time, only TV, print and radio were served with all relevant information. The spectrum in the modern web and the constantly expanding social media channels has become much faster, more extensive and more complex today.

Not only is the Olympic motto ‘Citius, altius, fortius’ (faster, higher, stronger) reflected in competitive sport, but it has also fought for its legitimate place in media work, it has become indispensable and has meanwhile become a loyal companion, even if it keeps the pressure high and increases it selectively. The demands on clubs, associations and athletes have become ever higher in the digital age. The expectations of media representatives, fans and customers have skyrocketed and it is often no longer ‘just’ to provide information. Rather, the content has to be divided up exactly –depending on the channel, you have to present the end consumer with well-prepared ‘fillet pieces’ that, on the one hand, convey a high level of entertainment value and, on the other hand, ideally, also encourage interaction.

The transformation from a sports event to a media event creates an important secondary entertainment level in addition to information –this mix must be used ideally for the sender in this communication. The time that is available for those responsible is becoming less and less in practice, driven by the high speed and the ever-increasing demands. The Internet and the numerous social networks in particular offer enormous ranges and stimulate interaction with all their diversity and high-quality content. Clubs, associations and athletes have to find their respective position in the ‘big pool’ and consolidate it in the long term in order to be able to participate and benefit for themselves in the still increasing interest in online sports offers.

More and more fans and customers are being picked up in their ‘digital living rooms’, a space in which they often and happily spend their time, informing themselves, exchanging news and increasingly thirsting for entertainment. Media entertainment, which particularly finds its climax in the various sports, is classified as a classic instrument



for satisfying user needs from the perspective of entertainment reception and, ideally, binds users in the long term. So, if you make the claim that professional clubs and associations have developed or have had to develop into their own media companies in recent years, this is certainly not pulled by the hair, but definitely has its justification.

The end of this journey has not yet been reached and will continue to require a lot of creative and innovative input from those responsible in the future in order to continue to meet this development and demand with the necessary quality. So, the questions that arise are the following: How clubs, associations and athletes as media providers deal with it? Why and how do they best integrate entertainment into their online presence? How does this affect the perception of sport in society? In any case, it creates interesting insights into current sports communication, will continue to benefit from a specific development in the future, and new niches that will then take their own place in an exciting media construct will still be found.

Social media

Probably, no other area has developed as quickly and positioned as indispensable as social media in sport. This applies not only to Germany, but to all relevant sports and to the entire target group interested in sports worldwide. Sport has the great advantage that it touches people's everyday life or that it is an important part of it: it writes stories, it bundles emotions and the passion of millions.

Up until 2006, the digital presence of professional sports organizations was mainly limited to an official website. This mostly contains current information and news, the squad, statistics and the history of the club itself. And with the market entry of Facebook and YouTube in the same year, as well as Twitter in 2007, an unbelievable success story began.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube are now part of the standard offering in every professional sports club and serve interested parties and fans worldwide with current and sometimes exclusive messages. From the original dissemination of information and news, formats for marketing evolved to generate new sources of revenue. When developing new fans and target groups near and far abroad, the social platform always forms the central basis in order to first gain awareness, then to generate interest and sympathy and, in the following step, to attract 'new' fans for the club in which the target group wins. New platforms are constantly pushing their way into the market, offering new functions again and again, and the existing platforms are constantly developing their range of functions in order to move from 'mass communication' to individual dialogue and to serve the personal needs of a sports fan more and more.

As an introduction to the topic, this chapter gives a brief outline of the history of the Internet (World Wide Web) and its further development, which has long been described

as 'Web 2.0', up to the status of social media, which have now developed an enormous influence and are seen as the engine for sports communication today.

Central characteristics and principles of this development direction are worked out in order to convey a basic understanding of the social media based on it, including mobile communication as well as the new possibilities of online social exchange.

1.1.1 Sport, media sport and sport communication in transition

In order to understand the exact role of entertainment in modern sports communication, a look at its development over the past 40 years is essential. The systems of sport and media are interdependent due to their complex interdependence. However, two decisive events have triggered essential and far-reaching transformation processes in the past: on the one hand, the introduction of the dual broadcasting system in the 1980s and, on the other hand, the establishment of 'new media', as they have been called for many years, in the 1990s. The term 'digitization' is ubiquitous these days and has undoubtedly changed the entire communication process, shaped it in a very special way and expanded it to open many-to-many communication beyond the classic sender-receiver principle.

One thing is clear: With Facebook, Instagram, Twitter & Co., behaviour in communication has changed incredibly. The transmitter-receiver principle is a thing of the past and has been replaced by transmitter-transmitter concepts. As a result, the well-known motto "You can't not communicate" takes on a deeper meaning. The users post, share, like and link what the smartphone has to offer –sometimes, for good and important things, but often as a pastime and on irrelevant topics. For top-class sport, regardless of whether it is world sports such as football, tennis or fringe sports, the 'social networks' open up innovative communication options, additional marketing options and PR variants. The increasing independence from the classic media is being promoted more and more.

1.1.1.1 History and overview

The Internet comes from the English 'interconnected network', emerged from Arpanet, which was created in 1969, a project of the Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA) of the US Department of Defense. It was used to network universities and research institutions. The aim of the project was initially to make sensible use of the scarce computing capacity, first in the USA and later worldwide. The initial spread of the Internet is closely related to the development of the Unix operating system. After the Arpanet adapted TCP / IP in 1982, the name 'Internet' began to gain acceptance and establish itself.

According to a widespread legend, the original goal of the project against the backdrop of the Cold War was to create a distributed communication system to enable interference-free communication in the event of a nuclear war. In reality, mainly civil projects were

funded, even if the first nodes were funded by the ARPA. The most important application was the email from the start.

The World Wide Web (WWW for short) was developed in 1989 at the CERN research center, near Geneva (SUI) by Tim Berners-Lee. The breakthrough of the Internet as a mass medium came in 1993, when the first graphics-capable web browser, called Mosaic, was published and offered for free download.

The aim was to develop and continuously expand a global, close-knit and constantly growing network of websites in which information of all kinds could be stored. Finally, laypeople were also able to access the network, which, with the growing number of users, led to many commercial offers on the network. A little later, Mosaic was further developed in Netscape Navigator, which, due to its user-friendliness, gave the Internet a huge boost. The web browser was therefore also referred to as the 'killer application' of the Internet, which was an essential catalyst of the digital revolution.

In 1990, the US National Science Foundation decided to make the Internet usable for commercial purposes, making it publicly accessible beyond the universities.

1.1.1.2 Beginnings of the Internet

Many private users and first companies discovered the Internet in the following years. Numerous websites were created, and the first web applications such as Yahoo (in 1994) and commercial providers such as the Internet department store Amazon (1995) were developed.

Since the mid-1990s, the Internet has spread at an enormous pace. In 1997, there were around 45 million Internet users worldwide; in 2002, more than 600 million people were using the Internet. At the beginning of 2005, the magical barrier of one billion people was broken for the first time. The rapid increase should not stop in the following years either, and, at the end of 2019, it again exceeded a magical mark with 4.1 billion Internet users around the world. This value corresponds to a little more than 50 percent of the total world population.

Towards the end of the 1990s, there was also a tremendous optimism for the Internet in the business world. The increasing penetration of information technology into society and, accordingly, into the economy led to a real boom, which was described by the term 'New Economy'.

The upswing, however, was financed with a considerable amount of risk capital from investors who all wanted to participate in the boom. Within a very short time, a group of new companies formed, most of which did not have a viable business concept, and so these Internet start-up companies had to file for bankruptcy again after a short time.

quantitatively and qualitatively decisive measure yourself, regardless of whether it is the upload of photos, videos or texts you have written yourself. To define the new role of the user, the term 'prosumer' has become established.

Nowadays, mobile phone cameras, which are often already equipped with two or three lenses and contain integrated filter functions, often replace the classic digital camera. This opened up countless new possibilities for the consumer in terms of impressive quality when using the images (print or online). The video function was also raised to a new level with the recording of 4K sequences that were even suitable for television. This means that the perfect content for the various social networks can be produced in a very short time, including unique snapshots.

In marketing, attempts were made to move from the push principle (pushing: active distribution) to the pull principle (pulling: active collection) and to motivate users to help design websites of their own accord.

In addition to the web as a platform, the following aspects are in the foreground:

- The harnessing of collective intelligence

The use of the web as a platform leads to increased convenience in dealing with the new web and results in more and more users using the medium. At the same time, attractively designed websites or platforms motivate their users to make a contribution to the site with a few clicks. As a result, more and more data are being entered into the global network. Ideally, everyone can enter their data into the global network on the respective platforms, be it from a stationary computer with an Internet connection, the laptop via wireless (wi-fi) connection, or simply with a mobile smartphone. This largely involuntary and independent collaboration between users means that the added value of a platform –and ultimately the entire web– is increased.

A well-known example of the use of collective intelligence is the free encyclopedia Wikipedia, on which any user can write down knowledge and change existing content.

The online bookseller Amazon also makes use of the commitment of its users and the resulting collective intelligence. In terms of its offer, Amazon does not differ significantly from comparable online shops. However, in addition to selling, Amazon offers its customers various options for participation, for example, writing recensions or creating favorite lists and ratings. In principle, this is actually the first approach of a social network, since the reviews of the article are often used significantly to make a purchase decision.

- User-generated content and values

One principle of Web 2.0 is that of 'user-added value' and is directly linked to the previously described paradigm for the use of collective intelligence. Users participate in



the creation process of web content. The attractiveness and success of many Web 2.0 applications are based, to a decisive extent, on the contributions made by users. At Wikipedia, for example, many small contributions become a whole. This concept is also described as the 'microwork principle'.

Many Web 2.0 applications are dependent on data that is permanently generated by users. Without the post creator, there is no content and thus no value for the user. Once such a user-based service has been launched, it can become a sure-fire success. With each new user, the value of the product increases. The user, for his part, benefits to a great extent from the network effect –since he mostly moves on the web for personal reasons, he also likes to give something back to the community.

- Abolition of the software life cycle

With the move to Web 2.0, there is a trend towards delivering software not as a product, but as a service. Web applications eliminate the need to install and renew software. In the ideal case, the user does not even notice that an update has been installed. As a rule, it always loads the current version of the service or software. Updates no longer take place on the user's computer, but are imported by the provider of the Internet application. O'Reilly described this as eliminating the software lifecycle (O'Reilly, 2006).

- Lightweight programming models

The core idea here is to use simple and expandable technologies as far as possible. Simple data formats such as RSS promote the development, integration, testing and reuse of content, and they also reduce costs.

The pursuit of simplicity ultimately lowers the entry threshold for users, which in turn allows more people to be reached and more experience and improvement potential to be tapped, which, in the end, contributes to a smarter web.

- Applications beyond the boundaries of individual devices

Web 2.0 is no longer limited to the PC as a user interface. Mobile end devices increasingly enable convenient use of web applications that are increasingly based on seamless coupling of different device classes.

- User guidance

The principle describes the effort to implement the so-called 'rich user interfaces' and an interaction with the server in web applications. This means that the familiar user interfaces and the associated convenient functions of desktop applications are increasingly being integrated into web applications. In order to strengthen this principle even further, the user interface, the control and the functionality of the applications are

uniformly designed and presented to the user in the same 'look and feel' depending on the access or use option (desktop, laptop, iPad, or mobile device).

This enables more comfortable work, which leads to greater use of the web and thus to a better flow of information, which, in turn, results in a more intelligent web.

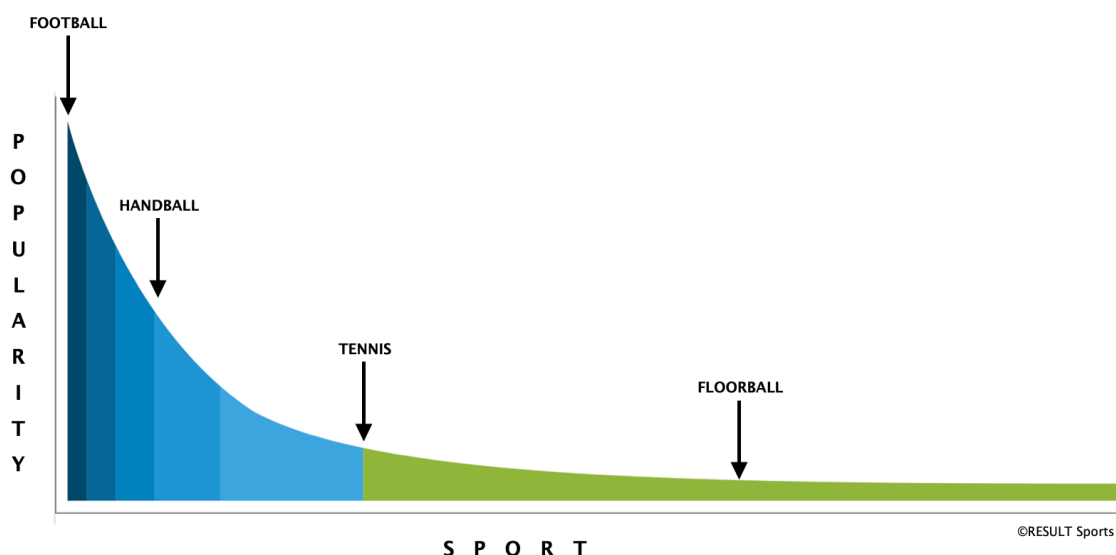
- The long tail: opportunities for niche products

The concept of the 'long tail' originally comes from statistics. What is meant by this is that a small number of high values in a set of values add more to its total value than a large number of low values.

However, in the age of the Internet, this rule loses its significance in certain areas. Investigations of the sales figures of online shops such as Amazon and iTunes showed that a high proportion of sales are no longer generated with bestsellers, but with the supposed slow-moving and niche products from the so-called 'long tail', which seldom sell but in a more regular way.

If you record all products sold according to the frequency of their demand, the top sellers form a steep peak on the left. So, on the left are the few things that are frequently asked for –the curve is high and narrow. On the right, is the long, thinning 'rat tail' of the many rarely requested articles. However, these goods, which are less in demand, collectively, seen as a 'long tail', often generate a larger sales volume than the best-selling goods and products. This area goes to infinity, so to speak. On the basis of this fact, it is easy to conclude that the long tail takes up a much larger area. And the Internet increases this development again and makes it highly lucrative and profitable.

Figure 2. The long tail



Source: RESULT Sports, n.d.

1.1.2 Communication: Modern and multifunctional

Cross-media communication is one of the most important characteristics in sports communication. This cross-mediality is divided into a large number of different, mutually influencing offers. From the mid-1990s onwards, the 'new media' were able to establish themselves as the third essential pillar of media sports alongside broadcasting and print. The successful development could not be foreseen at the time, but the number of users of the digital media for sports consumption steadily approached that from television, which had been the leading medium for many years, and opened up many new possibilities. The intensive interlinking of the individual media components should be a loyal companion for many years. More and more different forms of representation (texts, images, audio and video segments, background information as well as statistics) were developed and enabled a complex approach to sport.

Many media are benefiting from the increasingly important cross-media nature and are increasingly incorporating entertaining content or striking forms of representation into their communication strategies. The main goal is to generate a lot of attention and thereby increase the range of the message –regardless of whether it is about promoting a product or just making the opinion known to the public. The user does not only want to choose between traditional or 'social media', but uses this mix of possibilities for himself. The content is more and more often consumed twice as a second screen, but is therefore only followed with peripheral attention. For many years, this development increased the pressure on media providers who have to make their content more attractive and user-friendly and deliver concise content. In the digital exchange between consumers, there are many humorous, critical, but also opinion-based conversations that come close to real conversation.

Branded entertainment is a coherent further development of the entertaining elements of communication. An advertising company acts as a media provider and produces its own media articles, which are rousing, entertaining and of very high quality, and tailored precisely to the target group to be reached. A prime example of this form is the Austrian energy drink manufacturer Red Bull, whose portfolio includes a wide range of 'branded entertainment'. The specially-produced and branded sports content, which is no longer perceived as advertising, is voluntarily consumed and disseminated by the recipients because of its entertainment value. The producers cleverly use entertainment elements, let their athletes tell exciting, emotionally effective sports stories and also integrate user-generated content, for example, in the form of spectacular adventure selfies, which are then published together with athlete portraits in a series of images (cf. Kunz & Elsässer, 2016, p. 69).

1.1.3 The development of mobile communication

The development of mobile communications in Germany began as early as 1926, with a telephone service on Deutsche Reichsbahn and Reichspost trains on the route between Hamburg and Berlin. This telephone service was only offered to first-class travelers, but as early as 1918, around five years after the invention of the Meißen tube transmitter, the Deutsche Reichsbahn carried out tests with radio telephones in the Berlin area.

The first and surprisingly precise description of the mobile phone in the literature dates back to 1932. It can be found in Erich Kästner's children's book *Der 35. Mai* or *Konrad rides in the South Seas*:

A gentleman who was driving along the sidewalk in front of you suddenly stepped on the pavement, pulled a telephone receiver from his coat pocket, spoke a number in and called: 'Gertrud, listen, I'm coming for lunch an hour later today. I want to go to the laboratory first. Goodbye, honey!' Then he put his pocket phone away again, stepped on the moving tape, read a book and drove on his way.
(Kästner,)

Not only have many years passed since then, but the development of mobile communication and cellular networks has also advanced at an incredible pace. A detailed explanation would be too extensive in this context, only one thing should be mentioned: With the analog C-Netz on December 31st 2000, the third and, at the same time, last analog generation in Germany said goodbye. From then on, digital networks, which were introduced by E-Plus in 1993, determined the market. After the turn of the millennium, all mobile phone providers offered UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications System) networks. In 2010, the first fourth-generation ground stations (LTE) went into operation, which a decade later must slowly give way to the next milestone. In the meantime, the 5G networks are being set up and expanded, which represents the new generation in mobile communications. It creates the basis for new customer experiences such as augmented reality games or the networking of machines in industry and intelligent devices. The technology also supports the digitization of many areas of life. In 2019, more than 41 billion euros were raised from the auction of 5G licenses by market participants.

1.1.4 Mobile Internet and apps are changing communication

Mobile Internet refers to the possibility of making all or part of the Internet (in particular, the World Wide Web) accessible on a mobile device. Since the 1990s, it has been possible for consumers to access the Internet with their mobile phones via the GSM network, albeit

initially only as a CSD data connection at a low speed. The introduction of the GSM extensions HSCSD, GPRS and EDGE brought a significant increase in speed.

Further important development steps were the introduction of UMTS in 2002 and, based on this, HSDPA and HSUPA in 2006. Due to the expansion with HSDPA, end customers can surf the Internet with a maximum of 7.2 Mbit/s download and a maximum of 1.45 Mbit/s upload. This opened up a new group of customers. Photo reporters, journalists and households outside of wired broadband Internet access could therefore surf the Internet at a comparable speed.

Although the major mobile network providers have consistently converted their mobile network to UMTS or, based on this, to HSDPA in recent years, the mobile Internet in Germany does not have nearly as large a number of users as the Internet. In Austria and other countries, on the other hand, the growth in broadband access is now coming from mobile access (mobile broadband), while access via cable TV or the telephone network is stagnating –in 2007, almost a quarter of all households with Internet access used (almost exclusively) mobile broadband. In the fourth quarter of 2014, the time had come when Facebook's mobile users overtook those who use the social network on stationary PCs. This tendency will continue.

Many providers of Internet sites provide special variants of their content for mobile use –with the advantage of getting not only a presentation optimized for small displays but also a data-saving variant. If you are looking for suitable pages, you can, for example, fall back on the classic search engines: the major providers, Google, Bing and Yahoo offer mobile versions of their services, which can then find such mobile phone-specific pages on request. But since some smartphones now also offer high display resolutions and some users also rely on a data tariff with a high inclusive volume, classic websites have also become more and more interesting for mobile users. Anyone who uses a laptop, netbook or tablet on the go does not need to worry about an optimized display –this is where the ‘real’ Internet comes into its own.

Portals are becoming less important

In the past, portal pages were very important for orientation in the mobile Internet –and were also provided directly by the network operators, whereby some offers were only available from the respective customers, others also to third-party customers. Of course, corresponding offers still exist, for example, as preset start pages for the installed mobile phone browser, if a device branded by the network operator is purchased. These then provide content such as news and (partly location-based) leisure tips, but also entertainment such as chats, photos, video clips or even logos and ring tones as well as offers from external providers. At that time, Telekom launched t-zones, Vodafone, the live offer, and o2, the active portal (all WAP-based). E-Plus, however, relied on i-Mode until the service was discontinued. In addition, for some time, tariffs were in vogue for which



the use of the portal was free of charge in contrast to the rest of the Internet –a concept that is no longer an attractive concept due to today's data prices.

Apps

The term 'app' (which is the English short form of 'application') mostly refers to any form of application program. In parlance, however, this mostly means applications for modern smartphones and tablet computers that can be obtained from an online shop integrated into the operating system and thus installed directly on the smartphone.

Evolution

Even the first mobile phones often contained small applications such as calendars, calculators or small games. These were designed by the manufacturer for the respective operating system, permanently installed and could not be deleted. With the appearance of Java on mobile phones (Java ME), users were given the opportunity to download small applications and games from their mobile phone operator or from the Internet via WAP (so-called midlets), which were often platform-independent. A hobby programming scene developed, but professional software houses also offered such applications for a fee. Applications could also be installed on various PDAs. But it was only with the appearance of Apple's iPhone, and soon afterwards the Android phones and other smartphones, that the possibility of installing smaller applications on devices became more common among broad sections of the population, supported by the corresponding increased marketing of the manufacturers. There are apps for a wide variety of areas, such as B. Office applications, games, advice, sports apps, to emulate older home computers and programmable pocket calculators (such as the HP-41C) to help diabetics and much more.

Characteristic

In a narrower sense, apps are characterized by the fact that they are specially adapted to the target platform and can be obtained and installed very easily via a manufacturer-specific online portal. Since an app is nothing more than an application program (also called 'program' or 'software') for the corresponding device, the range of applications is very high. It ranges from the simplest tools and fun applications with just one function to program packages with extensive functionality. This includes simple content (current news, newspaper articles) and databases as well as pure user interfaces that enable the efficient use of certain web applications on a smartphone. Due to the different software platforms, however, it is not possible to install an Android app on an iPhone or vice versa. A software company, therefore, has to develop or adapt the application for each mobile device individually.

The Palm OS PDA applications, which also usually only consist of one file and can be used immediately after the transfer, can be regarded as forerunners of smartphone apps. On Psion organizers, you could even create the programs yourself with the device.

Business model

The best-known example is the Apple iPhone with the App Store. In the meantime, Android smartphones with their market and Windows smartphones with their Windows phone marketplace are also claiming a growing market share. While apps in the Apple App Store are mostly chargeable, two-thirds of the offerings in the Android Market consist of free or open-source software. Some of the proceeds go to the developers, and the platform that sells them also shares in the profits. Apple, Google and Microsoft keep 30 percent of the purchase price of an app as commission. As a rule, apps are technically checked by the portal operator, and, in some cases, a content check also takes place before they are then activated for the store, regardless of whether it is a new app or an update.

The business model allows hardware manufacturers to control the use of free software on their devices and to design the sale of paid apps into their own business model. This model prevents your own software from being used on the affected devices, as has been common practice on computers for decades, or from being obtained from third parties. The providers use the corresponding options very differently. While some providers, such as B. Android, enable the use of free applications, the world's leading platform Apple has repeatedly been sharply criticized in the past because it strictly controls the use of software on the devices and often does not allow individual programs or even subsequently removes them from the App Store.

1.1.5 Influence on communication and social interaction

Mobile devices such as mobile phones, smartphones or PDAs have become a constant and sometimes indispensable companion for many people. We are currently seeing rapid further development of these devices (e.g., in terms of size and quality of the display, RAM, processor, input options, device form factor), the supported network technologies (e.g., UMTS, Bluetooth, WLAN), and the areas of application.

So far, mobile interactions have mostly been limited to the interaction between user, mobile phone and service (e.g., SMS, phone calls).

Due to the high acceptance of SMS, short messages had an increasing influence on social interaction (making appointments, for example) and language in the early years. Since the 1990s, 'texting' has also been the slang term for sending short messages with a mobile phone in German-speaking countries.

In order to bring more content into the messages, which are limited to 160 characters, a widespread abbreviation culture has developed, which originally originated in chats and e-mails and was adopted from there. Emoticons have also been used so often in short messages that many of them have already been pre-stored in modern mobile phones.

With the implementation of the various Internet-based messaging services (WhatsApp, Signal, etc.), an essential further development could be achieved in this area, but it leaves some points open. The classic SMS, which is probably the safest messenger service, is now almost only used in so-called 'emergencies' (when there is no internet connection). Even if the common services have many advantages in terms of communication, the topic of digitized security remains –the Internet never forgets! Especially with WhatsApp, the complete (private!) Phone book is uploaded. What exactly happens to the data and whether it really complies with the current General Data Protection Regulation has been a never-ending story since Facebook took over WhatsApp.

Mobile interactions can, for example, also include interactions with the real environment, gesture recognition on mobile devices or the use of the mobile phone as a universal remote control.

Unit 1.2 Classification and importance of social media for sport

Since both social media and mobile marketing open up new possibilities for media exchange that contain user-generated content and direct interactions in online communities, differences to traditional media should be made clear.

Globalization was and is a central topic in international debates. The resulting trend can be traced back to the economic revolution at the beginning of the 21st century. With the invention of the Internet, not only people's consumer behaviour changed, but also the production and distribution behaviour of individual corporations did. The further development of various social media tools, which are consistently promoted by innovative companies, should provide new economic prospects in the future. The new information and communication technologies with their media are important instruments of the globalization process, as they can be used to overcome the space-time continuum. This gives way to global economic, political and social processes that are intended to increase the prosperity of the world's population.

The importance of social media is increasing not least due to the decreasing effectiveness of classic advertising and PR, which is examined in this chapter. Against this background, social media marketing and mobile marketing can be viewed as a new approach to increasing the effectiveness of online communication and offering additional points of contact for successful marketing.

Sport and the sports industry are now also benefiting from the virtual platforms, because this tool can be used to establish proximity to target groups that were previously inaccessible. This means that feedback can be obtained directly through fan or customer contact. Fans can also act as positive multipliers and maintain the image of their idol: ideally, this ensures the desired public perception and, at the same time, the fan community exerts a motivating effect on athletes' performance. Now that the competition between the sports players is also taking place in the media sector, the role of reputation is becoming increasingly important.

The following table shows the media change from classic media to social media, based on a few selected areas, such as the types of media and the type of use.



Table 1. Media change from classic media to ‘social media’

AREA	CLASSIC MEDIA	NEW MEDIA	SOCIAL MEDIA
Medienart	Analog – Radio, TV, print-media, LP	Digital – Websites, streaming, CD	Web-based – Podcasting, microblogs, MP3
Structure	Central – Monolithic	De-central – Static	Connected – Dynamic
Marketing	Advertisement	E-Commerce	Social commerce Mobile commerce
Type of Usage	Reception – Consumption	Participation – Usage	Collaboration – Production & creation
Status	Offline	Online - Web 1.0	Permanently online – Mobile Internet – Web 2.0

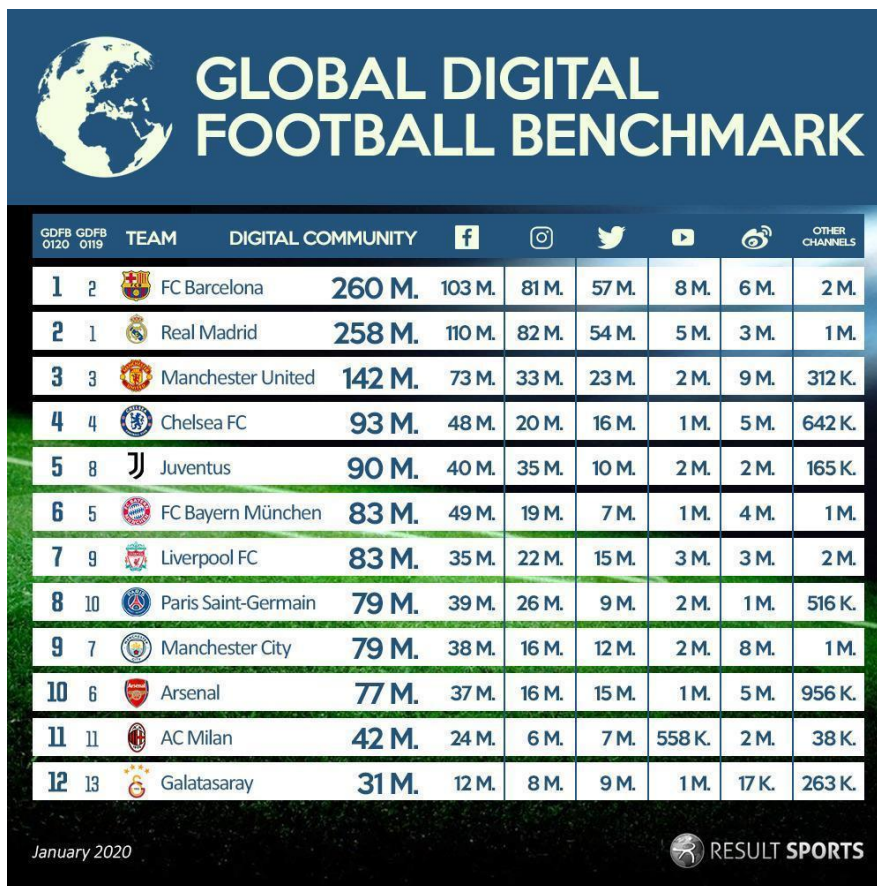
Source: Own work.

With regard to the impact that social media has on users and companies, one can say that users are no longer just consumers, but are increasingly becoming producers as well. Many new network-based applications create the prerequisites and enable users to distribute content, even if they have no special programming or computer skills.

In addition, it becomes clear how large the digital following of the top European teams (as of January 2020) has become on the various channels and what power is now behind it.



Figure 3. Top European teams in January 2020



Source: RESULT Sports, n.d.

The multiplication of the offer is to be seen as a challenge for communication today. The flood of information leads to people wanting to avoid this oversupply because they are not able to process all the information. The information is selected on the basis of this. Information is consciously or unconsciously hidden, and only allegedly relevant or seemingly appropriate statements are filtered out.

1.2.1 Limits of classic media and public relations

Society is becoming more dynamic and so is how it deals with the media and advertising. The key words here are 'HD recorders', 'podcasts' or, for example, 'video-on-demand', as well as 'IPTV'. This makes it easier for the viewer to escape from advertising, as can be seen, for example, from the growing popularity of hard disk recorders, a technology that allows time-shifted television. Audiences tend to avoid advertising if it is not entertaining or does not meet the needs that the viewer is trying to satisfy through media consumption. Advertising is avoided both actively and passively. Zapping, ad blockers, pay-TV/pay-per-view and the oversaturated advertising markets make it difficult to address the target group in the usual way. In addition, viewers' skepticism towards classic



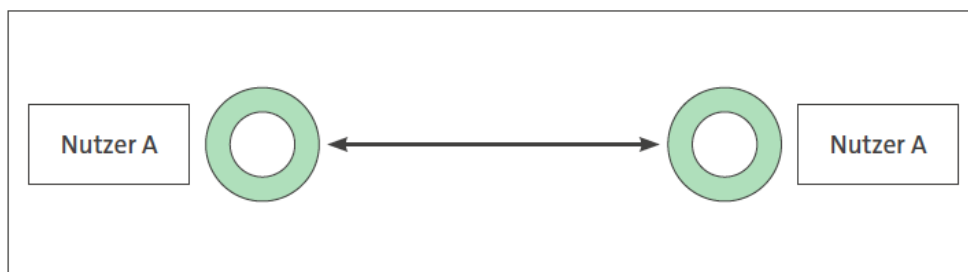
advertising is growing, with the consequence that it is losing credibility. Sticking to classic strategies can no longer conform to the times.

If one deals with communication relationships between the sender and recipient of messages and the media in between, there were mainly two forms of media to be found in the pre-social media era:

A) 1:1 media

The 1:1 media enable mutual interpersonal communication, the information content of which is only intended for the people who are exchanging information. Regardless of whether the communication takes place simultaneously or staggered over time, and whether it is practiced in simple terms or by means of modern telecommunications (for example, by e-mail or telephone), it has a closed, non-public character.

Figure 4. Interpersonal communication that the 1:1 media allow

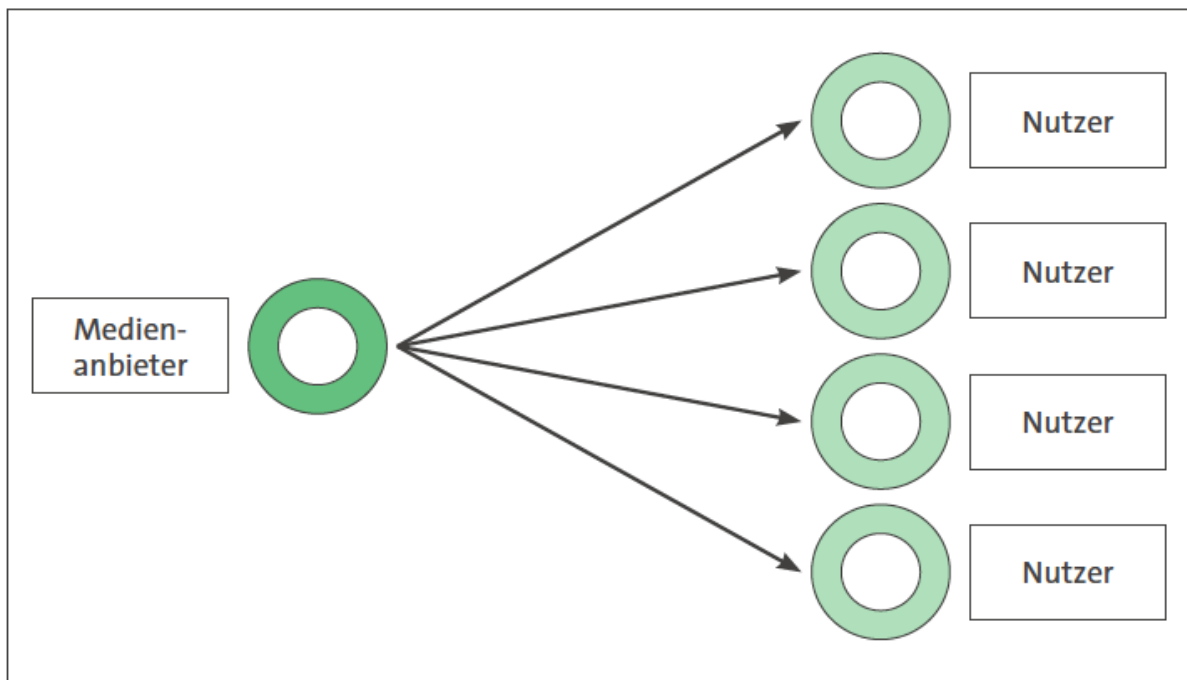


Source: RESULT Sports, n.d.

B) 1:n media

The 1:n media enables a sender to transmit the content to many recipients. This communication relationship is typical for mass media such as newspapers, radio, TV, but also for classic websites that are designed for one-way communication from a sender to many recipients. It is true that these media also offer reaction and interaction approaches aimed at the public, such as in newspapers in the form of a letter to the editor. However, the interaction process is very time consuming and cumbersome.

Figure 5. Same content transmitted to many recipients by the 1: n media



Source: (RESULT Sports, n.d.)

The period of time between the press publication and the reader reaction shown in the medium is linked to the frequency of publication of the medium. It often takes days, sometimes even weeks, until the publication date of a letter to the editor takes place, if it is published at all.

As a user of the medium, one is clearly in the role of the recipient. Direct and immediate access to the sender of one's own information contributions is only provided in exceptional cases and then only through the editor or program manager in the role of 'gatekeeper' of content. 1: n media are predestined as carriers of advertising messages. Through the simple handling of a central placement while at the same time being able to reach a large group of addressees, they allow an efficient distribution of advertising content.

1.2.2 Print, radio and TV advertising

Conventional mass media and the advertising placed there reach fewer and fewer people (as already described). This supports the tendency to shift advertising budgets to the Internet, which sometimes brings existential difficulties for advertising media that are dependent on advertising income, such as newspapers, for example.

In the meantime, online advertising has already overtaken conventional advertising in terms of the entire budget. What makes the classic media of print, radio and TV more difficult is that the abundance of offers and competition in their own media environment



have increased significantly in recent years, which makes media planning and the selection of the most effective advertising media an increasingly complicated process. The almost unmanageable media offer reflects the immediate consequence of fragmented media usage behaviour, the diversity of which, coupled with increasing individualization of consumer behaviour and ever smaller buyer segments, poses major challenges for marketing planning. Consumers are more difficult to classify into categories and to reach them using standardized mass messages according to the watering can principle. In terms of behaviour, they often display changing, sometimes diametrically opposed actions. The proportion of hybrid consumers who, so to speak, on the one hand, 'split' into the purchase of high-quality branded goods but, on the other, buy cheaper private labels or 'no names', is already between 35 and 70 percent today –with an upward trend.

In addition to the declining importance of traditional mass media as an advertising medium, the advertising effect of 1: n communication (from a media provider to many viewers or readers) is increasingly being questioned. For example, when TV spots are shown, many viewers turn away from the screen to attend to personal needs, mute TV or 'zap' to other channels.

The advertising effect of important advertising media, such as TV spots, has been demonstrably declining, despite an increase in advertising budgets of almost 200 percent across all advertising media since 1990.

Advertising researchers agree that the majority of advertising contacts take place at moments when there is no interest in the product or no time for intensive consideration of the advertising. Advertising is literally forced or imposed on the viewer. This type of advertising can be referred to as 'push advertising'. It is difficult for the recipient to evade this type of influence.

1.2.3 Online advertising

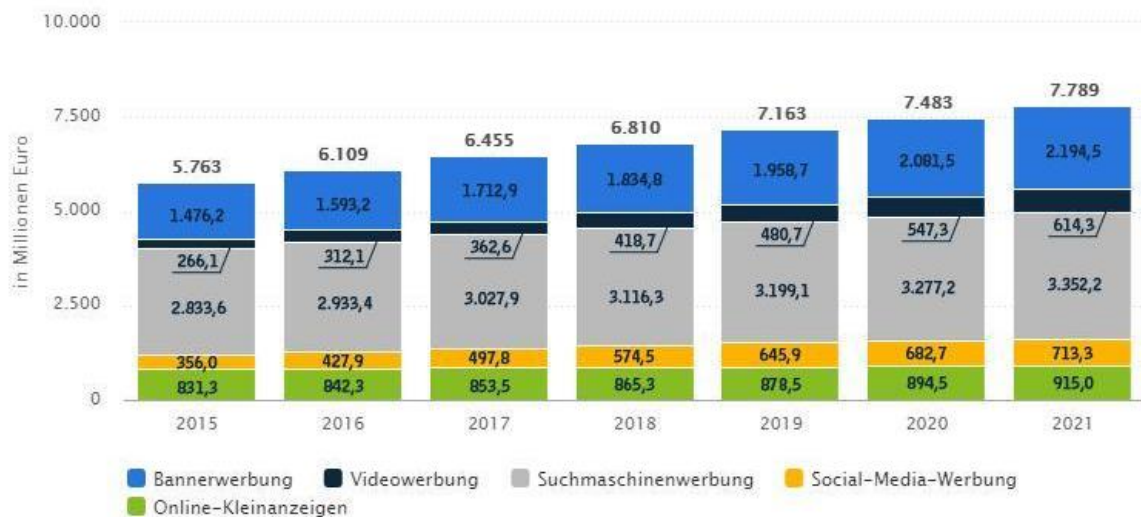
The critical accompanying circumstances of advertising in conventional 1: n media that have been expressed so far can also, to a certain extent, be transferred to online media. There, too, the principle of placing banners on the most heavily frequented websites is used in order to attract attention. The effectiveness of banner advertising –companies also became more and more creative and designed their banners more and more interactively– is being viewed increasingly critically for several reasons, for example, against the background of the phenomenon of banner blindness. Popups are also used in online advertising. With them, the advertisement opens automatically for a certain time in a small browser window, which is optically placed in front of the desired page and thus represents a clear expression of the interruption advertisement. This type of advertising is also a typical push advertising. The forcing of messages, which is often perceived as

aggressive, can mean that viewers do not deal with the content from the outset out of anger and click away the window immediately.

A habitual ignoring banner advertising and the attempt to technically exclude advertising via pop-up bloggers from the outset can be reasons for the declining growth of graphically complex display ads. In comparison to search engine advertising, which is developing very positively, banner advertising is on the decline. The high importance of search engine advertising in the online media mix is proof of the increasing importance of advertising that is actively sought. It can be described as 'pull advertising'.

If you use a search engine to search for a specific term for which, in addition to the search hits, advertising messages that are relevant to the topic are presented, then you are much more positive about this advertising content than undesirably transmitted messages. The expected news is announced unobtrusively with just a few words and the actual advertising content is only available by clicking on the page behind it.

Figure 6. Online advertising - statistics, forecasts and benefits



Source: Statista, 2016.

Overall, it can be said that advertising in the form of intrusive push advertising, regardless of whether it is presented in conventional mass media or on the Internet, has recognizable limits. Newspapers and magazines, as well as private radio and television stations, with their business model, are still largely dependent on this form of advertising. They find it difficult to compensate for declining user numbers in connection with changing media usage behaviour towards online communication. It is not easy to find alternative forms of advertising communication that will ensure that your commitment is adequately refinanced.



1.2.4 Classic public relations and public awareness

While advertising –regardless of whether it is about product advertising or company advertising– requires a remunerated use of the mass media, the communication tool public relations (PR) aims at the free use of 1: n media. A central task of PR is to provide the media with positive product and company information and to persuade them to publish them in the form of original media articles and thus make them accessible to a broad audience.

The task of PR is to build good relationships with the various external (customers, suppliers, shareholders, political decision-makers, the state, etc.) and internal (employees) partners of the company. Various instruments can be used for this, whereby the targeted supply of information and the establishment and maintenance of contacts are to be seen as the core instrument of external PR. This high priority of maintaining relationships with the media is explained by the fact that a broader public can be reached and influenced most easily via the product –and company-related mass media. Journalists are the central ‘gatekeepers’ in the PR business, they decide whether a company news is worth broadcasting or not. Central patterns of action and rules of traditional PR work can be summarized as follows:

- The public can best be reached through mass media (indirectly).
- Journalists report on the company and its brands.
- Communication is unidirectional and feedback from recipients is difficult.
- Journalists, as ‘gatekeepers’, decide what is worth broadcasting and what is not.
- Companies communicate with journalists through press releases and press conferences.
- Press releases should have new and interesting content.
- If the transmitted information is not transformed into editorial contributions by the media, the public will not know about it.
- The key measure of success is how often and extensively the company and its brands have been mentioned in the media (e.g., represented in press clippings).

In the course of the growing importance of the Internet, the emphasis is also shifting in the context of PR –away from traditional mass media towards online communication. The relocation of PR activities to online channels opens up new opportunities for PR managers to simplify exchanges. In this way, press releases can be quickly distributed to a large number of journalists using an email distribution list. This type of ‘push communication’



differs from postal dispatch only in the medium and not in the interaction relationship. Information is passed on to multipliers who select the most valuable information for the readers from the offer and then distribute it, if necessary, editorially revised.

The simple electronic sending options can tempt you to send messages more frequently, some of which are of little news or information value. If journalists do not want to run the risk of being overwhelmed by well-intentioned information spamming by PR officials, they have to well organize their information management. In this context, it can be observed for journalistic work that, in addition to the use of push communication, the targeted use of pull communication is being used to an increasing extent. This means that one does not passively wait to see what news is offered by the company, but that journalists actively research various channels in order to find material for 'their top story'.

With the spread of social media, the wealth and breadth of information offered has increased by leaps and bounds. Statements about companies and brands are no longer distributed exclusively by authorized company representatives, but also by a large number of Internet users who share their own experiences, expectations and assessments in blogs, communities, comment pages, etcetera.

Due to the large number of Internet users exchanging information on corporate, sports organizations and brand issues, the monopoly-like position of journalists and mass media in influencing public perception is crumbling. New authorities and opinion leaders emerge, who, as multipliers, represent new target groups in corporate communications.

Conclusion

Marketing decision-makers expect a result-oriented and economical use of the advertising budget. In terms of effective and efficient brand management, communication must not only appeal to the emotions and attract a lot of attention, but also activate actions that lead to a purchase. Most offers, however, only address small or very small market segments. Communication with traditional media (for example, radio and television advertising) has therefore reached its limits. If you want to communicate successfully with your customers, you have to rethink. The result is a clear shift in the evaluation of communication instruments in German companies: the importance of the individual dialogue with the customer in combination with measurable proof of performance is growing. The communication requirements that result from this are immense. The core task is to find a meaningful balancing act between the individualization of advertising (differentiation and detailing of the address), on the one hand, and economic aspects, on the other.

1.2.5 Merging of the types of communication

In the future, users should be able to work from any location and with any device –with the best possible network connection. The transmission technologies for computers, mobile phones and television are growing ever closer together. The various ways of using media are becoming more and more independent of the end device.

Overview

The change to a digital society becomes particularly clear using the example of communication. We are at a historic turning point: various media such as telephone, television, radio, CDs, books and newspapers are increasingly being made available digitally and are increasingly being used digitally. It is becoming apparent that this digitization will lead to the merging of media types and that the traditional separation of media will gradually be abolished. At the same time, new communication networks are creating the ability to send and receive digital information over broadband technologies. Thanks to the wireless connection of mobile devices to the Internet, digital information can be accessed from anywhere. The transmission capacity of the new data networks is so high that they are not only suitable for speech, but also for music and film.

With the merging of computer technology, entertainment electronics and telecommunications, computer science is moving to a more central position within society: it ensures that there can be a complete integration of previously different systems. Computer science is facing other important challenges. It has to give three important services: provide basic software for setting up new infrastructures, create new and uniform information formats, and enable the integration of old and new applications.

1.2.6 Unlimited image and brand positioning

How does this convergence of media change communication between individuals and how does it change communication in society? With the Internet, the public and the private are increasingly merging: From a technical point of view, broadcasting radio and television programs is now also possible for private individuals. This not only increases the reach of the individual's voice, but also changes the character of traditional media.

Computer science provides the theoretical and practical tools so that 'old' and 'new' can merge in society. With broadband data communication, companies will standardize their warehouse management, customer databases and accounting in one network. Machines can be checked and optimized via the Internet regardless of their location and at any time. This type of teleservice opens up new market opportunities for equipment manufacturers, their service providers as well as for sports organizations.

The clubs can reach their target group globally and no longer only have to turn to the regional or national 'market'. Promotional items, tickets, etcetera can thus be completely repositioned. However, with the advent of the digital age, the image of the respective club

is also in a kind of 'shop window'. And how do people communicate with a network that connects so many old and new applications? In the communication of tomorrow, private individuals will be able to reach the masses and, conversely, the media will be able to offer individual program content to individuals. As a result, among other things, the form and content of language will change; it will adapt to social media.

Some companies use successful athletes in the hope that the positive attributes associated with the athlete will be carried over from the consumer to the company. Such athletes are often used because they are credited with generating a strong connection with consumers. They embody values such as 'dynamism, performance and success and have a high level of awareness and sympathy among the advertising-relevant target groups'. From an industrial point of view, this means that all the requirements for an image transfer of positive properties are transferred to the product or service to be advertised

1.2.7 Addressing the target group directly

Content and communication are no longer assigned to specific media and devices –the markets are merging. Sport and its fans can communicate and consume anywhere and on all devices, from mobile phones to computers and television. So, you cannot only talk to a fan from Australia over a teleconference, you can call him on the PC, send him e-mails on his mobile phone, watch TV with him on the computer and watch him over an IP teleconference.

In the context of customer management (CRM), the use of social networks is becoming more and more important for companies. In the future, marketing and direct addressing of target groups will increasingly take place on the Internet, and the 'word-of-mouth' is the decisive factor for spreading branding and product messages. Building a brand community can help to get a direct line to the target group and to learn from them.

What began with book reviews at Amazon is now common practice: Customers and interested parties register on a website in order to write themselves. They are active in blogs and forums and exchange their opinions and experiences; bad publicity is spreading rapidly. Consumers gain control over communication through social media. Wikipedia and Flickr & Co. turn you into experts, publishers, authors, critics and photographers in one person. Customers get media power.

And because this is so, new rules of the game must be followed in order to be successful. With the synonym 'Web 2.0', one-sided 'sound reinforcement' becomes a dialogue.

In the opinion of all experts, personal contact with customers, dialogue-oriented forms of communication and individualized instruments for addressing customers are guarantees for the future success of communication strategies. But the new basic understanding is



also important: Dialog marketing is more than a technology that deals, for example, with the latest options for address optimization.

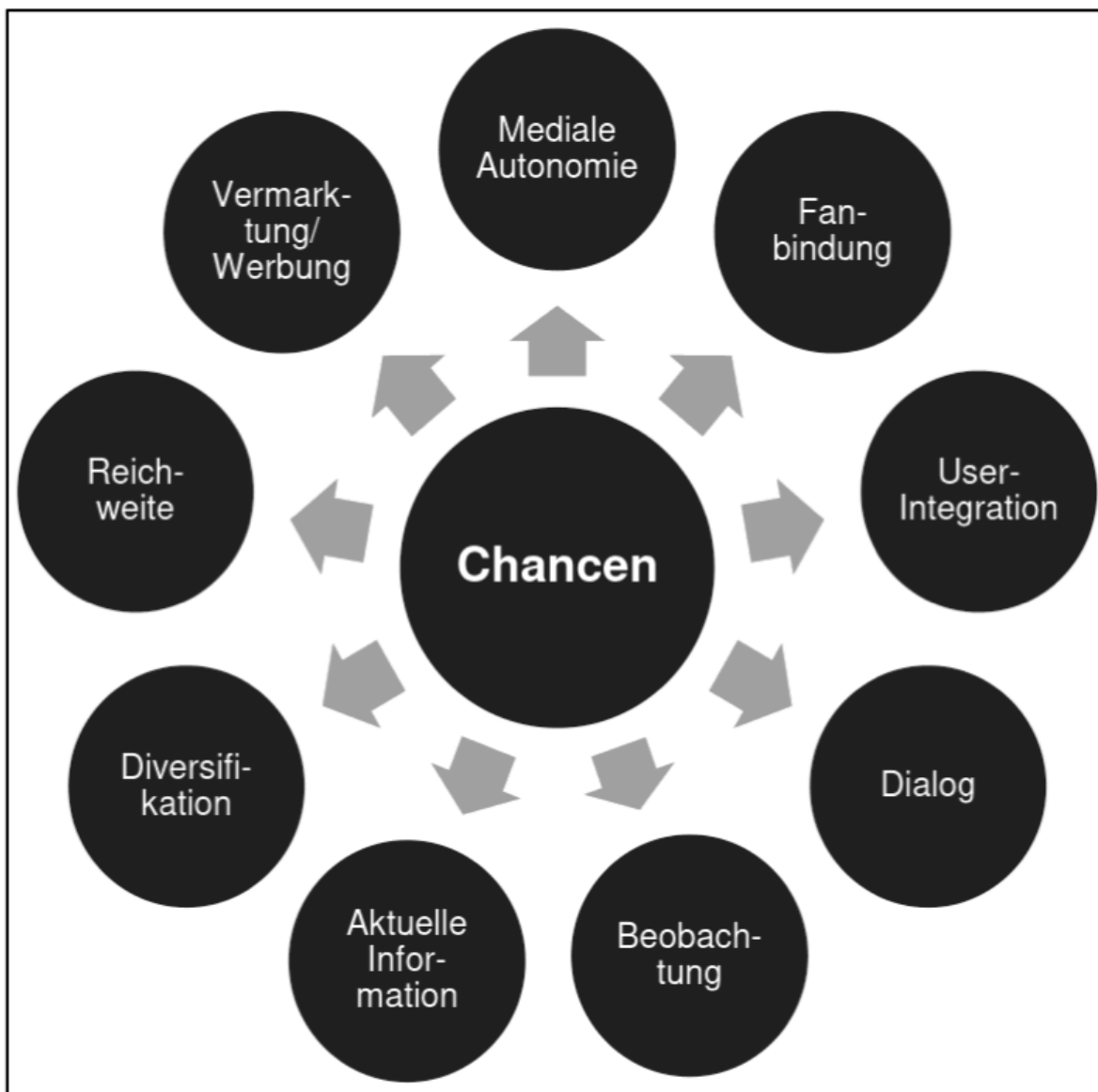
So far, many companies have hardly or only occasionally carried out success measurements. Controlling the success of communication measures is becoming indispensable for every company that wants to operate efficiently due to tougher competitive conditions and falling advertising budgets.

This implies the introduction of controlling systems with various communication controlling tools. Apparatus methods for measuring the perception and effect of advertising are also trendy. Eye camera technology is known in particular. Neurophysiological perception research, or 'brain research' for short, represents an innovation.

1.2.8 Opportunities

The future of communication belongs to such highly professionally managed cross-media campaigns that are very precisely geared towards the target group. The success of such campaigns depends on the extent to which the companies pre-qualify their target group with precise information.

Figure 7. Opportunities



Source: RESULT Sports, n.d.

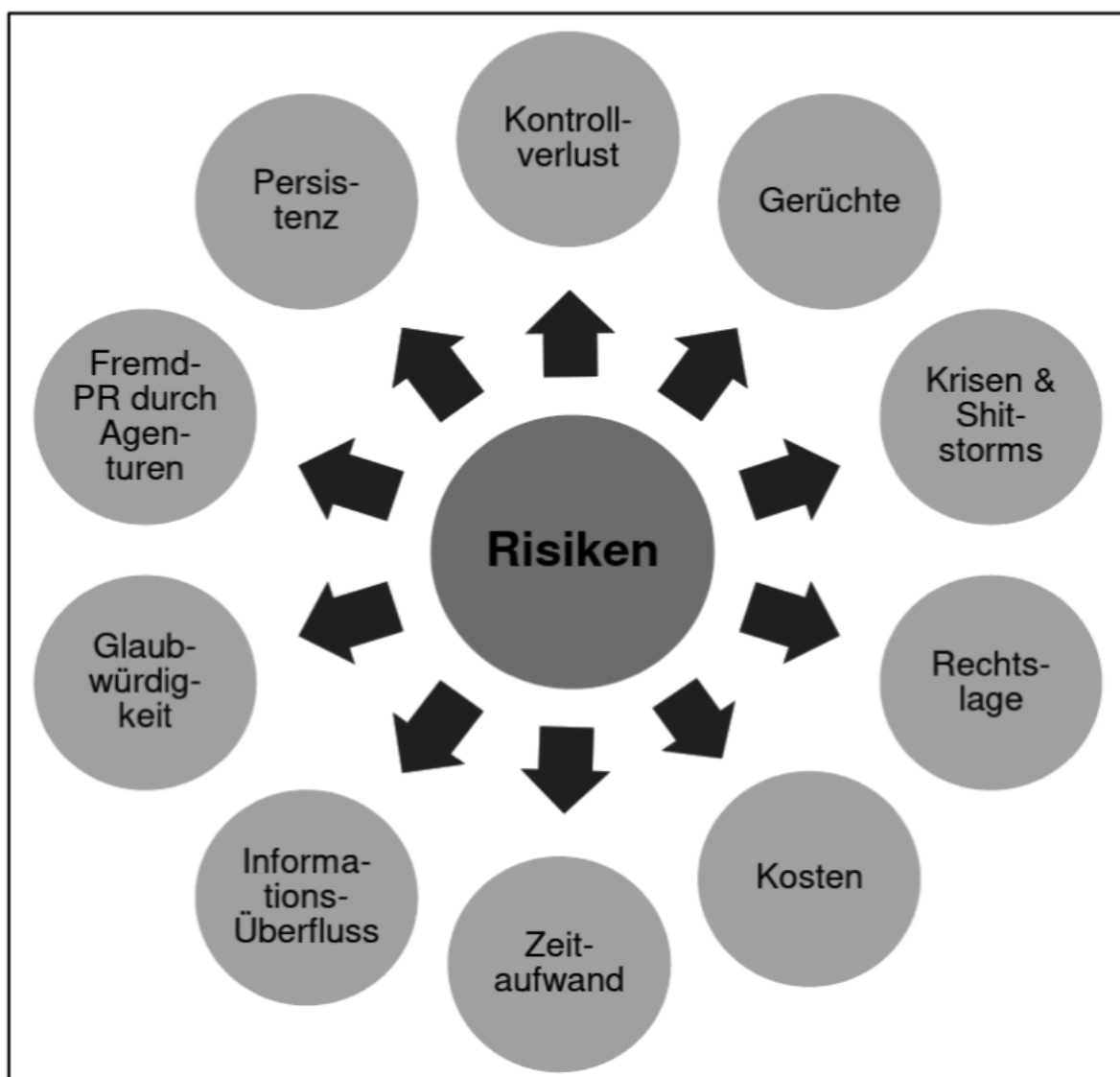
With successively learning communication systems, companies can win and retain their customers and interested parties to the greatest possible extent in a way that is tailored to their target groups. A new type of prospect, lead and buyer acquisition can be used for all industries, regardless of whether well-developed customer databases are already available. In the future, successful advertising campaigns will have direct contact via all communication channels as an integral part. Earlier communication campaigns consisted of announcement mailings, catalogs and follow-up mailings. It was really good to be able to follow up with customers by phone as soon as possible. A great agency service was when campaigns –print, TV, radio and outdoor advertising– worked at the same time and even dovetailed conceptually.

Where will dialogue marketing develop in the future? Trendsetting are future images in which providers and customers connect as partners on an equal footing: Customers will formulate exactly in what form, at what point in time and on what topics they are ready for dialogue. And they will decide on which channel and at what point in time they actively initiate communication themselves and would like to receive appropriate answers. In this sense, the customer is increasingly becoming the real king. (Stahl-Weiss, 2003)

1.2.9 Risks

Even if the social networks bring many advantages, there is always a certain residual risk. Associations and companies have increasingly lost control of who communicates what about their offerings and when. Instead, every player can publish posts and thus pose a reputational risk that can certainly trigger a crisis that either only affects the person affected *per se* or takes on a larger dimension.

Figure 8. Social networks risks



Source: RESULT Sports, n.d.

It is difficult for PR managers to completely avoid such risks, because the only way to do this would be to completely ban social media. But whether that would be legally permissible at all –keyword: ‘freedom of expression’– seems at least debatable. In practice, therefore, guidelines and training sessions with players are carried out regularly, which contain various tips and are intended to define the guard rails.

Nonetheless, there will always be players who, due to ignorance, negligence, or purely intentionally, faux pas and bring themselves or their club to explain –the PR manager in today's digital age will certainly not get bored.

As already shown, social media offers enable dialogue and large reach. However, this can also turn out unintentionally for PR drivers. Shitstorms are one of the greatest risks. A topic that is negative for an organization generates a great deal of attention, for example, through numerous splits, recommendations and comments and can thus develop into a crisis for the organization.

Unit 1.3 What are the strengths of social media?

Social media facilitate access to information (temporally and spatially) and thus contribute to shaping the knowledge society. The advantage of social media compared to conventional media lies in their being up-to-date and in their versatility. They are economical, realistic and authentic in their application. Their disadvantage is the possible loss of personal communication skills of the user, as well as the risk of abuse facilitated by anonymity.

What can social media do?

- Inform
- Convince
- Make the invisible visible
- Arouse emotions
- Dispel prejudice
- To sell

At the center of social media are user-generated content, such as personal assessments of brands, suggestions for innovative products, self-made video spots and so on. These originate from your own mobile device (mobile phone), laptop or PC. These contents then become seismographs to record moods and represent excellent sources of information for market research. They support entrepreneurial and brand-related positioning and the marketing planning process based on it.

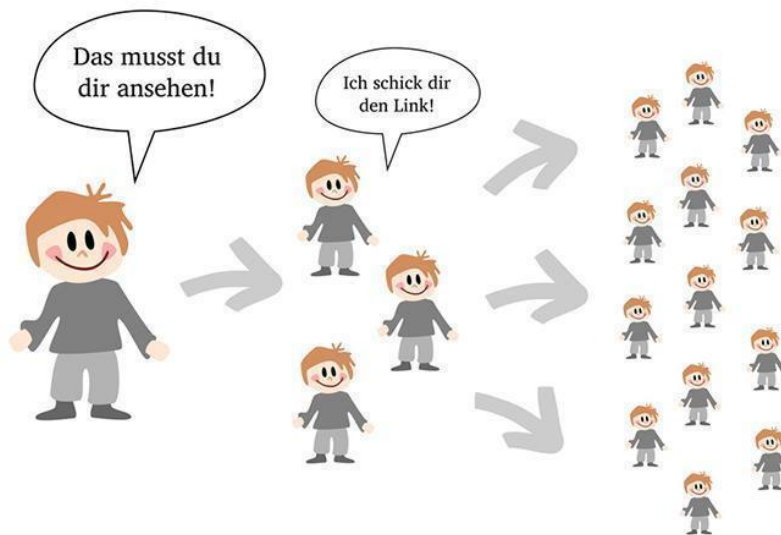
The social media are therefore unbeatable in one respect: in the aspect of 'many-to-many' communication. In contrast to all traditional advertising media, it is not just your message that is spread, but also the conversations in the community: They talk about you and you have a say.

1.3.1 Viral marketing

The supreme discipline of social media is called 'viral marketing'; that means the redistribution of content according to the snowball principle. This effect occurs when a visitor recommends a piece of content to his group of friends and his friends in turn pass the content on to their friends, and so on. In this way, an undreamt-of distribution can be achieved in a relatively short time, combined with the corresponding click rates.



Figure 9. Viral marketing



Source: Gastrostore, n.d.

Viral marketing is a form of marketing that social media use to draw attention to a brand, product or campaign with a mostly unusual or subtle message. Although the epidemic spread is similar to that of word of mouth, viral marketing is not to be equated with this, since in word of mouth the initiation of the spreading usually comes from neutral participants. The term 'viral' means that information about a product or service is passed on from person to person within a very short time, similar to a biological virus.

Viral marketing uses various methods to publish the message, for example, postcards, film clips or simple posts in Internet forums and blogs. The methods specially prepared for the Internet are known as viral.

The success is disproportionately high when measured against the minimal financial outlay. This effect works excellently both on the mobile device and on the computer.

1.3.2 Mobile marketing

Mobile marketing is the description of social media marketing measures using wireless telecommunications and mobile devices with the aim of reaching consumers as directly as possible and leading them to a certain behaviour.

Any type of communicative business activity in which the provider creates services based on mobile devices such as digital content (games, songs, videos, etc.), information (news, alerts, product information) and/or transactions such as shopping, video streaming, and payments, is included to that effect. Potential consumers should be noticed, and, ideally, it should lead to sales.

Wireless technologies (such as UMTS/HSDPA, Wireless LAN, Bluetooth and DVB-H) are used in connection with mobile devices. The aim of mobile marketing is to build up a sustainable customer relationship and to obtain permission to make offers that are as tailor-made as possible to make life easier for them in mobility. Mobile marketing is viewed as part of the broader term mobile commerce, which consists of different applications.

Interactivity in mobile marketing

An indispensable part of a mobile marketing activity is the interaction between provider and consumer. This can be realized via various interfaces. Sending/receiving SMS or MMS, WAP pages, WAP push links, which have functional but not design similarities with Internet pages, Audiotex systems, interactive voice response and simple to complex applications using Java or now also come into consideration Flash light, for example, see also J2ME.

Figure 10. Interactivity with mobile marketing



Source: HWZ digital, n.d.

If one examines various existing mobile marketing campaigns, three basic approaches can be identified:

- 1) With the push approach, advertising companies use their own address lists or address lists rented through service providers to send mobile advertising messages to consumers.
- 2) With the pull approach, consumers explicitly request mobile advertising messages. Therefore, additional advertising media are required for these campaigns in order to

motivate the desired target group to participate in the campaign. In order to make navigation easier for the user, graphic user profiles are created on the application level, and thus a framework is given in which he can find more or less useful services. The providers promise to build customer bases that have comprehensible profiles, which can have invaluable advantages for advertisers and marketing professionals.

3) With the viral approach, mobile advertising messages or mobile services received from consumers are passed on to other consumers, following the basic principles of classic word-of-mouth (mouth advertising). This third form of interactivity in mobile marketing is also referred to as 'mobile viral marketing'. Consumers are motivated to send content to other potential consumers from their social environment using mobile electronic communication technologies (in connection with mobile devices) and to motivate them to make recommendations. This content is called 'mobile viral content' and includes both mobile advertising messages and mobile services. An example of the first case, which represents the communication concept in mobile viral marketing, is a mobile multimedia greeting card that contains an advertising message. An example of the second case, which represents the distribution concept in mobile viral marketing, is a mobile instant messaging service that typically spreads virally.

1.3.3 Communication, market research and innovation management

Communication

In order to spread messages, it is not enough today to simply place a few clips on popular video platforms and wait for them to spread by themselves. Like any form of advertising, viral campaigns must be carefully planned in advance with a view to achieving specific communication goals. At the beginning of every viral campaign –you can save yourself a lot of financial resources with a good plan and a large reach–, there is the targeted dissemination of the content that must be of benefit to the recipient on selected platforms and portals as well as in communities. First of all, it is important to reach opinion leaders who contribute to the dissemination of the content in blogs, social networks, video portals or even by e-mail. In the end, a self-sustaining, epidemically growing communication process should be created. The recipients should, for example, learn something interesting, be amused or enjoy something useful. They should also be encouraged to share. Anticipating the expected joy and potential benefit from others, and possibly hoping for a certain kind of gratitude for the transmission, can be an important motivator in this context.

The positive effects of a viral campaign are difficult to put into concrete figures. In order to be able to measure success at all, the goals to be achieved must be defined at the beginning of the campaign. Specialized providers offer online tracking instruments that not only determine the initial transmission of a viral message, but can also precisely track



its further path. This makes it possible to monitor user behaviour and learn from it. It also makes it easier to assess the chances of success of viral campaigns.

The success of viral marketing depends on a variety of factors that need to be considered when planning and running a campaign. But even if all eventualities are considered and an action is carefully planned, there is no guarantee that the message will be passed on. As it is well known, recommendations are only made if the personally perceived benefit of a recommendation is rated accordingly high. If advertising is perceived as superficial and individuals feel they have been instrumentalized, viral marketing will nip in the bud.

In addition, it must be taken into account that the popular video platforms have now been discovered by many companies for advertising purposes. Viral marketing based on these platforms means enormous competition from a large number of other advertising clips, some of which have similar content. On YouTube today, the views of business-generated content (that is, of content that was produced by companies) outweigh those of videos that were shot by private individuals. In order to attract significant attention for a video, the contributions must be particularly creative, interesting, provocative or entertaining in order to stand out from the crowd and to be considered valuable for viral distribution.

Market research

The abundance of user-generated content directed at the public in social networks opens up new, excellent opportunities for market research to obtain information. This aims to support marketing decisions through the systematic procurement, processing and analysis of market-relevant information. Information can be obtained methodically, on the one hand, by evaluating data that has already been collected or existing publications and results –this is referred to as ‘secondary research’ or ‘desk research’.

If the available material does not ensure sufficient gain in knowledge, there is also the possibility of answering your own questions to collect new, previously unrecognized market data as part of primary research.

The social media are ideal for this, as they offer great potential in the same way as mobile devices. The abundance of text, image and video contributions from a wide variety of target groups that are already available and that are constantly being added represent a unique fund for the recording of circumstances and behaviour video contributions, social relationships, behaviour in virtual communities, and much more, but not direct communication between the surveyor and the respondent. A typical question of a quantitative survey would be, for example, how many statements about a certain club in a certain period are to be regarded as negative in percentage terms.

The objective of qualitative market research goes beyond the measurement of directly ascertainable facts. Rather, it is about describing, interpreting and understanding



behaviour-related, underlying relationships and factors such as the wishes, experiences, motivations, attitudes and perceptions of the survey participants. Qualitative research does not attempt to draw hard and fast conclusions.

The social networks are suitable for both quantitative and qualitative primary surveys. In order to conclude the topic of market research, you should learn about and understand the following research:

- Exploratory examinations are indicated when there is little information available on a specific area of knowledge about the initial situation, and, sometimes, even an examination problem cannot be specified more precisely. Dealing with the social media can help in the context of exploratory studies to outline a problem area, to grasp initial connections and to gain more in-depth insights.
- Descriptive studies aim to quantify and precisely record market and environmental conditions and to analyze relationships between variables that are used in the context of social media monitoring.
- Causal studies aim to analyze relationships between variables in methodically demanding procedures for the existence of causal relationships. Due to the methodical effort, they are only suitable to a limited extent for standard market research studies including social media. Here the listing is only for the conceptual completeness.

Unit 1.4 Practices of the Social Web

Social networks and the various 'social sharing platforms' can be assigned to three specific modes of action: Identity management, relationship management and information management to describe the actions of users in the 'social web'.

Identity management outlines the making accessible of aspects of oneself, relationship management, the maintenance of existing or the creation of new relationships and information management, ultimately refers to the selection, filtering, evaluation and administration of all relevant information.

The 'social web' practices do not happen unquestioned and require active and explicit selection and design of the user. In addition, the practices of identity management, relationship management and information management –all three of which can be described as basic needs that 'social media' and social networks satisfy– cannot be completely separated from the real world in the virtual world. After all, the methods of the action components must always be carried out by a real person.

Another aspect for the only apparent boundary between the virtual and the real world is that, for example, in relationship management, contacts are not only continued online, but also via face-to-face communication. The individual platforms of the 'social web' provide a number of tools and options for this type of action, but are also restricted by rules or software codes.

- Innovation management

Basically, the ability of an organization to constantly renew products and processes has always been a key success factor. Innovations make a decisive contribution to securing the future viability of a company. Some creative approaches and ideas are explained below.

- Crowdsourcing

The term is an artificial word made up of outsourcing and crowd (mass of customers or users). Crowdsourcing relies on the 'wisdom of the many'.

Any number of people who are interested in taking part, as large as possible, provide ideas and suggestions, write articles, give recommendations and assessments and thus become a staff of 'employees' that usually operates free of charge. Crowdsourcing relies on the collective intelligence and the labor of a mass of surfing leisure workers, which can lead not only to falling costs but also to a high degree of non-commitment and possible fluctuations. Popular pioneers are Amazon and eBay.



- Innovations through interactive value creation

The need to integrate the customer into product development and business processes has been demanded for many years. Opening up the innovation process as part of 'open innovation' can be beneficial for everyone involved. The term 'added value' means to outsource parts of the tasks to customers or interested parties. 'Open innovation' embodies the opening of the innovation process and the integration of external and internal ideas, for example, from existing customers or employees.

The engagement of customers through the creation of proposals can help to increase the customer's loyalty to the company, which in turn can also have economic effects.

- Generating ideas through social media

The realization that customers usually know better about a company's products and thus have valuable creative and innovative knowledge potential is not new. Many companies now share this opinion and express this in a greatly increased appreciation of their own customers. The inclusion of customers in your own product development is nowadays greatly simplified by the communication possibilities of the Internet. However, not only content-related input is of great value, but also the appreciation of these people and the likely chances that they will then do free PR for the company.

The Italian car manufacturer Fiat relied very intensively on social networks and actively involved its customers in product development – a strong signal. With a large-scale campaign for the model launch of the Fiat 500 Cinquecento in 2006, customers and interested parties were allowed to participate in the development of the car on the Internet, but, above all, to have a say; over 170,000 designs were submitted by fans. Fiat brand boss, Luca de Meo, saw Internet work primarily as modern market research and risk insurance for investments.

- Idea portals

If you are looking for suggestions that focus more on your own product range, you can set up your own ideas portal.

With 'my Starbucks Idea', the coffee house chain Starbucks offers an ideas community with the help of which many ideas for various service packages of the provider have already been collected, although no material reward is promised for the commitment. As a result of customer suggestions, various new beverages were introduced, the quality of the coffee mug was improved, and a special discount card system was offered.

It is conceivable to offer this model exclusively to own employees as a supplement or as a replacement for an Internet community for generating ideas. In this case, departments or groups of people could actively participate in the creation of creative solutions.

For example, a corporate blog is ideal for generating ideas. It is therefore easy to address product and process innovations and to ask your own readership for specific suggestions and ideas.

- Internet forums

The value of forum entries and a possible member dialogue should not be underestimated, since the members of the forums in question often use the product themselves and are reliable 'long-term testers' who deal intensively with product-related issues. It can also be assumed that, as a member of a 'branded community', you identify with the brand and are emotionally connected to it. For sport, this means that fans should seek dialogue in the forums at an early stage in the event of possible construction work, process changes, etcetera, in order to be able to incorporate the results into implementation.

The inclusion of targeted dialogue efforts can therefore have a great additional benefit that goes beyond the pure information gathering. By making contact, the organization demonstrates that it is dealing with the forum's concerns and that it takes the professional assessments of the forum members seriously. It signals users an appreciation from which positive consequences in terms of customer loyalty and the education of viral effects can result.

- Service and support management

While companies have long used social media activities primarily for marketing and PR purposes, customer service via social media is becoming increasingly important: Social care is becoming a new basic trend in digital communication.

Customers drive social media customer service

The reason for this development is not only the emergence of new online communication channels, but also changed user behaviour. The activity of customers in social networks is increasing continuously, so customers there also demand a quick and competent response to their postings. As communication with and about companies shifts to the Internet, communication between customers and companies is changing: It is becoming more public, with 'many-to-many communication' dominating.

New challenge and opportunity for companies

This represents a major challenge for customer service areas in companies that previously focused on a different type of communication, measured against other KPIs (number of calls processed, lost calls), and where often no interfaces to social media activities and systems exist. At the same time, new forms and channels of online communication open up new fields of action and opportunities for companies in terms of reputation, image and added value. Excellent customer service is a fundamental unique selling point in the future.

1.4.1 Identity management

The core message of identity management is to make information about one's own person public, which can be handled differently from case to case and represents the basic requirement for using the various social networks own profile page or uploading a self-made picture into this practice. The user thus creates his digital identity and can ideally present his person on the 'social web'. For example, the better an athlete designs his profile, the more precisely the fans can draw feedback on the intentions, views, mindsets, interests, preferences and individual character. Nevertheless, one should not lose sight of another aspect: In principle, disclosing such information is a conscious decision, even if one often gives unconscious information about oneself.

The athlete is unrestricted in his actions and the filling, but certain framework conditions are often given by the various platforms, which restrict the freedom in a certain way through standardized modules. It is often specified which information can or must be disclosed and sometimes the number of characters in published text messages is limited.

The self-portrayal of the user is closely related to the extent to which a communication environment expects and demands authenticity; this means the correspondence between an online representation and the true identity. This not only affects top athletes but, above all, private individuals. So, you present yourself on the so-called 'business platforms' XING and LinkedIn in a different way than you do it in what feels like a 'private setting' on Facebook and Instagram.

It is also important that identity management and self-expression must always be in relation to a public or an audience. Virtual relationships and relational aspects are essential for self-presentation and the formation of a digital identity.

1.4.2 Relationship management

The identity management and relationship management already described are closely linked in practice and are in harmony. Relationship management means maintaining existing relationships or making new contacts. In addition to friendships, acquaintances or relatives, this also includes partnership and business contacts, i.e., all kinds of relationships between people. But what exactly do you mean by that? For example,

accepting contact requests or directly commenting on a post, photo or video fall under the category of relationship management practices, which not only take place between the people involved, but these interactions between the communicating people are always part of the public and can be observed by external users.

A general distinction is made between mutual and one-sided relationships, which then also have an impact on the design and performance of a platform. For example, a fan relationship, where an athlete or a club is closely observed or favored, is referred to as a 'one-sided relationship'. Strictly speaking, the number of fans/followers has a significant influence on how users perceive and assess the respective athlete or club. A large number of contacts is more likely to be accepted by public figures, as it is an expression of great interest and an indicator of popularity than is the case with private individuals.

1.4.3 Information management

Information management means selecting, filtering, evaluating and managing information of all kinds. This includes, for example, commenting or tagging relevant keywords from one's own or someone else's contribution. In online-based information management, a distinction can be made between two areas: the 'paying attention', which is made up of the 'pull-and-push' mechanisms, and the classic 'evaluating'.

The 'pull' principles are mainly limited to searching for and researching relevant information in order to be able to satisfy one's own and specific needs as quickly as possible –in the online area, this process is significantly influenced by the various search engines such as Yahoo, Google, among others.

The 'push' principles in the social web are expressed in the form of automatic updates of specific information that might interest users. On network platforms, this information relates to the people you follow on the platforms and to your own interests, which are then displayed in your own feed.

In addition to 'becoming aware', 'evaluating', which is different on each platform, is an important activity in information management. In addition to the known likes, hearts, individual evaluation processes are often also carried out with points or other features (the comment function also falls into this area). In any case, ratings for other users are also visible. In addition, there is "tagging', which provides existing content with relevant keywords –regardless of whether it is done by the author of the text or by other users.

The software code plays an important role in information management. Algorithms, such as those used by search engines and keywording systems, determine the order of the results of a search query. The software codes on the platforms also decide which evaluations and actions are made visible and thus serve as orientation.



1.4.4 The public on social media

Social media have created a new understanding of the public. It is up to the users themselves to create their own and, above all, personal public. In contrast to the created public of a journalist, other criteria apply when selecting the published information. Above all, the personal assessment of relevance determines the selection of the information that is published. In this way, not only the broad mass of the large media is served, but rather it is limited to a smaller group, primarily made up of friends, colleagues or your own network. In addition, it is more about the direct conversation that arises through interaction (comments, ratings, etc.).

It is hardly surprising that the authenticity of the self-portrayal is required, which includes not only the profiles and the published content, but also communication with one another. Personal publics imply authenticity, users take on a social role that is shaped by the expectations of the environment and present themselves as they are expected from their environment. It is therefore clear that people can only develop their own identity in interaction with their social environment.

Over a certain period of time, the respective user receives an approximate idea of the type of audience that will interact with them and receive the published content. This regular feedback influences the user in the selection and presentation of topics and information that will continue to be treated in the personal public and forms the self-presentation. This can also lead to contradicting expectations on the part of the recipients. The mix of 'consumers' made up of friends, family and business partners can lead to different ideas about presentation and behaviour. So, everyone has to define their personal limits in order to be able to protect their privacy within this construct –often one has no security about who really has insight into the personal information.

The already discussed discussion of the behaviour of identity, relationship and information management can be traced back to the practices of lay people. However, some of the statements outlined above can also be applied to the professional work and activities of people who are in public. Athletes often have a high reach, and several thousands, if not millions, of followers and fans on their social platforms are therefore considered a special case. You can, like 'normal' users, select and publish information according to your own assessment of relevance, and address a public directly without the media multiplier, but, due to the high range and numbers, you cannot speak of a personal public, rather, one-sided relationship.

1.4.5 Characteristics of social media

For a further detailed description and limitation of social media, various characteristics of these digital applications are explained in more detail below.



1.4.5.1 User-generated content

There are many special features that make up social media, but the most important characteristic for all platforms is probably the 'user-generated content' (UGC). Social media only emerges when the content produced is actually in use online. So, every single user flows into the big picture and sees themselves as part of this online movement. The individual applications and the individual design offer countless opportunities. Texts, images, audio files and videos can be published, giving a (potential mass) public free access. The fact is that more than half of the users produce content for their own social media community –in which way or for which platform is not of essential importance here.

1.4.5.2 Self-organization

Since the users themselves take care of the production of their content, all social media channels are based on a high degree of self-organization. Although the creator or owner of an account has the services offered, it is ultimately the users who determine how they use them and how they adapt the offers to their needs. So, everyone has it in their own hands in which direction and when a development takes place on which level.

1.4.5.3 Deinstitutionalization, deprofessionalization

The self-organization creates a deprofessionalized and deinstitutionalized communication area. The way in which members can create and publish articles means that they have similar distribution options as journalists in terms of content. In this way, social media can break through the opinion-forming monopoly of the professional media. Having ordinary users generated content implies that they too set the criteria of what is topically relevant in social media (Lomborg, 2011).

1.4.5.4 Content access

Access to the social media content is usually free, freely accessible and redistributable. The online encyclopedia Wikipedia is a suitable example in this regard. All content is accessible at any time, free of charge, and can be adapted and edited by any user. However, free registration is required for some social media platforms. But here, too, there are now, in addition to the pages that are only visible in one's own network, also fully public ones that can be accessed by any non-registered user.

1.4.5.5 Networking

For social media, the possibility of networking different users is a typical approach. Members can often build relationships with other registrants and follow individuals or organizations, thereby subscribing to their reporting. Networking does not only apply to people, but also to information, whereby the focus here is not on singular information, but



on its announcement. By relating content, a kind of collective knowledge arises (Pürer, 2015, p. 151).

1.4.5.6 User focus and personalization

The focus of social media applications is on the individual users or user groups and their communication. These have a high interactive potential. For example, individuals integrate into groups and invest energy in building the community. The functions offered are also personalized so that actions can be tracked and assigned directly to the respective users.

1.4.5.7 Transparency

The personalization described above helps to create transparency. Not only the acting people, but, in general, any actions, data and connections can be seen.

New transparency models have higher potential than classic instruments in print or radio media due to their interactivity, speed, archiving and the lack of space restrictions on the Internet. In post comments, web videos, blogs, Twitter feeds and social networks, journalists discuss editorial decisions with users and give an account of them. Transparency is the trend of the digital public; however, it is not clear, but contradicting and complex to assess. Nevertheless, transparency is not only ethically desirable, but should increase the recipient's trust in the content consumed, because it enables quality assessments by the audience.

1.4.5.8 Modularity

In a certain way, social media is reminiscent of a Lego box. With various digital components (pixels, sounds, shapes, fonts, etc.), you can create your own pages or your own content, or insert elements on the pages of others. The modules are already available and can be used, combined and reassembled individually by the users, thus enabling communication. In addition, however, there is also the possibility of developing new features/modules and integrating them into the various platforms.

1.4.5.9 Variability

The modularity described above is the prerequisite for the variability of the user –so, your own profile can be designed individually and you stand out from other athletes or clubs. The various applications in the social networks allow a range of combinations, whereby the degree of variability diverges; how great this range of combinations really is depends on the platform chosen. With Facebook, for example, all relevant positions are specified and can only be individualized with different content. The approach of the network platform MySpace is completely different. Here it is possible for the user to almost completely individualize their own profile and to design it according to their own ideas.



1.4.5.10 Automation

Numerous applications within the social media offerings and their links are based on automation. These enable the members to use it easily without any programming knowledge. For example, posts on Facebook that contain images or videos are automatically placed and integrated into the post by the platform. The technologies make it easier for users to 'make information of all kinds accessible and process it on the Internet'. Without this automation, a lot of social media content would be unthinkable.

1.4.5.11 Trust and credibility

Trust and credibility are two extremely relevant terms and crucial parameters in communication. Organizations that are trusted by their environment can, at least partially, evade the constant pressure of observation and legitimation. PR is based in three relationships of trust: firstly, the relationship of trust with the respective contractor or employer; secondly, 'as a trust mediator between the organization and the specific sub-public'; and thirdly, 'PR itself enters into a relationship of trust with these sub-publics' (Röttger, Preusse & Kobusch, 2014, pp. 151 ff). For further differentiation, the efforts to build trust of the PR in the goal of 'establishing trustworthiness', which must be generated within the organization, and the 'attempt to establish willingness to trust on the part of the stakeholders', which is achieved outside the organization, can be distinguished (Röttger, Preusse & Kobusch, 2014, pp. 151 ff).

The fact is that trust is acquired rather slowly in long, dynamic processes. It starts at a low starting level and can develop to a maximum level. In the other direction, however, it can often go very quickly, so that one loses trust and falls back to the minimum level. Discrepancies (lies, differences between verbal statements and actual action, etcetera) lead to the cited loss of trust.

In summary, it can be said that trust and credibility are the basis for building, maintaining or improving the image and reputation of organizations.

Appearance and use of social media

The use of social media has seen changes over and over again in the past few years, which will also take place in the future. Every change process is the chance for something new. And that is a good thing! But why?

There was a great accumulation of changed premises. Innovation companies such as Apple and Samsung & Co. have followed their developments with an impressive strategy that attracted a great deal of attention from the target group. The 'transport networks', like mobile phone companies, have made the proliferation of smartphones possible through subsidies in their mobile phone contracts. This made technology affordable. At the same time, price adjustments were made for data, and the spread of so-called WLAN



areas was accelerated. Thus, it was possible for the end consumer and user to be active on the move at any time.

As a result, the social networks received increasing attention, as the technical possibility was available to communicate up-to-date and situationally. The company has developed a great need for communication. A status message here, a picture or video from there.

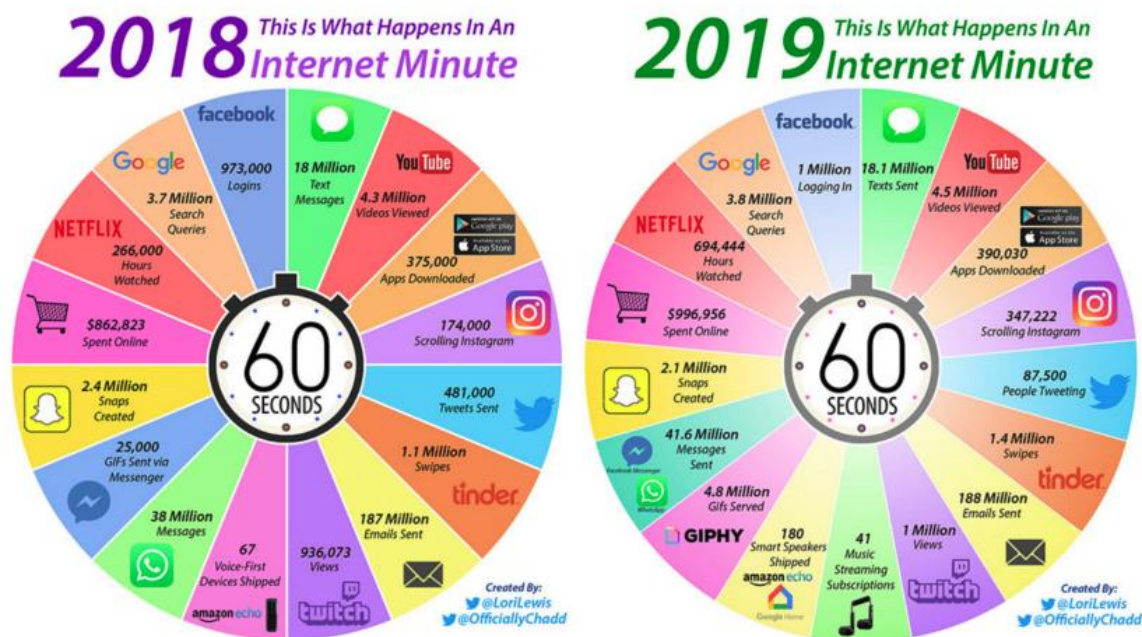
As expected, this development was initially initiated by the age group 16-24, but with a limited time interval of 'only' 18 months, all other age groups in society began to use social media. However, there is one important factor to consider here: the wishes and preferences in every age group did not always have the same focus. While the elderly still often use the stationary PC to access social networks, the young are already fully mobile and often no longer have a PC or even a TV in their apartment.

In this context, developments in the use of social media have repeatedly had to be adjusted or operationally checked and corrected. The fact is, however, that the people who use social networks have become younger and younger in recent years. As a result, different channels have manifested themselves for each age group. This means that you can clearly assign the main target group to each social network. Consumers can thus be met with target group-specific communication in their age-appropriate living room, regardless of whether they are older people, representatives of Generation Z (born 1995 to 2010) or Generation Alpha (born between 2010 and 2025) acts.

In the past few years, the activities in social media have increased steadily. The following graphic shows the enormous number of views and usage behaviour of online users between 2018 and 2019 in a single minute – 60 seconds of digital internet!



Figure 11. Number of views and usage behaviour of online users between 2018 and 2019 in one minute



Source: Visual Capitalist, n.d.

1.4.5.12 The developments

Always new applications, the pressure of the technology industry, the rather rapid decline in high-priced offers and thus ever faster market penetration, these would be the summary of the requirements for the use of social media. But that it does not always turn out that way, that it changes frequently, was initially only expected to a limited extent.

The first deployments therefore proceeded more according to a trial and error (trial and failure principle) until the right mix was finally found. However, it quickly became clear that the social networks would become firmly established in the communication mix of sports organizations. Here, too, the question of why is very easy to answer: The platforms of the social networks that have become established globally always have two identical aspects:

1. Their use is initially free of charge.
2. It is quite easy to use and can be learned through play.

This means that the entry hurdle is very low, which makes the rapid adaptation and broad application understandable.

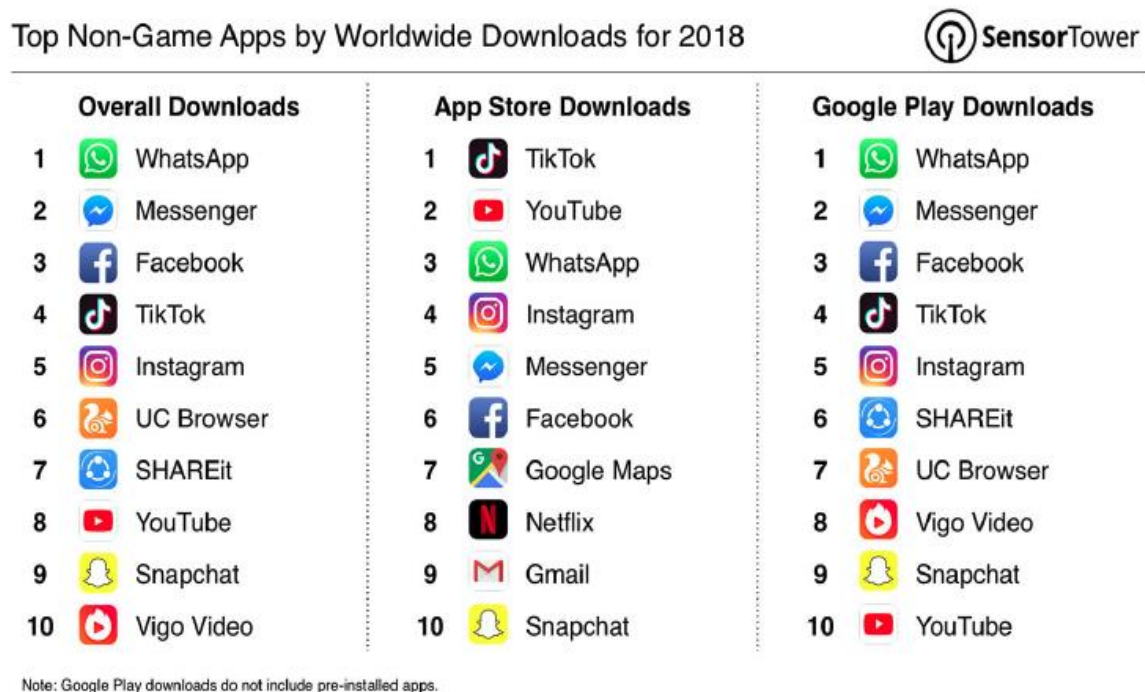


Social media platforms

Social media platforms are moving at a rapid pace in terms of their importance. We have therefore decided to concentrate on the most essential platforms from now on.

The following figure shows the worldwide download ranking of social media apps in 2018.

Figure 12. Download-ranking social media apps 2018



Source: Sensor Tower, n.d.

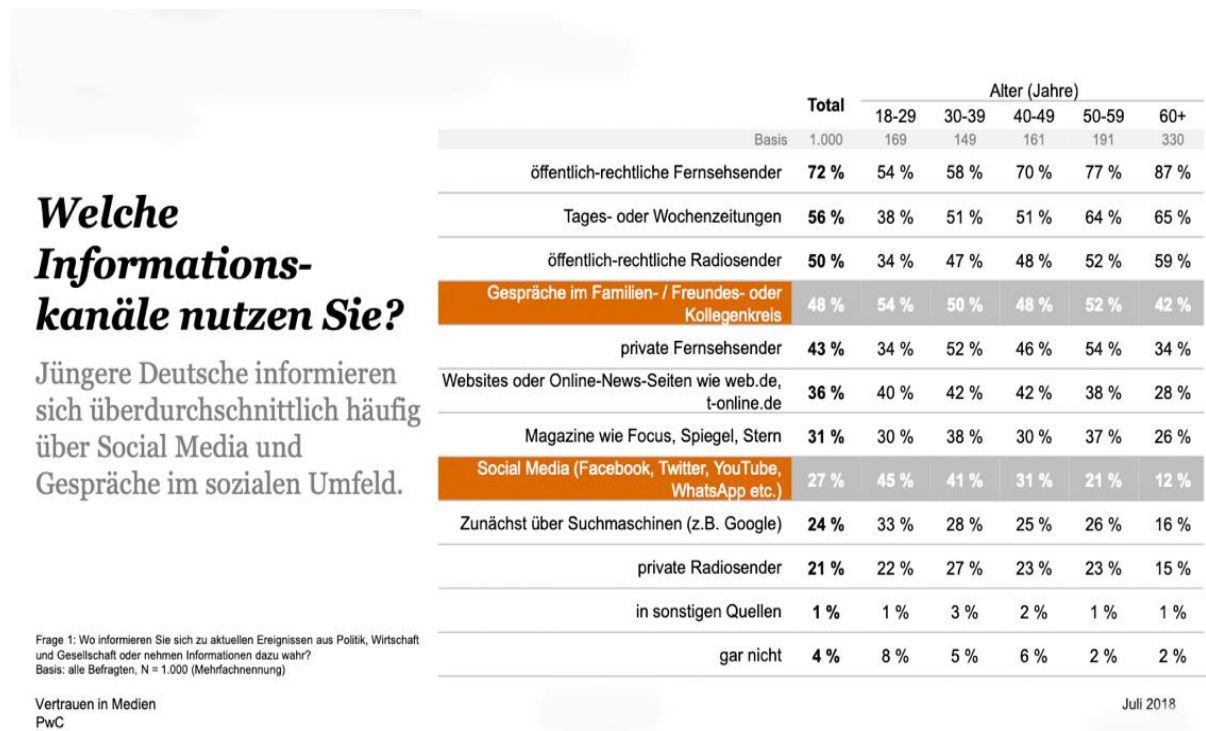
1.4.5.13 Less is more, but the experiments remain

By increasing the awareness of the various possibilities in the social media, the relevance and value in the organizations have more than increased, and the communication mix is becoming more and more relevant. But four years later, social media is also generating substantial income. The advertising partners and sponsors also want to use this emotional channel for their marketing goals.

And these developments continue and continue. More and more users are online, and more and more news are spreading faster and faster. Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) published a study in Germany on the subject of "Trust in the media" in 2018:



Figure 13. Study in Germany on the usage of information channels in 2018



Source: PWC, n.d.

The study shows very clearly the steadily increasing relevance of online and social media in information procurement. Sport occupies an absolutely special position, because it occupies a unique selling point with emotions and passion that no other industry can serve in this form.

1.4.5.14 The 'merging' of mobile and social media

As a result of the mobile revolution and the associated smartphone boom, the way in which people use media, the way they deal with their everyday lives and the way they interact with one another have constantly changed. The smartphone is increasingly becoming the linchpin of human communication. With it, it becomes possible to be close to more and more people regardless of space and time. The technology provides ever more multifaceted, media-supported forms of expression to communicate with one another and also to transport emotions, be it via selfies with filters, GIFs, emojis, hashtags or, generally, via photos and videos, which can now be produced in high quality with the smartphone and accompanying apps (Kobilke, 2019).

With the increase in mobile Internet and the ease of use of the applications, smartphones and social networks are merging. Instagram is a case study for this: Open the application on the smartphone, select a photo, add text, set multipliers (if desired, post on Twitter & Co. at the same time) and that is it. You can no longer even set a picture on the stationary PC...

These applications are designed intuitively, have short learning times to understand and are therefore a basic requirement for a broad target group.

The second screen, the tablet or mobile device, which is often described in the media, becomes the first screen –the moving image program runs in the background on the laptop or TV.

1.4.5.15 Social media: more than an additional distribution channel

Sports media providers serve their audiences over 16 hours a day with current posts that are multimedia-based and also contain high-quality visual elements. Over 90% of the contributions offer entertainment features which, especially in the combination of text and images, promote user involvement. These factors show that media providers are not only using Facebook as an additional distribution channel, but are also trying to adapt their content and presentation to the new medium.

The fact that the entertainment potential of social media is not being exploited can be seen from the largely lack of user-generated content as well as from the one-sided selection of sports and topics. Due to this one-sided selection of topics, hardly any special content is offered that would make up the diverse range of social media and could also serve the special interests of a segmented audience.

The goal of media companies is to optimize their own product, and for this purpose, strategies are formulated that are based on entertainment-effective features of social media. The fact that there are still deficits in the targeted use of the entertainment potential of social media may be due to traditional media companies in particular feeling committed to quality standards that reject the use of emojis or interactive games as dubious, for example.

In addition, providers who only allow self-researched, professionally prepared content and thus largely forego user-generated content leave one of the most important advantages of social media unused. Goldapp writes with a view to viral platforms that have developed into direct competitors for traditional media providers within a very short time:

Not everything that works should also be done taking journalistic quality criteria into account. Nevertheless, classic journalism should open up to the findings from other disciplines and also from clickbait offers. Only in this way can quality media compete for the attention of users. (Goldapp, 2016, p. 81)

1.4.5.16 Image change information on entertainment

In recent years, there has been an increase in the demand for and supply of media entertainment. Entertainment is not seen as a 'necessary evil' but as a 'constructive feature' in current journalism. In the digital age, new content has to meet many requirements in order to be seen and perceived. In addition to an exciting presentation, it should be entertaining and enticing. In addition, it is still absolutely necessary to map a high-quality level in the communication or to tailor the content precisely to the respective target group.

With the constant expansion of media usage times [...], media entertainment is increasingly recognized as a potential, for example as an aspect of market-based calculation of media offers, as a means of political conviction, as artistic expression or as motivation for learning processes. Today entertainment is therefore a central aspect of programming in books, newspapers, magazines, films, television, radio, computer games and the media on the Internet. Media entertainment thus seems not only to be a basic human need, but also to fulfill an essential social function. (Kuhn, 2018, p. 34-35).

The much-cited image change in entertainment should not hide the fact that there are visible quality differences in reporting. The character trait 'entertaining' should refer to the way of presentation, but not to a superficial and irrelevant preparation of the message to be communicated.

Social bookmarking

Social bookmarking services make it possible to record and categorize Internet links or so-called bookmarks. They allow you to manage personal link collections directly on the web and access these bookmarks from anywhere. Other users' bookmarks can also be viewed, provided they are publicly accessible. The largest English language social bookmarking services include Delicious, Digg, and StumbleUpon. The German-language services include, for example, Mr. Wong, Linkarena, Oneview, YiGG, Shortnews, Webnews and Tausendreporter. What all of these providers have in common is that content that individuals consider to be interesting is displayed on a central platform on the web, and joint indexing is created through the cooperation of many. In a way, the offers embody a social filter that helps to identify publications that are considered valuable by a large number of people.

Concept and classification

according to the type of 'folksonomy', which is mainly based on the problem of uncontrolled vocabulary. Keywords can be interpreted differently in terms of content, which can have the consequence that, when searching for a certain term, results are displayed that are in no way related in terms of content. The presence of one's own publications on social bookmarking platforms is very important for promoting the dissemination of content on the web and for social media optimization, which will be discussed later.

1.4.5.17 Social news

The distinction between social bookmarking and social news is rather fluid. Basically, social news is also about recommending interesting articles and information to the community and, conversely, perceiving the recommendations of the community and then processing them. Some lists of popular links in social bookmarking portals read like a news page. Some authors see social news as a form of social bookmarking, but while the latter focuses on collecting personal bookmarks (and possibly sharing them with other users), social news is about the distribution and discussion of news. They are accordingly seen as part of citizen journalism on the Internet.

Concept and classification

Social news (in German, *Soziale Nachrichten*) are an application in the World Wide Web in which users post references to news or content on another website with a short comment. Other people can vote for or against the contributions. The most popular posts are posted on the homepage. The users decide which messages are disseminated and prominently positioned. For this reason, one speaks of a news community.

Origin and function

Posts can be read by all visitors; you usually have to register to post new posts. The same applies to commenting on posts. In some applications, registration is also necessary for voting. Registered users can, among other things, indicate in their profile who their 'friends' are, for example, to be informed by e-mail when they have posted a new post. The total number of points for a contribution is often calculated using a secret algorithm, which may not only count the number of votes for and against the contribution, but also possibly take into account who voted. One reason for this approach is the desire to prevent manipulation as far as possible. The contributions often contain overt or hidden advertising for a website. The submitter then tries to heave them onto the homepage or simply submit them as a means of search engine optimization. The users also receive points for their activity, which are reflected in the user status, often referred to as 'karma'. Points can be awarded for submitting contributions, comments or voting and summarized by an algorithm that is also kept secret. For example, the algorithm can also take into account the topicality of the activity or the success of the submitted

contributions, in terms of votes received. Algorithms that users find unfair can have a negative impact on activity. The user status already described, which is often based on an 'earn & burn' principle, does not always have a positive effect: The greed for collected points is often aroused, so that technically savvy users can occasionally find themselves through programmed computer bots. Fake profiles win votes with many likes.

Multi-dimensional construction of reality in sport through social media

With the introduction of social media, not only the user behaviour of the sports recipients changed, but also the entire communication process. From the original one-to-many communication based on the traditional sender-receiver principle, many-to-many communication developed in which the users are no longer dependent on traditional mass media as providers and intermediaries (Burk & Grimmer, 2018).

The amalgamation of the borders of information and communication channels between the producer and recipient continued to advance. In addition to established and new sports editorial offices, users have become additional players in sports reporting. The special features of social media also caused changes in the process of constructing reality.

Features of social media and the resulting advantages

Social media offer an enormous range of products and enable all users to consume content individually, they are free to choose which content they react to, when or how, and enable them to produce their own stories independently and publish them regardless of location. The fact that the barriers to access became lower and lower over the course of time and that use was mostly free of charge resulted in a real boom. Due to the new technologies, content can be disseminated faster and faster, thus ensuring that it is up to date in all situations. The best example of this is probably the online platform Twitter, which has been particularly well received by the media and journalists around sporting events. The most important and decisive events can be put online in abbreviated form to the second. If you are the fastest or if you have exclusive information, it is often adopted by other people and thus experiences greater coverage.

As mentioned, the user puts together his own sports program based on his personal selection according to his preferences, needs and interests. Classic multimedia (images, videos, graphics, audio files) plays a not-insignificant role here. The more a medium meets the individual taste of the user and grants him the freedom to consume, the higher the chance that the person will use the services offered in the long term, depending on the time they are willing to invest. Users interested in sports value the expertise and credibility of media articles that are published directly by athletes or sports providers. They also promise to gain special insider knowledge from actors who bring the user behind the scenes with the help of their posts (Bowman & Cranmer, 2014, p. 221).



However, one of the most important building blocks in the new digital age is interaction, as users can enter into dialogue on any topic and at any time. Contributions are shared, rated, supplemented and commented on. In summary, it can be said that social networks represent the ideal communication platform for many groups, regardless of whether they are athletes, fans, associations and organizers or representatives from business.

Fans can not only exchange and organize themselves via special communities in social media, but also obtain very specific information. The platforms give them the opportunity to show emotions –a criterion that Gantz and Lewis describe as ‘digital self-expression’ (Gantz & Lewis, 2014). The interaction during and parallel to the sports reception comes very close to a real group reception and can produce social-psychological effects similar to those of public viewing. You give the user the feeling that he is ‘part of the game’ and the acceptance of group membership, as well as that his personal opinion is seen and thus perceived. It is therefore not surprising that the user sees himself as part of an audience of millions, which, at the same time, increases the emotional experience. This also creates a special identification so that you can relate the success of your team or your idol in communication to yourself and the WE feeling is strengthened by posting ‘our victory’, for example. This mostly positive process can, in some cases, also go in a different direction and take on a dynamic in the form of a crisis.

When you consider that Nielsen's 90-9-1 formula applies online (Goldapp, 2016, pp. 13-14), according to which 90% of the users are only slightly active online, 9% contribute sporadically and only 1 percent are strongly committed, a relatively small group has a relatively large amount of power here. After all, a small number of users are responsible for the majority of online comments and thus shape the public perception of sport.

The separation between media makers and consumers that had been used for many years has increasingly been dissolved, as production is no longer in the hands of the journalists. The innumerable possibilities enabled new narrative patterns and forms of presentation to be generated, which, at the same time, made broader and more interesting reporting accessible.

Uncontrolled and fast publication of texts can logically also cause false or poorly researched articles to spread at breakneck speed. Therefore, great caution is required in this topic, and the content that is adopted should be carefully checked and selected with care. Once something is online, there is no turning back!

1.4.5.18 Conversation on social media

Now that features and various possible uses have been examined more closely, the question arises as to how the social media characteristics affect the user's entertainment experience. In the following, we take a look at selected theories that deal with the exact users' needs and the emergence of entertainment experiences.

Needs and benefits - Entertainment as graphics

The decisive factor is to meet the expectations of the recipients, whereby one can strongly assume an active audience that acts in a goal-oriented manner and uses the offer according to individual needs. In the pre-communicative phase, the media user selects the offers that are likely to correspond to their reception motives in order to receive bonuses through the subsequent media use. 'Motivations help media users to assess what they stand to gain from consuming a media channel, or what they will lose by avoiding or opting out of that media source' (Sanderson, 2013, p. 59). The classic user who regularly consumes media sports can usually estimate very early on based on their experience which offer corresponds to their own expectations and their cognitive, affective, integrative and interactive needs in the respective reception situation. Effects such as information, entertainment or interaction satisfy the respective concerns and therefore represent the gratifications for the respective media consumption. Entertainment is therefore to be understood as a media effect that 'can be brought about consciously or unconsciously' and the 'satisfaction with the consequences of media use' describes (Kuhn, 2018, pp. 317 ff).

Triadic fitting as a prerequisite for an individual entertainment experience

With its offer, the content and design of which contains certain stimulus properties and meanings, the medium offers a comprehensive communication package that tries to arouse positive emotions.

This process-like conversion of media stimuli into entertainment only works if the recipient does not lose the feeling of sovereignty and control and the three main factors (medium, person, situation) fit together, which is known as 'triadic fitting'. Media entertainment is not understood as a final effect, but as a process in which the content offered is constantly checked for emotions and cognitions while the media is being used and subjectively assessed by the recipient depending on the situation (Kuhn, 2018, p. 320).

For example, if a fan wants to maintain the euphoric mood after his team's victory, he can call up voices, reactions and pictures on the highlights of the match on social media, regardless of whether it is material from the club in question or from other fans. In addition, the possibilities of own text production and interaction, which are striking for social media, help to satisfy the need for control and sovereignty. Anyone who feels emotionally overwhelmed while watching an exciting penalty shoot-out can use the second screen to publish a post to the fan community and thus gain enough distance from the live events in between that the personal control of sovereignty is not lost. Social media therefore offer ideal conditions for using them to transform stimuli into entertainment experiences as part of a dynamic process.



Parasocial relationship as an expression of an intense entertainment experience

Emotional factors (need for self-definition, satisfaction with self-image, recognition, orientation, self-assessment, etc.) as well as social aspects (need for community experience, relationship, attachment, etc.) play a role in media use. The recipient endeavors to project the actors and situations perceived in the medium onto their own realities of life.

These relationships can be both positive (which is reflected, for example, in the worship of sports idols) and negative (which in extreme cases leads to antipathy or even hatred and envy). According to Kuhn, the experience of entertainment arises 'when this [parasocial] relationship is assessed positively in terms of its development and effect' (Kuhn, 2018, p. 338).

In this context, the professional athlete and fan relationship is probably the most important element. Many recipients emulate their idols and increase their own self-esteem with the success of their role model. This also applies to positive reports from the private sector –the 'we feeling' is reinforced again. In addition, athletes embody positive behavioural norms such as willpower or willingness to perform, which the media consumer can adopt.

In addition, the sports reception gains entertainment value and excitement when you put yourself in the media-offered situation, feel involved and follow the competitions between fear and hope. A parasocial relationship with the sporting actors shown is cultivated if one can empathize with the relevant (competitive) situation and experience involvement and presence. Because social media users put their program together themselves, they can create the necessary media presence for their PSB partners themselves and exchange ideas with others on fan platforms. Online appearances and posts by athletes create a direct proximity between fans and their idols and thus considerably increase the entertainment potential of social media.

The entertainment character of social media in the communication model

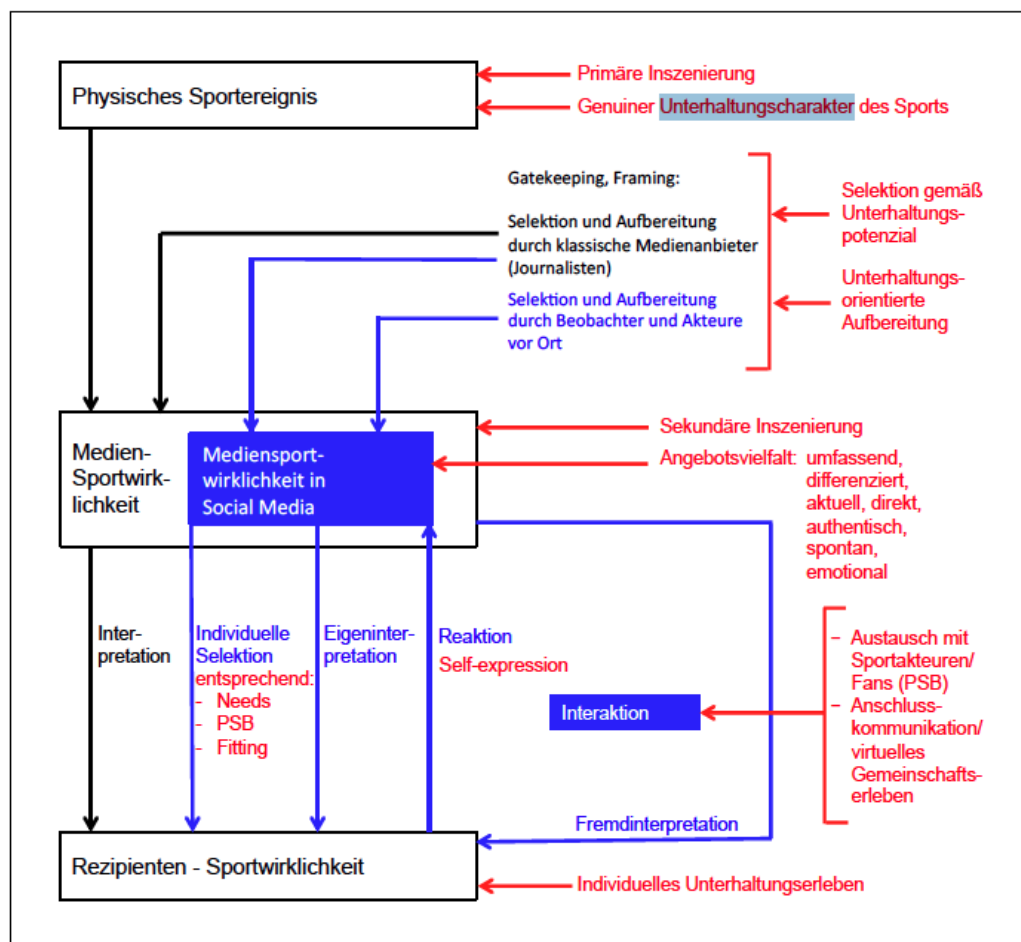
There is no concrete definition that sums up the phenomenon of entertainment, but the various approaches in communication research clearly show what role entertainment plays in motivating extensive media use, how entertainment is experienced and what conditions make the reception of sports particularly entertaining. Social networks offer the user a varied, multimedia offer in sport, which is expanded and enriched at the level of media sport reality with current contributions from (live) observers and sporting actors as well as reactive posts on contributions that have already been published. The wide range of authors promises a varied and differentiated sports program. Users design the reporting spontaneously and authentically, often report emotionally or humorously and

thus automatically introduce entertaining elements because they communicate according to their own information and entertainment needs.

The individual, time and location-independent access to sports content ensures that the media product with the personality factors of the user fits together in his current situation so that entertainment experience can take place. In addition, the dialogic-communicative character of social media can increase the entertainment value by serving social and affective needs and supporting the creation and maintenance of parasocial relationships. The interactive events typical of social media offer media users a variety of opportunities to experience self-efficacy, to position themselves strategically through self-disclosure and to present themselves as special individuals. The production and publication of your own posts also contributes to the individualization of the communication process

and transforms the media consumer from a passive recipient to an active user, who can communicate and print out himself in social media. All of these options are particularly suitable for satisfying entertainment needs and opening up a new dimension in sports entertainment for users of social media (Petry, 2018).

Figure 15. Diagram of Topic



Source: Own work.

If the findings of classical entertainment theories are related to the special features of social media, additional approaches and possibilities for the individual creation of an entertaining sports reception arise.

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