

**USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORK SITES ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN
HOTELS IN NAKURU TOWN**

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration

This is to declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented to any other University or Institution of Higher Learning.

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DEDICATION

First and foremost, I dedicate this research project to my God whose grace is sufficient the giver of all. Secondly I dedicate this work to my Parents Mr &Mrs Ezekiel Dentewo Komen and Sister Lydia Kossy Dentewo

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ABSTRACT

The importance of social media in enhancing positive relationships between customers and business cannot be gainsaid. This is because they offer new and innovative ways to communicate and network via the internet. Presently, there are various platforms provided by the social media networks such as Facebook, Google plus, LinkedIn, YouTube, Skype, mysite, whatsApp and Twitter in the strategic marketing of products and services for the hotel industry. As such, social media networking has become an effective form of marketing which has raised the brand awareness, brand loyalty, customer services and has led to increase in sales. The aim of this study was to investigate the use of social networking in service delivery in the hotel industry in Kenya. To achieve this objective, stratified proportionate sampling procedure was used to select the hotels; the study used questionnaires to collect data. The collected data was analyzed using statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 22 and presented in tables, frequencies and figures. A sample size of 190 permanent employees was used. The study showed that a huge percentage of employees used social media. There was also a higher usage of the social media among the younger age groups compared to their old counterparts. Facebook and twitter usage topped the list of the highly used social media networks in the hotel industry. The outcome of the study showed that there is different prevalence of the usage of diverse social media networks for different purposes such as marketing, sales, customer service and giving of information which enhanced service delivery. In the context of marketing, a high percentage of the respondents utilized social media for marketing purposes of which the face book and Google plus topped the usage. In marketing, it gave out introduction of new products, product features elaboration and networking with potential customers. The Facebook and twitter formed the highest used platforms for branding. The study recommends that organizations in Kenya should embrace the use of social media networks for marketing and branding. This will raise the brand awareness, brand loyalty, customer services and shall lead to increase in sales and lower operation cost.

Keywords: Social media network sites, Service delivery, and Hotel industry.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION AND APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.3.1 Overall Objective	4
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....	4
1.4 Research Questions	4
1.4.1 Main Research Question.....	4
1.4.2 Secondary Questions	4
1.5 Significance of the study.....	5
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	5
1.7 Limitation of the study	5
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2 Brief history of origin of social networking	7
2.3 General Benefits of Social Media Networks	10
2.4 Effects of Social Networking on the Hotel Industry	11
2.5 Effects of social media networks on brand awareness	13
2.6 Conceptual frame work.....	14
CHAPTER THREE.....	15
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	15
3.1 Introduction.....	15
3.2 Research design.....	15
3.3 Population and Sampling Procedure	15
3.4 Sample and sampling procedure	15
3.5 Data Collection.....	17
3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Instruments.....	17
3.7 Data collection procedure	17
3.8 Data Analysis	17
CHAPTER FOUR	19

4.1	Introduction.....	19
4.2	Response Rate	19
4.3	Respondents' Characteristics	19
4.3.1	Respondent's Age Group.....	19
4.3.2	Respondent's Level of Education	20
4.3.3	Respondent's Job Role	20
4.3.4	Respondent's Length of Service in Hotel Industry	21
4.3.5	Usage of Social Media in Hotel Industry	22
4.3.6	Prevalence of Social Media Platforms in the Hotel	23
4.4	The Use of Social Networking Media as a Marketing Tool.....	24
4.4.1	The Usage of the Specific Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes	25
4.4.2	Social Media Networking Forms used in the hotel industry	26
4.4.3	The Objectives of Social Media Marketing.....	27
4.5	The Use of Social Networking Media as a Brand Awareness Tool.....	28
4.5.1	The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Branding Purposes	28
4.5.2	The forms in which the Social Media Platforms are used for branding.....	29
4.5.3	The Brand Awareness Measurement Metrics	29
4.6	The Use of Social Networking Media as an Information/Education Tool	30
4.7	The Use of Social Networking Media for Sales Purposes.....	31
4.7.1	Prevalence of Social Media Platforms usage for Sales	31
4.7.2	Efficiency of Different Social Media Platforms for Sales Purposes	32
4.8	The Use of Social Networking Media for Customer Service	32
	CHAPTER FIVE.....	34
	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	34
5.1	Introduction.....	34
5.2	Summary of Findings	34
5.3	Conclusion	36
5.4	Recommendations	36
5.5	Suggestions for further research.....	37
	REFERENCES.....	38
	APPENDIX I: CATEGORIES OF HOTELS.....	42
	APPENDIX II: CONSENT STATEMENT TO THE RESPONDENTS	43
	APPENDIX III: THE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	44

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Respondent’s Job Role..... 21
Figure 4.2 Respondent’s Length of Service in Hotel Industry 22

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Respondents' distribution by age.....	20
Table 2 Education Distribution of Respondents	20
Table 3 Social Media Usage in hotel industry	23
Table 4 The influence of age on social media usage.....	23
Table 5 Prevalence of the Social Media Platforms in the hotel industry.....	23
Table 6 Use of Social Media for Marketing Purposes.....	25
Table 7 The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes	26
Table 8 The use of different social media networking forms for marketing purposes	26
Table 9 Objectives of Social Media Marketing	28
Table 10 Use of social media for brand awareness	28
Table 11 Social Media platforms used for branding	28
Table 12 Aspects used to create brand awareness.....	29
Table 13The extent use of brand awareness metric measures	30
Table 14 Information Cascaded through social media	30
Table 15The Use of Social Networking Media for Sales Purposes	31
Table 16 Platforms used for sales purposes.....	31
Table 17The efficiency of social media platforms.....	32
Table 18 The usage of social media for customer service purposes	33
Table 19 Efficiency of different Social Media networking platforms	33

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The use of social media network sites in organizations is wide and cannot be avoided. Social media network sites have come with the current generation and affected the way of operating in various organizations to reach and engage customers, communicate and market their products. Social networking refers to activities, practices, and behaviours among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Conversational media are Web-based applications that make it possible to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios (Safko & Brake, 2009). These are changes on how people discover, read, connect, and share information. It can offer business advantages for both private companies and government agencies. Organizations can use social media networks to reach out to mass audiences efficiently at very low cost, promote brand awareness in many different markets and network with potential customers. It transforms monologues into dialogues and transforms people from content readers into content publishers (Cheryl & Heather, 2008).

Currently, entrepreneurs leverage their business development services on the use of internet tools which include social media networks. These services include, among others, information gathering, and networking, consulting in areas like marketing, management, accounting, legal aspects, counseling as well as education and training. Other organizations such as institutions of learning and political parties are trying to keep up with this changing environment and are struggling to use Social Media to their benefit only, thus riding on the wave of Social Media but without any strategy (Robin, Jos & Theo, 2011). But Yankee (2008) argues that using social networking, as e-business format is not so much about soliciting business as it is about establishing yourself as a real, person with whom others may wish to do business.

Social networking is therefore a change that has emerged in the 21st century and organizations may not have any other way but adopt this change to improve and compete in the current environment in the business world.

It is common knowledge that social media networking is available to anyone with an internet connection and should therefore be a platform that can be recommended to organizations such as the hotel industry. This is because social networking enables organizations to increase their brand awareness and facilitate direct feedback from their customers. In essence, a business that understands the advantage of social media is well aware that social media is fundamental in developing new business in the current competitive and online driven market place (Cornelius, 2008).

While marketing is an important aspect for any business, social media marketing can be useful in reaching out to the people who access these social media platform regularly. This is also because communication is essential for any corporation and business. Therefore either they change the way information is conveyed or be prepared to lose some of the audience. It is imperative for marketing managers in the hotel industry to continuously find a solution to appeal, keep new and current consumers (Schneider, 2009). Social media network is the ideal platform for communication that applies perfectly with marketing in the virtual world. Social media networks are groups of individuals who prefer to communicate with one another through a preferred site based on the profile created for themselves (Laudon & Traver, 2007).

Social media marketing has advantages for marketing. For example, it has the ability to reach a wide audience, provides two-way communication, it is accessible and has a viral effect. Therefore, social media marketing promises to improve promotional efforts significantly. One of the major advantages of social media marketing is the ability to reach a wide audience, hence breaking down geographic boundaries. Historically communication with others was limited by geographical boundaries and the current technological of the era. Today's social media technologies enable nearly everyone to reach a global audience for interpersonal interaction and exchanging information (Gillin, 2009). Web 2.0 encompasses tools and platforms that enable

people from different part of the world to be connected and to exchange information with each other.

The importance of Social Media is still growing and could well become an essential mode of communication towards interacting with the customer and hotels can take advantage of this trend and rip the benefits in terms of online placement and revenue. Many organizations today use social media as a vehicle to reach out to millions of prospective and usual customers. Businesses in the service industry, such as the hotel industry, that engage in constant communication with guests are drastically changing their marketing strategies by choosing this new age interactive media over traditional practices of marketing and public relations. This is considered so because the social media has been lauded as having an increasingly important role in many aspects of the hospitality industry, including guest satisfaction and process improvement (Safko & Brake, 2009).

One of the more intriguing aspects of social media is their potential to move markets by driving consumers' purchasing patterns and influencing lodging performance. With this, hospitality industry tends to become more customer-centric and also one that prides itself by reaching out to its guests and providing a personalized experience. Social media encourages customer engagement, and it being on Web 2.0, promotes two-way traffic. It allows for a faster response and a low cost investment than is typically achieved with traditional marketing.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been a general outcry about the decline in the number of customers in various hotels in Kenya (Kinyua, 2012). This decline has greatly affected the hotel industry leading to a reduction in profits as well as income generated especially because of stiff competition from their counterparts. It is for reason that many hotels have come up with new strategies to reach out to many potential customers. One strategy that has been lauded for its ability to boost sales is the use of Social media network sites (Maria, 2010). Social media networking can play a significant role in social learning, which can subsequently influence customer choice of hotels. To have a lasting impact, strategies need to be compatible with the structures and functions of

social networks in the hotel industry. This study is designed to examine the use of social media networks in reaching out to customers in hotels in Nakuru town.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Overall Objective

To investigate the use of social media network sites on the hotel industry in Nakuru Town, Kenya

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the extent to which hotels in Nakuru Town are using social media networks as a strategic tool for marketing their services.
- ii. To determine the use of social media networks sites on brand awareness of services in the hotels.
- iii. To establish the use of the adoption and integration of social media network sites in educating and informing customers
- iv. To determine the use of social media networks sites in increasing sales
- v. To determine the use of social media network sites in improve customer service

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Main Research Question

What are the effects of social networking on the hotel industry in Nakuru Town?

1.4.2 Secondary Questions

- i. To what extent are hotels in Nakuru Town using social media networks as a strategic tool for marketing their services?
- ii. What is the use of social media networks sites on brand awareness of services in the hotels in Nakuru Town?
- iii. What are the use of the social media network sites in educating and informing customers?
- iv. What at is the use of social media networks sites in increasing sales?
- v. What are the uses of social media network sites in improving customer service?

1.5 Significance of the study

This assessment was meant to help the Managers, employees and customers of various hotels to understand the role and use of social networking in its diversity. The study would not only add to the existing knowledge with regard to the application and use of the use of social networking in the business operations in organizations, but it would provide insight on some insights on how social media helps in strategic marketing and managing organizational change could benefit the industry, and at the same time concentrate on their primary efforts of ensuring good use of social media by all stakeholders.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused on the management of the hotel industry in Kenya. More specifically the study assessed the use of social media network sites on service delivery who were the main users. The objective of this study was limited to finding out the use of social networking in the Hotel industry in Kenya.

1.7 Limitation of the study

Since the study focused on the hotel industry in Kenya, it was limited in scope and variety of findings. The results do not give specific use of social networking in all hotel industry. In addition, managers or employees may have biased since most may not have given true information about the use of the social networks in the organization.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Social networking: Refers to the use of Web-based and mobile technologies to turn communications into an interactive dialogue. The content in social media is created by people using highly accessible and scalable technologies. (Safko& Brake, 2009)

Social networking websites can be defined as that enterprise social software's used in company intranets and other softwares and communication platforms.

Social media refersto activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media (Laudon & Traver, 2007)

Web 2.0 is a term that was first used in 2004 to describe a new way in which software developers and end-users started to utilize the World Wide Web; that is, as a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion” Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010)

Active members in this study active member are those social networking users whose frequency of sharing information and contributing to updates by the social network page is frequently noticeable.

Communication: It refers to any interaction which leads to sharing of information, ideas and feelings between people.

Facebook is an online social networking service which helps members identify each other; also, an online version of this, with profiles including a picture, name, birthdates, interests, etc.

Skype is networking site used for doing things together, whenever you are apart. The text, voice and video make it simple to share experiences with the people that matter to individual, wherever they are.

My space it is a social networking site it is helps in sharing information very quickly, it is able to increase brand exposure as well as brand awareness, interact with target customers or people and monitor feedback (Yue Cao, 2013).

Linkin social network site good platform to bond and maintain relationship with customers and clients.

Twitter is a social network site where individuals tweet each other via internet

Hotel- a building where people stay, for example on holiday, paying for their rooms and meals a commercial establishment providing lodging, meals and other guest services (Collins, 2009).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a brief description on the concept of use of social media networking in general and Kenyan perspective on the use and management of social networking.

2.2 Brief history of origin of social networking

Early social media networking on the World Wide Web began in the form of generalized online communities such as Theglobe.com in 1994, Geocities in 1995 and Tripod.com in 1995. Many of these early communities focused on bringing people together to interact with each other through chat rooms, and encouraged users to share personal information and ideas via personal WebPages by providing easy-to-use publishing tools and free or inexpensive webspace. Some communities - such as Classmates.com - took a different approach by simply having people link to each other via email addresses. In the late 1990s, user profiles became a central feature of social networking, allowing users to compile lists of "friends" and search for other users with similar interests.

New social networking methods were developed by the end of the 1990s and many sites began to develop more advanced features for users to find and manage friends. This newer generation of social networking began to flourish with the emergence of Friendster in 2002, and soon became part of the Internet mainstream (Abreu, 2010).

MySpace was started in 2003 and was the driving force in popularizing social networking and still maintains a large user base. Facebook was designed as a social networking site for Harvard students. After spreading from Harvard through the university ranks and down into high school, Facebook was opened to the public in 2006. Facebook profiles also include two types of messaging services: a private system; which is similar to webmail service, and public system called 'the wall', where friends leave comments to the owner of the profile that can be viewed by other

users. Users can create profiles with photos, lists of personal interests, contact information, and other personal information (Cornelius, 2008).

Users can communicate with friends and other users through private or public messages and a chat feature. They can also create and join interest groups and "like pages" (called "fan pages" until April 19, 2010), some of which are maintained by organizations as a means of advertising. Facebook has been prompted to add a "third gender", "other", or "intersex" tab in the gender option which contains only male and female. Facebook refused and said that individuals can "opt out of showing their sex on their profile. Twitter started out as a microblogging website in 2008 and has quickly grown into a social messaging platform and one of the top social networking in the world. Twitter is phenomenon that transcends social networking to provide an outlet for news, trends, buzz, and chat among many other uses (Cornelius, 2008).

Life therefore is becoming more solitary without social media and ignoring them is almost unthinkable. Since its inception, this social network service has quickly become both a basic tool for and a mirror of social interaction, personal identity, and network building among users. Social network sites have deeply penetrated users' everyday life and, as pervasive technology, tend to become invisible once they are widely adopted (Human Capital, 2010).

In Kenya, social media has become a familiar phenomenon used by many individuals and organizations alike. Ouma (2010) in the East African's on-line edition says that; "Social media has gained popularity with the launch of sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and MySpace has become an integral part of many Kenyans' lives through which they express their opinions on matters affecting their lives, organizations and brands". Some organizations in Kenya especially institutions like telecommunication and media televisions have now heavily invested in information technology and online communities to capture customers who are heavy users of the internet.

Facebook specifically is widely used by celebrities, organizations and even individuals who utilize it for different uses and gratifications. The Kenyan media, for instance, radio and TV have recently complimented the traditional call- in sessions with Facebook and twitter. Additionally interactions like the common opinion polls

on Kenyan TV usually in the evening news are shifting to the use of Facebook, twitter and even reading comments posted on the station's Facebook page. Some famous politicians have also shown interest in using Facebook, Skype and Twitter to reach their followers or even seek new support from people whom they become friends with on Facebook, twitter and other social networks. Moreover, Lecturers in various universities use Skype to lecture students within or outside the university premises and Alumni of many universities converge on the social networking and catch up on issues touching their lives (Ouma, 2010)

The greatest challenge, however, is that it is not easy to authenticate the identity of the persons or organizations on social network since the registration process is easy, free and open meaning anyone can call themselves anything including impersonation and still get friends.

What is clear is that more and more organizations are now embracing the use of online communities as a communication channel alongside other forms of communication. However there are many other organizations that are willing to utilize the online communities as a channel but are not convinced of its effectiveness and reliability (Pate, 2011).

Social media usage has benefitted from rapidly growing internet access, especially as increasing numbers of people use mobile phones for this purpose. Kenya already has a mobile penetration rate of around 50%, and the prices for smart phones keep falling, as do the data tariffs offered by mobile telecommunication companies: Safaricom currently offers virtually unlimited mobile internet access for ten Kenya Shillings a day, Yu's Peperusha service allows people to access the internet via SMS, i.e. users do not even need a Smartphone anymore to use Twitter, and Orange offer 50MegaBytes for fifty Kenya Shillings a week (Onsando, 2012).

Social networking is quickly becoming a key source of information for urban Kenyans. Consequently, in addition to straightforward online advertising, corporates also need to be aware of how they can use the digital chatter spaces to provide information about their goods and services, to build their brand, and also to counteract mentions on online media that are detrimental to their image. Social media is

changing the way people relate to brands, and more and more people are expecting to interact with brands (Kaigwa, 2010). Social media strategist frames the change that: “Think of it as a room with loads of people in it talking about a brand. The conversation is happening and will happen whether or not the owner is in the room. One might as well take part.”

2.3 General Benefits of Social Media Networks

Social networking has many benefits which include knowledge sharing, improved feedback/service, improved marketing and sales. From the organizations’ viewpoint, use of social network channel can enhance relationship to customers if social network is used to gather information from customers, analyze customer information, and respond to customers faster. Prior research on social network has mainly focused on individual perspectives such as the impact of social influence, social presence, behaviour and benefits. Social networking provides an opportunity to enhance relationship between customer and business. Therefore, it’s important to know how to manage social network site in details so that organization can use as the framework to manage social networks more effectively. The better social network site management can make customers feel impression and intention to use the networks. Only effective social network site management can enhance knowledge sharing among employees (Abedniya & Mahmoudi, 2010).

According to Pate (2011) the usefulness of social networks is usually determined by their dimension. He further acquires that a network that is not open up to outsiders tends to not be incredibly valuable to its consumers, as they will be limited to what and who they by now know. On the other hand, a network that is open to outside members provides their members the opportunity to meet new people with quite perhaps new suggestions, and new and cultures. Thus, this affords organizations and businesses the possibility to marketplace their goods and solutions to a wider populace. Organizations have regarded the aggressive edge that can be gained, when using these networking internet sites to market their goods. These internet sites have been known to guide in investigation about rivals and competitors, offering data on the current and prospective employees of an organization (Abreu, 2010).

2.4 Effects of Social Networking on the Hotel Industry

Social networking relies on Internet and Web-based tools and services to enable anyone the ability to publish information on the Web (Computer Economics, 2010). The hotel industry has yet to identify the effectiveness of marketing through the use of social media. This is in spite of an abundance of advantages such as low cost investment, direct customer communication, brand communication and also it acts like a verbal evidence theory that people tend to believe when compared to commercial advertising (Hailey, 2010).

It appears that the hotel industry is very slow to gain momentum towards technology and is reputed to be reluctant to adopt technological advances. This implies that the industry has not leveraged on the power of social networking and integrates it with their marketing initiatives. With consumers becoming more immune to conventional advertising and communication channels, the hotel industry should turn to social media (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) as a means of reaching out to their audience. Social Media has become very much part of everybody's everyday life. In effect, social media is an alternative platform for them to enhance their knowledge and widen their network of connection. But for the non-technological sophisticated users, they can learn from those whom are experienced in the IT aspect (Abreu, 2010).

It seems the hotel industry fears social media because they think that it could be detrimental to employee productivity or even fears that social media has the potential to damage the company's reputation. But social media engagement is essential to a business branding and communication yet it can also work against a business if used inappropriately. A social media policy can be developed to educate and provide better understanding for employees to keep within certain parameters and implications of their participation. Nevertheless, there is a need to explore and discover if social media can become the new "tool" for effective branding and marketing purposes.

There are a number of people who consider Social media as just a tool. It is a tool for connection and a medium for broadcasting. These social media tools are recommended to be used in the way they are designed. For example, Twitter and

Facebook are used as marketing machines while YouTube functions more as a public relations tool since it is video sharing website. Similarly, LinkedIn is a professional networking tool; it is a site for business minded professionals to keep track of their contacts. According to Mowat (2010) the adoption of social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn has opened up a variety of avenues and opportunities to listen to the hotel guest. Owning a website is a form of marketing strategy; there has been a significant increase in marketing over the Internet these days.

The parameters of social networking websites possess several unique implications for the hotel industry including guests, staff, and management. These sites provide a platform for a rating system that can be used to generate, monitor, and evaluate reputation and image of the business. Online consumer-generated content is perceived as highly credible and in fact, more so than information attributed to the hotel entity (Starkov & Mechoso, 2008).

The participation of hotels in online social networking has been shown to be a cost-effective means for interaction and engagement with potential clients. Participation in these websites provides businesses with direct access to active users without the need to adding any additional hardware, or software. A social networking site that is easily accessible, straightforward, and appealing enables participants to become engaged in unique ways. It comes as no surprise that many hotels, restaurants and travel business have entered the social network space. Hotel businesses are proactively interacting with their customers by coming up with innovative customized solutions and much responsive and prompt customer service (Kasavana, Nusair, & Teodosic, 2010). Online consumer reviews play a big part in the choice of hotel and travel consumers make today.

With a rise in the number of social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, consumers are given an opportunity to look up reviews by other real consumers; the way information is perceived today has changed considerably. Making a unique social network that allows guests to create a profile and share opinions, feelings, stories and even photos can be a source of competitive advantage or disadvantage. If a guest decides to participate in an online network, shares a testimonial or recounts an experience or downloads content, others in the network are likely to be affected by the

opinion of the postings (Green, 2009). Another networking and communication tool that has become popular is blogging. The Travel and Hotels today are faced with consequences that blogs have not only positive impacts but also negative ones, if not managed properly (Thevenot, 2007).

This is also because any individual can upload content in the form of images, audio or video for others to respond and comment, which forms the basis of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 has given popularity to user generated content where information is gathered from different online sources all of which collaborate to form the final source (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto, & Buultjens, 2009). An effective means to benefit from this trend is to carefully follow the comments that are posted relating to your business. Research has proven that hotels that engage their customers via social media get their customers to spend more, have higher repeat clientele, and get more referrals from their guests. However good, bad, or ugly, it is vital that no comment goes unnoticed because for every benefit a hotel rakes in with positive feedback, suggestions and tracking consumers it can be on the receiving end of unfair criticism and negative publicity if it leaves important issues unaddressed (Kasavana, 2008).

2.5 Effects of social media networks on brand awareness

Social marketing provides visibility and awareness for the brand; this is the awareness that is essential to convert potential customers to loyal customers eventually. The secret is to create a thematic content that can lead to an effective marketing campaign. This move will generate brand awareness and the brand will be top of mind with the consumers if they decide to buy the product or services. For example, on 25 th February 2010, Sony reported that Sony Vaio's Twitter account had achieved over £1 million in sales. Therefore Sony sees Twitter as a viable sales platform (Wares, 2010). Another success story through the use of Twitter is by the third-largest maker of PC, Dell, which reported that its promotions on Twitter have helped generate more than \$6.5 million in orders for PCs, accessories and software (Guglielmo, 2009).

Social media keeps the customers stimulated and involved. When a company gets their customers involved and engaged, it leads to lasting working relationships with organizations. The level of customer support increases with the use of social media since it is personal and interactive. In the event of an unfortunate situation, social

media may serve as a catalyst to turn this situation into an opportunity for a company to extend their services and go the extra mile to reverse the negative feeling.

Reputation management is a construe component of online activity for organizations with plenty of internet users, especially their customers. Whereas some organizations utilizing the internet are cautious to project themselves in a way that suits specific audiences, other internet users embrace a more open approach. For instance, a report by Deloitte titled 'Hospitality 2015' states that social media and new technology trends are playing the key role over the next five years towards the growth in the hospitality industry. With millions of consumers having internet access around the globe, these numbers are expected to increase by 50% in year 2015 (Deloitte, 2010). Nevertheless, the growth of social media can be positive for consumers but it can be bad news or an opportunity for hotel operators. Jeremy Wagstaff, a commentator on technology has shared that the most effective way to get satisfactory service these days is to tweet about how bad it is. Since hospitality is a leisure industry, social media may act as a disaster item for one's brand (Wagstaff, 2010).

2.6 Conceptual frame work

Independent variables

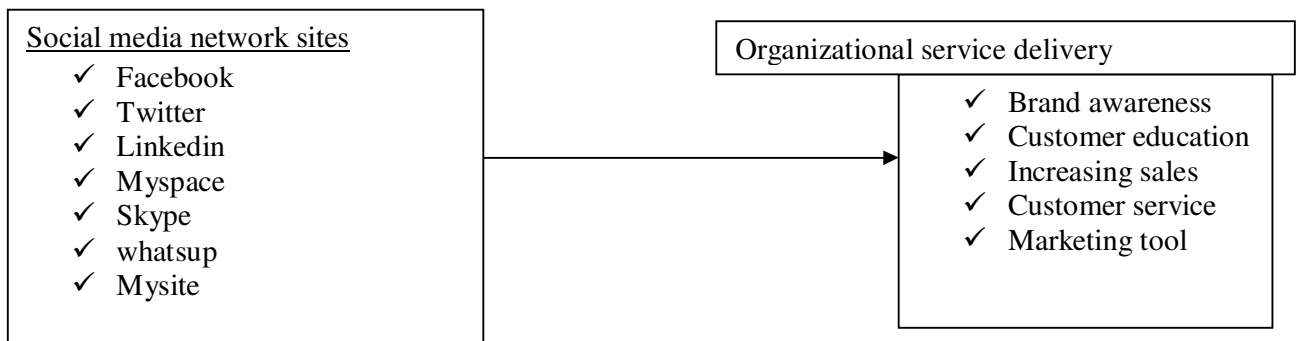


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the study's operational framework used for the study including research design, the population that was studied and the sampling strategy, the data collection process, the instruments used for gathering data, and how data should analyzed be and presented.

3.2 Research design

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari, 2004). This research employed a descriptive research design. This method was appropriate for the study since the study involved collecting data regarding values, behavior, experiences and attitudes of the population under study as well as answering questions on their status, it's a survey of people who have had practical experience with the problem to be studied.

3.3 Population and Sampling Procedure

According to Kothari (2004), a statistical population is the complete set of all items in the researcher's field of inquiry. The target population is defined as all individuals, objects or things that the researcher can reasonably generalize his or her findings to (Mugenda, 2008).The target population comprised the twenty one hotels in Nakuru Town, Kenya. The study considered only the permanent employees as they provided informative details regarding their work. There were 977 employees permanently employed in these hotels as shown in Appendix I.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedure

The sample size will consist of employees permanently employed in the two, three and four star-rated hotels. In order to pick the hotels for the study, stratified proportionate sampling procedure has been used. There are 13 two star hotels, 6 three star hotels and 2 four star hotels in Nakuru Town. According to Gay (1976), a sample of between ten to thirty percent of the total population is adequate in large population while twenty percent above of the total population is commendable in small population. 30 % of the hotels in each group will be used. As such, 1 hotel was picked from the four star category; 2 from the three star and 4 hotels selected from the 2 star

category. A total of nine hotels were picked. This represented a 30% of the total number of the hotels in each category namely 2 star, 3 star and 4 star hotels. Each hotel from the nine was picked at random using the balloting method. In these hotels, the total number of employees is 363. From this total population, the Slovin's formula was used to determine the sample size (Slovin, 1960). A sample of 190 employees was needed to accurately represent the population in question.

The formula used is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where: n = sample size

N = population size

E = margin of error * desired

Hence:

$$n = 363 / 1 + (0.05)^2$$

$$n = 363 / 1.9075 = 190$$

$$n = 190$$

Table 3.1 shows the various representations from each hotel.

Table 3.1 Sample of Hotels

Name of hotel	Classification	Number of employees	of sample
Capital hill	2 star	28	15
Waterbuck	2 star	64	33
Kunste	2 star	33	17
Jumuia	2 star	51	27
Chester	3 star	40	21
Bontana	3 star	63	33
Merica	4 star	84	44
Total		363	190

The proportionate sampling technique will be used to select one hundred and ninety participants who will serve as respondents chosen from the employees of each category across the hotels that constitute the sample.

3.5 Data Collection

This study adopted the use of both structured and unstructured questionnaires to gather in-depth information from the respondents. The justification of using the questionnaire was to allow the respondents adequate time to think about their responses, being focused and guided by the questions. The questionnaire was therefore developed from the literature review and organized on the basis of background information of the respondents and the research objectives. This ensured relevance of the research problem. The questions had been tailored to determine the use of social media network sites in 2 stars, 3 star and 4 star rated hotels in Nakuru Town.

3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

In consultation with the supervisors, the researcher developed a questionnaire based on the research objectives. A pre- test was conducted before the main research work commence. The pre-test was conducted on 10 respondents from Capital Hill Hotel and villas Resort who were not part of the final sample. This allowed any modification in the questionnaire before the same were distributed to the respondents. It also ensured the reliability and the validity of the instrument. In this study, for instance, the researcher hoped to find out the effects of the use of social media network sites in the hotel industry in Nakuru Town.

3.7 Data collection procedure

Data for this study was collected using a questionnaire. Prior to visiting the hotels under investigation, the researcher planned for the most appropriate timings of the respondents in order to fill the questionnaire. This ensured that, their work schedules were not affected. After administering the questionnaire, the respondents were given at least two days to respond. The researcher then visited the hotels under the study on several occasions for a follow-up on the research questionnaires and collecting them.

3.8 Data Analysis

For data to be properly interpreted and understood it must be processed or analyzed. Data analysis is the process that begins after data collection and goes all the way up to the point of interpreting the results. The data received was in both qualitative and quantitative forms since this research employed triangulation (use of both qualitative

and quantitative methods). Questionnaires were coded and fed into the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The data was later presented in tables, frequencies and figures

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the response rate of the study, the respondents' characteristics, the research findings, discussion of the research findings and conclusion of the chapter.

4.2 Response Rate

The target sample size of the study was 190 respondents. The researcher was able to collect back 152 questionnaires out of the 190 questionnaires issued. This represented a 80% response rate. There were several reasons for the unreturned questionnaires including staff that had proceeded for leave, staff not at their work places at the time of questionnaire collections, respondents who had misplaced the questionnaire and respondents who were not willing to participate in the study. The collected questionnaires were further analyzed to remove inconsistencies in the responses and eliminate partially filled questionnaires. Out of the 152 questionnaires that were collected, a further 34 questionnaires were eliminated due to various reasons; 22 questionnaires due to inconsistent responses and 12 questionnaires due to incomplete questionnaires. One hundred and eighteen questionnaires were thus analyzed representing a 62.1% of the sample size. The analyzed questionnaires are deemed representative of the population under study.

4.3 Respondents' Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents included the respondent's age group, level of education, job role, and length of service in the hotel industry. The background information will also capture the level of social media usage among the respondents' hotel and the different social platforms used by the different hotels.

4.3.1 Respondent's Age Group

The respondent's age group was measured in five categories that are 18-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years, 36-40 years and 41-45 years age groups. The age group is critical in the determination of the usage of the social media as a younger age group are likely to be more digital savvy and hence influence the usage of the social media

in their workplace (Abreu, 2010). The results indicate that a majority of the workers 61% of the respondents were in the 26-30 years age group. Abreu (2010) supports the usage of social media network for this age group.

Table 1 Respondents' distribution by age

Age Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
18-25 Years	20	16.9
26-30 Years	72	61.0
31-35 Years	13	11.0
36-40 Years	7	5.9
41-45 Years	6	5.1
Total	118	100.0

4.3.2 Respondent's Level of Education

The level of education is a major determinant on the aptitude to use the social media especially when considered in conjunction with the age factor. Respondents with post-secondary education level would be relatively exposed to social media working and hence easily adapt to its usage in work environment (Abreu, 2010; Cherly & Vaughn, 2008). The respondent's level of education was categorized into four categories that is KCPE level, KCSE level, Diploma Level, Graduate Level, and post graduate level. A majority of the respondents at 45.8% had a degree level of education, 28.8% diploma level education and 20.3% KCSE level education and only 5.1% had postgraduate level of education.

Table 2 Education Distribution of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
KCSE Level	24	20.3
Diploma Level	34	28.8
Graduate	54	45.8
Post Graduate	6	5.1
Total	118	100.0

4.3.3 Respondent's Job Role

The job role is a critical role in the respondent's usage of the social media. Job roles that are skewed towards information technology, customer service, complaint handling, customer onboarding, marketing and public relations are more likely to be involved in the social media as part of their job functionalities compared to other job roles (Cherly & Vaughn, 2008). There were 12 categories in relation to job roles and

include; Front Office and Operations, Food and Beverage, Finance and Administration, Human Resource, Food Production, management, health and safety, housekeeping and laundry, maintenance and repair, security, procurement and information technology and resource based. Only six out of the 12 only responded as indicated in the figure 4.1 below.

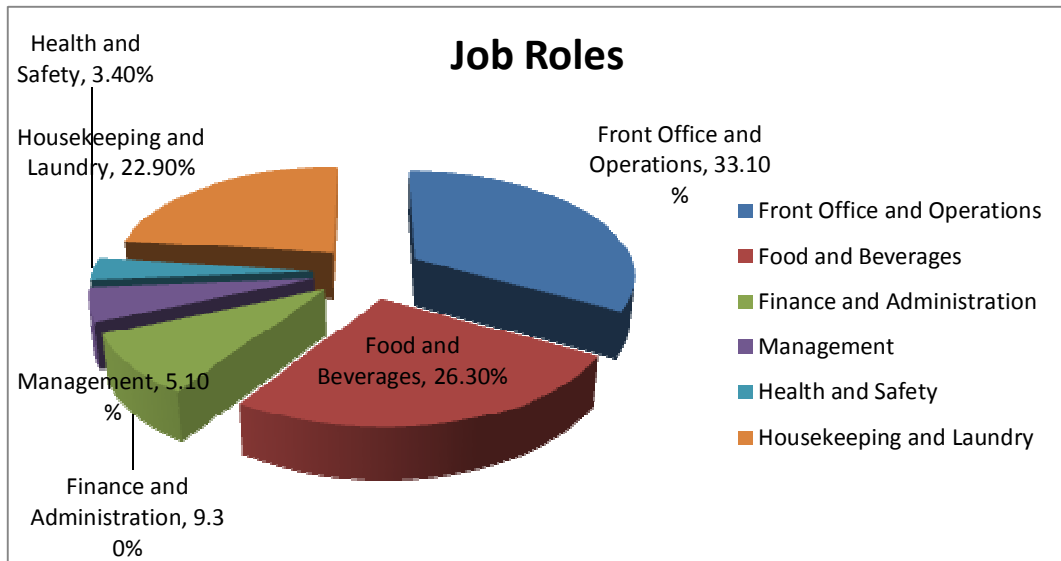


Figure 4.1 Respondent’s Job Role

4.3.4 Respondent’s Length of Service in Hotel Industry

The length of time worked in the hotel industry was divided into four categories that is 0-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and over 15 years. 72.9% of the respondents indicated that they had worked in the hotel industry for less than five years while 16.1% indicated that they had worked 6-10 years. Only a small fraction of employees (10%) had worked for 11-15 years and none of the employees indicated that they had worked for over 15 years.

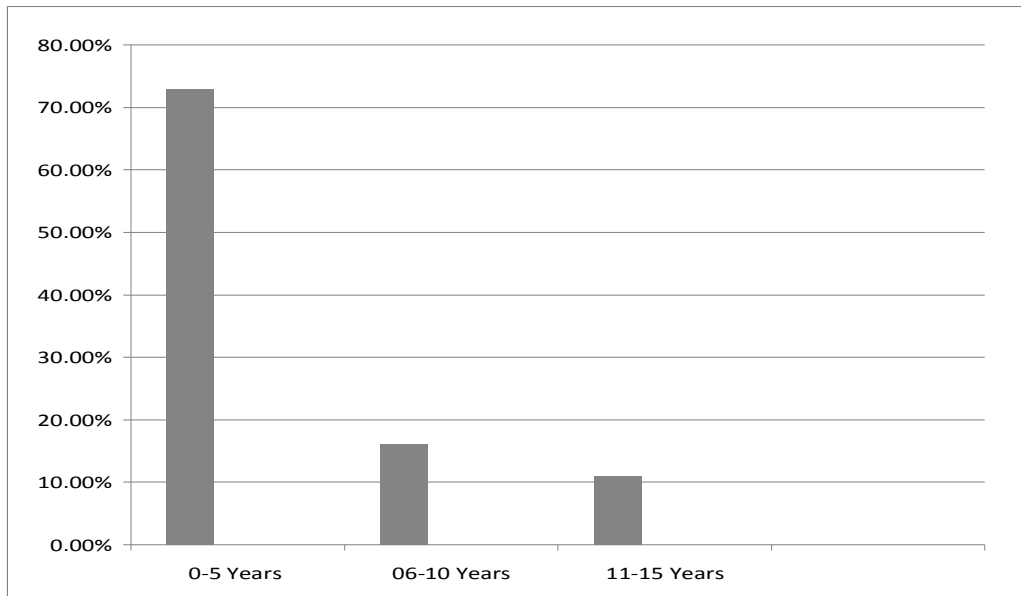


Figure 4.2 Respondent's Length of Service in Hotel Industry

4.3.5 Usage of Social Media in Hotel Industry

The usage of social media is important for any business due to the number of target market as well as existing customer using the social media platforms. In this context, the study revealed that a high frequency of 94.1% of the respondents used social media. These findings are supported by Mowat (2010) who argues that the adoption of social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn has opened up a variety of avenues and opportunities to listen to the hotel guest. The high percentage can also be explained by the fact that the social media has come of age where a large percentage of the population is well versed with the usage of social media in their private lives. The high number of cheap smart phones with internet connection capabilities is also contributing to the familiarization with internet usage in general and to some extent the social media (Abreu, 2010). It is thus easy for social media users in social lives to use the same for their professional needs. These findings are supported by Hailey (2010) who argues that social media acts as a verbal evidence theory that people tend to believe when compared to commercial advertising. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Social Media Usage in hotel industry

Does the hotel use any social media?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	111	94.1
No	7	5.9
Total	118	100.0

An analysis between age and the usage of the social media indicated that age factored in strongly in the usage of social media. All the respondents below 30 years of age utilized social media platforms while the higher age groups such as 31-35 years, 36-40 years, and 41-45 years has some respondents who didn't utilize social media platforms. The respondents constituted 7.69%, 28.57% and 67% of the 31-35 years, 36-40 years, and 41-45 years age groups respectively. Therefore, a huge percentage of the older age groups is not utilizing social media platforms. This can partially be attributed to lack of interaction and exposure on the usage of the social media platforms. It could be due to the fact that some of the platforms have only exploded in usage in the recent past. Results presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4 The influence of age on social media usage

The influence of age on social media usage		Does the hotel use any social media?		
		Yes	No	Total
What is your age group?	18-25 Years	20	0	20
	26-30 Years	72	0	72
	31-35 Years	12	1	13
	36-40 Years	5	2	7
	41-45 Years	2	4	6
Total		111	7	118

4.3.6 Prevalence of Social Media Platforms in the Hotel

Different social media platforms have different target groups, different dynamics in terms of usage and different ease of use among different social demographic factors.

Table 5 Prevalence of the Social Media Platforms in the hotel industry

	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Total
	YES		NO		
Does your hotel use the following social media platforms?					
Facebook	79	66.9%	39	33.1%	118

Twitter	45	38.1%	73	61.9%	118
Instalgram	19	16.1%	99	83.9%	118
My Site	6	5.1%	112	94.9%	118
Yotube	31	26.3%	87	73.7%	118
Google plus	53	44.9%	65	55.1%	118
Skype	37	31.4%	81	68.6%	118
My space	11	9.3%	107	90.7%	118
LinkedIn	13	11.0%	105	89.0%	118

For example, the face book is relatively easy to use and is versatile to accommodate text (long and short) and images. Facebook is also relatively well known among different age groups and hence its popularity. This is reflected in the prevalence for the usage of the social media platforms where up to 66.9% of the respondents indicated that they used the social media. This compares with 38.1%, 16.1%, 5.1%, 44.9%, 26.3%, 31.4%, 9.3% and 11% who used twitter, instalgram, my site, Google Plus, you tube, Skype, my space and LinkedIn, respectively. These findings are supported by Mowat (2010) who argues that adoption of social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn has opened up a variety of avenues and opportunities to listen to the hotel guest. Owning a website is a form of marketing strategy; there has been a significant increase in marketing over the Internet these days. Google Plus was the second most popular social media-networking platform used by the respondents (Cherly & Vaughn, 2008). This can be attributed to the relative familiarity on the usage of the Google plus due to familiarity with the use of the sister product that is Gmail. Twitter is also relatively popular due to its uptake among the youth for micro blogging purposes. There is low usage of social media platforms that have low popularity among the general population or are more inclined towards niche target market.

4.4 The Use of Social Networking Media as a Marketing Tool

The social networking media platforms can be used for the marketing purposes through provision of a platform to connect with customers in cyberspace. There is also an element of the ability to reach a wide target market at a relatively low cost compared to traditional marketing tool (Abreu, 2010). A high percentage of the respondents utilized the social media for marketing purposes that is 82.2% as indicated in Table 6

Table 6 Use of Social Media for Marketing Purposes

Does Your hotel use Social Media for Marketing Purposes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	97	82.2
No	21	17.8
Total	118	100.0

4.4.1 The Usage of the Specific Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes

One of the major usages of the social media in organizations in service industry such as hotels is marketing purposes. However, different social media platforms are utilized to different levels by the hotels. The usage of the particular social media platform is influenced by its usage among general population in social lives and the extent to which the platform is customized for marketing aspects. For example, the face book offers a wide variety of combination of text and images that is ideal for marketing purposes. The hotels can be able to highlight their products, ambience of their facilities, different amenities available in their hotels. In addition to these, customers and prospective customers can make comments, and ask for clarifications.

To measure the usage of the different social platforms for marketing purposes, the respondents were asked the extent in which the specific social media platform was utilized. The face book and twitter had the highest usage for marketing purposes that is also reflective of their general popularity in day-to-day lives. Up to 28% of the respondents indicated that the face book and Google plus were frequently used for marketing purposes. This was followed closely by 22% of the respondents who indicated that they utilized twitter for marketing purposes. These results are supportive of the observations by Guglielmo (2009) who noted increase of sales through the use of twitter. Some of the social media platforms such as my site, my space and LinkedIn did not have any of the respondents indicating that they frequently used the social media for marketing purposes. However, analysis using Chi-square showered significant differences for lack of proportional agreement ($p < 0.05$) in each of social media platform with facebook, twitter, instlgram, my site, myspace being dominated by 'Not Used at all' and goggle plus youtube, skype and LinkedIn with don't know"

Table 7 The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes

To what extent are the following social media platforms used for marketing.

Social media platforms	Frequently Used	Rarely Used	Not Used at all	Don't Know	Total	χ^2	Pr> χ^2
Facebook	33(28.0%)	25(21.2%)	42(35.6%)	18(15.3%)	118	10.88	<0.05
Twitter	26(22.0%)	15(12.7%)	55(46.6%)	22(18.6%)	118	31.49	<0.001
Instagram	3(2.5%)	10(8.5%)	68(57.6%)	37(31.4%)	118	88.85	<0.001
My site		19(16.1%)	53(44.9%)	46(39.0%)	118	16.39	<0.005
Google plus	34(28.8%)	9(7.6%)	36(30.5%)	39(33.1%)	118	19.42	<0.001
You Tube	13(11.0%)	13(11.0%)	45(38.1%)	47(39.8%)	118	36.98	<0.001
Skype	10(8.5%)	11(9.3%)	44(37.3%)	53(44.9%)	118	50.34	<0.001
MySpace		13(11.0%)	58(49.2%)	47(39.8%)	118	27.98	<0.05
LinkedIn		7(5.9%)	48(40.7%)	63(53.4%)	118	42.73	<0.001

4.4.2 Social Media Networking Forms used in the hotel industry

Different social media networking forms such as podcasts, blogs, micro blogs, face book posts, twitter feeds, you tube videos and Skype have their ease of usage, the potential audience reach and the kind of information they can conduct which influences their usage (Cornelius, 2008). The podcasts are ideal for the hotel management, founders, and key staff such as chefs to do videos while providing background commentary. This is a critical form of marketing in the context of the potential customer of existing customer getting a view of the hotel or hotel services from an authoritative figure in the hotel ideally who is well known in the public arena. In this context, 13.6% and 22.0% of the respondents indicated that they “frequently used” and “rarely used” the podcasts respectively in marketing. As shown in Table 8

Table 8 The use of different social media networking forms for marketing purposes

Which of the following social media networking forms is used in your hotel for marketing purposes?

Social media platforms	Frequently Used	Rarely Used	Not Used at all	Don't Know	Total	χ^2	Pr> χ^2
Podcast	16(13.6%)	26(22.0%)	55(46.6%)	21(17.8%)	118	31.08	<0.001
Blogs		8(6.8%)	95(80.5%)	15(12.7%)	118	118.80	<0.001
Micro Blogs	3(2.5%)	13(11.0%)	68(57.6%)	34(28.8%)	118	83.96	<0.001
Face book posts	22(18.6%)	13(11.0%)	55(46.6%)	28(23.7%)	118	33.25	<0.001
Twitter feeds	25(21.2%)	8(6.8%)	45(38.1%)	40(33.9%)	118	28.24	<0.005
You Tube videos	10(8.5%)	8(6.8%)	55(46.6%)	45(38.1%)	118	58.75	<0.001
Skype	4(3.4%)	15(12.7%)	60(50.8%)	39(33.1%)	118	63.76	<0.001

Therefore, a cumulative figure of 13.6% used podcasts for marketing purposes. Twitter feeds were well used for marketing purposes with up to 21.2% of the respondents indicating that they frequently used it. Other social media platforms used frequently included face book posts (18.6%), and you tube videos (8.5%). Blogs, micro blogs, and Skype were lowly used mainly because they would require a higher creativity input to bring up the marketing aspects of a hotel. Thus twitter feeds were frequently used (21.2%) for marketing than the rest of the networks. Results in (Table 8). However, significant results ($p < 0.01$). chi square test shows that most respondent indicated that they “do not use social media at all”

4.4.3 The Objectives of Social Media Marketing

Engagement in social media for the marketing purposes has certain objectives in which hotels aim to achieve within the marketing sub themes. These sub themes include introduction of new products/services, networking with potential customers, publicising products and elaboration on product features. Networking with potential customers was the major reason on why the hotels engaged in social media marketing as indicated by 83.9% of the respondents (Cornelius, 2008). Social media platforms by nature provide an avenue of diverse and large groups of people networking in the cyber space at their own convenience. The ability to engage each other in a virtual world is key where there is need for clarification on services offered and where there is need for validation on the product features by older users of the product or service (Kinyua, 2012). In this context, 77.1% of the respondents indicated that they used the social media platforms for the elaboration of the product features. This is closely linked to the use of the social media for publicising of existing products (61%) and introduction of new products/services (43.2%).

Table 9 Objectives of Social Media Marketing

What are the objectives of social media marketing?	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Total
	YES		NO		
Networking with potential customers	99	83.9%	19	16.1%	118
Introduction of new products/services	51	43.2%	67	56.8%	118
Elaboration on product features	91	77.1%	27	22.9%	118
Publicising products	72	61.0%	46	39.0%	118

4.5 The Use of Social Networking Media as a Brand Awareness Tool

There is high usage of the social media platforms for the purposes of brand awareness as indicated by 66.1% of the respondents.

Table 10 Use of social media for brand awareness

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Does your hotel use social networking sites for branding purposes?	Yes	78	66.1
	No	40	33.9
	Total	118	100.0

4.5.1 The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Branding Purposes

Branding involves making the hotel know for certain aspects such as standards, quality service, and excellent customer experience amongst others with a view of standing out from the crowd. This may be through creating memorable experiences, unique experiences and evoking of positive emotional connection with uses (Kinyua, 2012). In this context, the hotel may use photography, songs, audios, and text to create positive mental imagery of their institution, service and staff (Kasavana, Nusair & Teodosic, 2010). Among the social media, platforms highly used for this aspect include face book (44.1%) and twitter (22.9%). However, there is low usage of the social media platforms for branding purposes through instagram (3.4%), my site (4.2%), Google plus (6.8%), and my space (3.4%). chi test indicate that social media is “not used at all” with (p<0.001)

Table 11 Social Media platforms used for branding

To what extent are the following social media platform used for branding?

Social media platforms	Frequently Used	Rarely Used	Not Used at all	Don't Know	Total	χ^2	Pr> χ^2
Facebook	52(44.1%)	6(5.1%)	45(38.1%)	15(12.7%)	118	51.15	<0.001
Twitter	27(22.9%)	14(11.9)	50(42.4%)	27(22.9%)	118	22.81	<0.005

		(%)					
You Tube	9(7.6%)	13(11.0%)	72(61.0%)	24(20.3%)	118	85.73	<0.001
LinkedIn		7(5.9%)	79(66.9%)	32(27.1%)	118	67.95	<0.001
Skype	12(10.2%)	19(16.1%)	61(51.7%)	26(22.0%)	118	48.17	<0.001
MySpace	4(3.4%)	6(5.1%)	56(47.5%)	52(44.1%)	118	81.73	<0.001
My Site		5(4.2%)	86(72.9%)	27(22.9%)	118	89.20	<0.001
Google Plus	8(6.8%)	18(15.3%)	65(55.1%)	27(22.9%)	118	63.08	<0.001
Instagram	4(3.4%)	12(10.2%)	80(67.8%)	22(18.6%)	118	120.78	<0.001

4.5.2 The forms in which the Social Media Platforms are used for branding

There are several ways in which the social media platforms are used for branding including discussion of the hotel culture, discussion of the hotel heritage, discussion of the product features, face book posts, twitter feeds and you tube videos (Mowat, 2010). These forms have different ways in enhancement of the brand image and suited to particular social media platforms. Discussion of the product features was the most commonly used means of creating brand awareness according to 66.9% of the respondent. The other used aspects for brand awareness include hotel heritage (43.2%), face book posts (46.6%), you tube videos (38.1%) and twitter feeds (25.4%).

Table 12 Aspects used to create brand awareness. Does your hotel engage in discussing the following aspects to create brand awareness?

Aspects used to create brand awareness	Frequency		Percentage		Total
	YES	NO	Percentage	Percentage	
Hotel Culture	23	95	19.50%	80.50%	118
Hotel Heritage	51	67	43.20%	56.80%	118
Product Features	79	39	66.90%	33.10%	118
Facebook Posts	55	63	46.60%	53.40%	118
Tweeter Feeds	30	88	25.40%	74.60%	118
You Tube Videos	45	73	38.10%	61.90%	118

4.5.3 The Brand Awareness Measurement Metrics

To determine on the effectiveness of the specific social media platforms in relations to creating brand awareness there is need for measurement metrics. These measurement metrics includes number of followers, mentions per period (times the brand is talked online for a given period), and inbound links that is the number of sites linking to the hotel site (Gordon, 2010). The other metrics are the share of voice (number of times mentioned in comparison to the competition) and share of conversation that is number

of times mentioned in conversations relevant to the industry (Onsando, 2012). There is well usage of each of the metrics as evidenced by the responses that ranged from a low of 39.0% to 61.9%. The metrics used in order of popularity include share of voice (61.9%), share of conversation (55.9%), number of followers (55.1%), mentions per time (49.2%), and inbound links (39.0%). chi test indicate that brand awareness Metric measures is “frequently used ”

Table 13The extent use of brand awareness metric measures

To what extend does your hotel use the following awareness metric measures

Brand awareness Metric measures	Frequently Used	Rarely Used	Not Used at all	Don't Know	Total	χ^2	Pr> χ^2
The mentions per time period	58(49.2%)	47(39.8%)	7(5.9%)	6(5.1%)	118	58.61	<0.001
Inbound Links	46(39.0%)	46(39.0%)	20(16.9%)	6(5.1%)	118	73.80	<0.001
Share of Voice	73(61.9%)	27(22.9%)	6(5.1%)	12(10.2%)	118	40.24	<0.001
Share of Conversation	66(55.9%)	34(28.8%)	12(10.2%)	6(5.1%)	118	93.46	<0.001
Number of followers	65(55.1%)	21(17.8%)	12(10.2%)	20(16.9%)	118	74.95	<0.001

4.6 The Use of Social Networking Media as an Information/Education Tool

There are various types of information that can be cascaded through the social media such as hotel location, hotel menu, amenities near the hotel, and hotel facilities information (Ouma, 2010). The technical expertise of key staff and the hotel vision and mission are also discussed. All the respondents indicated that they discussed the hotel location. The other aspects cascaded through online measures included the hotel menu (66.1%), amenities approximately the hotel (72.9%), hotel facilities (82.2%), and technical expertise of key staff (50.0%).

Table 14 Information Cascaded through social media

Which information is cascaded through social media	Frequency Percentage		Frequency Percentage		Total
	YES		NO		
Hotel Location	118	100%		80.50%	118
Hotel Menu	78	66.1%	40	33.9%	118
Amenities in the Vicinity	86	72.9%	32	27.1%	118
Hotel Facilities information	97	82.2%	21	17.8%	118
Technical Expertise of key staff	59	50.0%	59	50.0%	118
Hotel Vision and Mission	85	72.0%	33	28.0%	118

4.7 The Use of Social Networking Media for Sales Purposes

The usage of social media networking platforms for the purposes of sales is relatively limited at 39.8%. The low usage of social media for sales can be attributed to the fact that sales process needs a one on one persuasion in order for the potential customers to commit themselves.

Table 15 The Use of Social Networking Media for Sales Purposes

Does your hotel use social media for the purposes of sales?		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes		47	39.8
No		71	60.2
Total		118	100.0

4.7.1 Prevalence of Social Media Platforms usage for Sales

This is because there is need for the personal touch for the potential customer to be convinced on the need buy the product. This convincing can only take place in a one-on-one conversation. In this context, social media platforms that had provision for one-on-one conversations such as face book through inbox and Google plus had high usage for sales purposes. In this context, face book had 35.6% popular usage for sales services while Google plus had 19.5% usage for sales oriented services. This implied that therefore social sites could lead to increased sales compared to other forms of selling by hotels as commented by (Green, 2009) that; “The key attribute for the social media platform to be ideal for the usage of sales is the ability to have a one- on-one conversation as opposed to one-to-many conversation”

Table 16 Platforms used for sales purposes
To what extent are the following platforms used for sales purposes

Social media platforms	Frequently Used	Rarely Used	Not Used at all	Don't Know	Total	χ^2	Pr> χ^2
Face book	42(35.6%)	16(13.6%)	54(45.8%)	6(5.1%)	118	50.42	<0.001
Twitter	10(8.5%)	6(5.1%)	69(58.5%)	33(28.0%)	118	84.92	<0.001
You Tube	15(12.7%)	4(3.4%)	65(55.1%)	34(28.8%)	118	72.58	<0.001
Skype	11(9.3%)	11(9.3%)	86(72.9%)	10(8.5%)	118	144.3	<0.001
Myspace	6(5.1%)	4(3.4%)	75(63.6%)	39(33.1%)	118	64.08	<0.001
Instalgram	6(5.1%)	4(3.4%)	79(66.9%)	29(24.6%)	118	123.8	<0.001
Skype	1(0.8%)	5(4.2%)	77(65.3%)	35(29.7%)	118	125.3	<0.001
Google plus	23(19.5%)	8(6.8%)	75(63.6%)	12(10.2%)	118	97.66	<0.001

4.7.2 Efficiency of Different Social Media Platforms for Sales Purposes

The sales related work is comprised of different components` including sales prospecting, closing of sales, clarification of the service/product features, referrals and networking and market intelligence gathering(Mckay, 2008; Guglielmo, 2009). The social media were ideal for the sales prospecting (71.2%), market intelligence gathering (66.9%) and, referrals and networking (62.7%)

Table 17The efficiency of social media platforms

How do you rank the efficiency of social media platforms in the following aspects		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sales Prospecting	Very Effective	33	28.0
	Effective	51	43.2
	Ineffective	13	11.0
	Don't Know	21	17.8
	Total	118	100.0
Closing Sales	Effective	26	22.0
	Ineffective	92	78.0
	Total	118	100.0
Clarification of Service/Product Features	Very Effective	59	50.0
	Effective	52	44.1
	Ineffective	7	5.9
	Total	118	100.0
Referrals and Networking	Very Effective	74	62.7
	Effective	44	37.3
	Total	118	100.0
Market Intelligence Gathering	Very Effective	79	66.9
	Effective	39	33.1
	Total	118	100.0

4.8 The Use of Social Networking Media for Customer Service

The social media platform is also used for customer service aspects especially complaints resolution. A majority of the firms have embraced social media as a means of complaints management in order to counter the effects of customer's complaints getting into a wider group (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In this context, up to 38.1% of the respondents indicated that they utilized the social media for the customer service purposes.

Table 18 The usage of social media for customer service purposes

Does your hotel use social media for the purposes of customer service?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	45	38.1
No	73	61.9
Total	118	100.0

The social media platforms are used for different aspects in relations to the customer service purposes e.g. complaints capturing, complaints resolution, compliments capturing, sharing of best practices and customer experience (Jones, 2008; Hailey, 2010). However, chi test indicate that social media is “frequently used” for efficiency

Table 19 Efficiency of different Social Media networking platforms

How do you rank social media networking efficiency in the following aspects?

Ranking aspects	Frequently Used	Rarely Used	Not Used at all	Don't Know	Total	χ^2	Pr> χ^2
Complaints Capturing	53(44.9%)	25(21.2%)	27(22.9%)	13(11.0%)	118	28.84	<0.005
Complains Resolutions	52(44.1%)	45(38.1%)	14(11.9%)	7(5.9%)	118	50.61	<0.001
Complaints Capturing	45(38.1%)	46(39.0%)	20(16.9%)	7(5.9%)	118	37.59	<0.001
Sharing best practices on services	53(44.9%)	25(21.2%)	27(22.9%)	13(11.0%)	118	28.84	<0.005
Customer Experience	52(44.1%)	45(38.1%)	14(11.9%)	7(5.9%)	118	50.61	<0.001
Customer on boarding	45(38.1)	46(39.0%)	20(16.9%)	7(5.9%)	118	37.59	<0.001

A majority of the respondents (44.9%) indicated that they utilized the social media for complaints capturing. This is in tandem with the recent usage of the social media such as twitter to launch complaints and the notion that these complaints are attended to much faster than those handed through the traditional means.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter makes summary and conclusions of the chapter according to the research objectives.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The results indicated a high usage of the social media platforms at 94.1% attributed to the usage of internet enabled smartphones. This enables the users to be conversant with the usage of the social media in professional contexts.

There is a high prevalence of the usage of the Facebook and twitter social media sites in the hotel industry at 66.9% and 44.9% respectively. This is due to their relative usage in day-to-day social lives compared to the other social media.

The social media provides an avenue for the marketing through the ability to reach a wide market at a relatively low cost. In this context, 82.2% of the respondents utilized the social media for marketing purposes. In line with their general popularity, the Facebook and Google plus were the most used social platforms for marketing purposes at 28%. There are several forms of the social media marketing including use of podcasts, blogs, micro blogs, you tube videos and Skype amongst others. In this context, the podcasts twitter feeds and face book posts were the widely used social media forms at 35.6%, 21.2% and 18.6%. The major aims of using the social platforms for marketing include new products introduction, product features elaboration and networking with potential customers.

In the context of the use of the social media for the branding purposes, up to 66.1% of the respondents used the social media for branding purposes. The branding using social media involves making the hotel know for certain aspects such as standards, quality service, and excellent customer experience amongst others with a view of standing out from the crowd through creation of memorable experiences, unique experiences and evoking of positive emotional connection with users. Among the social media platforms highly used for this aspect include face book (44.1%) and twitter (22.9%).

The social media platforms are also used for the issuance of critical information about the hotel such as location, available facilities, technical expertise of workers, and hotel menu amongst other factors. Several sales related aspects can be performed through the social media platforms including sales prospecting, sales closure, clarification of service/product features, and market intelligence gathering. There is low usage of the social media at only 39.8% of the respondents. This is due to the need for one to one conversation in order to secure a sale.

The social media platform is ideal for the customer service aspects especially complaint handling aspects. Due to the wide usage of the twitter platforms, it has proved popular for clients wishing to complain. Other aspects of customer service through social media include complaints capturing, complaints resolution, customer experience, and customer on boarding. The efficiency of different forms includes complaints handling (44.9%), complaints resolution (44.1%), compliments capturing (38.1%), and customer on boarding (44.1%).

5.3 Conclusion

There is generally a high usage of the social media at personal level for the respondent that has not translated fully into the professional context. The facebook and twitter social media are the highest used social media platforms, which closely mirrors the day to day social usage of the platforms. There is evidence of the basic usage of the social media platforms in diverse basic ways but lack of digital strategy as would have been noticed by more pronounced usage of particular platforms for given aspects.

5.4 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations as a result of the study

- i. Hotels should enhance the usage of diverse social media platforms in order to capture niche markets. This is because there is overreliance on the face book, twitter and Google plus yet more of these platforms could be used to gain largely on service delivery in the Hotels and increase sales.
- ii. Hotels should come up with Clear strategies on the specific usage of particular social media platforms in order to maximize the gains that can be derived from them as depicted by this research project.
- iii. Hotels should widely use social media networks to market their services and products in order to reach wider market and interact with their clients one-on-one.
- iv. Hotels in Nakuru should use the platform for branding and setting standards in the market for competitive advantage
- v. Hotels should utilize the social networks to improve their customer services since it gives an instant response to clients complains and needs. Clients will

be able to get solutions to the issues they face on time and thus increase customer loyalty and trust.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

Future scholars on the subject matter can explore on;

- i. Investigate on the use of social networks as a change agent in employee productivity in organizations in Kenya
- ii. Investigate how the use of social networks in organizations in Kenya would contribute to achievement of the objectives of vision 2030

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APPENDIX I: CATEGORIES OF HOTELS

Serial number	Name of hotel	Classification	Number of employees
1.	Midland	3 star	56
2.	Cathay	4 star	67
3.	Grace Hotel	3 star	42
4.	Bontana	3 star	63
5.	Carnation	2 star	36
6.	Kivu	2 star	34
7.	Milimani Guest house	2 star	37
8.	Sarova lion hill	4 star	75
9.	Waterbuck	2 star	64
10.	Blue Bay	2 star	39
11.	Merica	4 star	84
12.	Milimani Suites	3 star	55
13.	Jumuia Guesthouse	2 star	51
14.	Chester	3 star	40
15.	Abbey	2 star	35
16.	Cool rivers	2 star	38
17.	Kunste	2 star	33
18.	Capital hill	2 star	28
19.	LanetMathfam resort	2 star	29
20.	Pekars	2 star	32
21.	Milele	2 star	39
Total			977

APPENDIX II: CONSENT STATEMENT TO THE RESPONDENTS

Dear Participant,

My name is Faith Yator. I am a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) student at Kabarak University. I am conducting as a research with the title “*Effects of social media network sites on service delivery in hotels in Nakuru Town*” as part of my degree program. I am inviting you to participate in the research by completing the attached questionnaire.

The questionnaire will not take more than 20 minutes. The information that you will share with me will not be discussed or accessed by any other person apart from the researcher and the people directly involved in the project. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Your answers will be kept confidential. There will be no financial compensation for participating in this study. The outcome of this research may be used for academic and general purposes such as research reports, conference papers, or books. By completing the questionnaire, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research.

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign below

Name (Optional).....Signature.....Date.....

APPENDIX III: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Please complete the following questionnaire appropriately.

Confidentiality: The responses you provide will be strictly confidential. No reference will be made to any individual(s) in the report of the study.

Please tick or answer appropriately for each of the question provided

BASIC INFORMATION

1. What is your age group?

18-25 Years ()

26-30 Years ()

31-35 Years ()

36-40 Years ()

41-45 Years ()

46-50 Years ()

51-55 Years ()

Over 55 Years ()

2. What is your level of education?

KCPE Level ()

KCSE Level ()

Diploma Level ()

Graduate ()

Post Graduate ()

3. Which of the following categories best describes your job role?

Front Office and Operations ()

Food and beverage ()

Finance and Administration ()

- Human Resource ()
- Food production ()
- Management ()
- Health and Safety ()
- Housekeeping and Laundry ()
- Maintenance and repair ()
- Security ()
- Procurement ()
- Information technology and resource based ()

4. How long have you worked in the hotel industry?

- 0-5 Years ()
- 6-10 Years ()
- 11-15 Years ()
- Over 15 Years ()

5. a) Does the hotel use any social media?

- Yes ()
- No ()

b) If yes to question 5a) above, which social media is used in your hotel?

Face Book	()
Twitter	()
Instagram	()
MySite	()
Google +	()

YouTube	()
Skype	()
Myspace	()
Linkedin	()

Use of social networking as a strategic marketing tool

6. a) Does your hotel use Social media for marketing purposes?

Yes ()

No ()

b) If yes to the question 6a) above, answer 6b), 6c) and 6d) to what extent are the following Social media networking sites used for marketing purposes? (Use the given scale)

1. Frequently used 2. Rarely used 3. Not used at all 4. Don't Know

Social Media	1	2	3	4
Face Book				
Twitter				
Instagram				
MySite				
Google +				
YouTube				
Skype				
Myspace				
Linkedin				

c) To what extent are the following Social Media networking forms used in your Hotel? (Use the given scale)

1. Frequently used 2. Rarely used 3. Not used at all 4. Don't Know

Social Media Networking form	1	2	3	4
Use of Podcasts on company site				
Blogging				
Micro Blogging				
Face book Posts				
Twitter Feeds				
YouTube Videos				
Skype				
Other				

d) In what ways does your hotel use the social media for marketing purposes?

(Tick all that apply)

- Introduction of new products/services ()
- Elaboration on product features ()
- Networking with potential customers ()
- Publicising their products ()

EFFECT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON BRAND AWARENESS

7. a) Does your hotel use social networking sites for branding purposes?

- Yes ()
- No ()

If yes to question 7a) answer 7b) to what extent are the following social media sites used for branding purposes? (Use the given scale)

1. Frequently used 2. Rarely used 3. Not used at all 4. Don't Know

Social Media	1	2	3	4
Face Book				
Twitter				
Instagram				
MySite				
Google +				
YouTube				
Linkedin				
Skype				
Myspace				

c) In what ways does your hotel engage in social media to create brand awareness?

- Discussing your hotel culture e.g. Ways of working ()
- Discussing your hotel heritage e.g. Origins ()
- Discussing product features ()
- Facebook Posts ()
- Twitter Feeds ()
- YouTube Videos ()
- Skype ()
- Other ()

8. To what extent does your hotel use the following brand awareness measures/Metrics on your Social media?(Use given scale)

1. Frequently used 2. Rarely used 3. Not used at all 4. Don't Know

	1	2	3	4
Potential Reach (Number of followers)				
Mentions Per time period (Times brand talked online for a given period)				
Inbound Links (Number of sites linking to you)				
Share of Voice (Number of times mentioned in comparison to competition)				
Share of Conversations (Number of times mentioned in conversations relevant to your industry)				

EFFECT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AS AN INFORMATION/EDUCATION TOOL

9. What kind of information is accessible about your hotel through social media? (Tick all that apply)

- Location and contacts ()
- Hotel Menus ()
- Amenities in the vicinity of the hotel e.g. cinema Halls, Shopping Malls etc ()
- Hotel facilities e.g. swimming pool, therapy and beauty ()
- Technical expertise information of key staff e.g. Chefs. ()
- Hotel Vision & Mission ()
- Hotel's Culture and Heritage ()
- Other(specify) ()

10. In what ways is the hotel information cascaded through social media?

(Tick all that apply)

Photographs ()

Podcasts from hotel directors/management ()

Blogs/Micro blogs ()

Feeds ()

Others.....

EFFECT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON SALES

11. a) Does your Hotel use Social Media for the purposes of sales?

Yes ()

No ()

If yes to question 11a) above, to what extent are the following social media sites used for sales purposes? (Use the given scale)

1. Frequently used 2. Rarely used 3. Not used at all 4. Don't Know

Social Media	1	2	3	4
Facebook				
Twitter				
Instagram				
MySite				
Google +				
YouTube				
Skype				
Myspace				

Linkedin				
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12. How do you rank the social networking sites efficiency on the given sales oriented activities (Used the given scale)

1. Very Effective 2. Effective 3. Ineffective 4. Don't Know

Sales Oriented Activity	1	2	3	4
Prospecting				
Closing Sales				
Clarification on service/product features				
Referrals and Networking				
Market Intelligence Gathering				
Other.....				

PART D: EFFECT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

13. a) Does your hotel use social media for the purposes of Customer Service?

Yes ()

No ()

If yes to question 13a) above, to what extent are the following Social Media sites used for sales purposes? (Use the given scale)

1. Frequently used 2. Rarely used 3. Not used at all 4. Don't Know

Social Media	1	2	3	4
Face Book				
Twitter				
Instagram				

MySite				
Google +				
YouTube				
Skype				
Linkedin				
MySpace				

14. How do you rank the Social networking sites efficiency on the given

Customer service oriented activities (Used the given scale)

1. Very Effective 2. Effective 3. Ineffective 4. Don't Know

Customer Oriented Activity	1	2	3	4
Complaint Capturing				
Complaint Resolution				
Compliments Capturing				
Sharing of best practices on services/products				
Enhancing customer experience/initiatives				
Customer on boarding/Welcome				

THANK YOU