

This chapter introduces the role of the Internet and particularly social media in today's economy. The reader gets an overview of the topics covered in the subsequent chapters and of the extent to which these topics relate to the different departments in an organization. Evidence is given that social media are not limited to marketing or information technology (IT), but that a multitude of departments are involved. This multidisciplinary approach of social media constitutes the main thread of the book in order to determine, execute, and evaluate social media strategies that help achieve business objectives and create value.

1.1 Introduction to the Internet

1.1.1 What Happens on the Internet?

Nowadays, children are part of a digital generation, and they can hardly image a world without the Internet, smartphones, tablets, games, and apps. Still, only a few decades ago, this was normal business. See, for instance, the following video in which children of today react to computers from the 1980s: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PF7EgEnglk#t=440#t=25>.

Instead, another video shows the world of today: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUCfFchwlw>.

Social media can be seen as part of the Internet evolution. While the first Internet generation primarily looked for information in the 1990s, we now use the Internet to share information and opinions and to collaborate or participate in online content. Given its high impact on our daily lives and on today's economy, the Internet can also be called a revolution instead of only an evolution.

The Internet impacts on both online and offline relationships. For instance, more people meet online and dating sites are flourishing. While the content of social media tools (e.g., Twitter™, Facebook™, YouTube™, Google+™) might get censored to some degree in certain countries (e.g., China), other countries (e.g.,

Egypt) accept that babies are named after “Facebook™” or “Twitter™.” Nevertheless, many people have already shared online pictures of offline events, possibly without well considering who might actually see those pictures. For instance, what if anyone can see pictures of your holiday or party (let’s say your ex-partner, your parents, or total strangers)? Bloomers or blunders are easily made if the access rights are not strictly defined or if you release pictures to all your Facebook™ friends without considering that also your parents are on your list of Facebook™ friends, for instance.

Social media may also have a business impact. For instance, regarding someone’s career, what if an (current or future) employer can see personal pictures of employees or candidates on social media? Furthermore, organizations seem forced to adopt social media and even to adapt to social media content, because people tend to have more trust in online recommendations about a brand and its products or services rather than in traditional advertisements.

Given the impact of social media on offline relationships and organizations, it seems that the concept of “word of mouth” is changing towards “world of mouth.” The former refers to people talking to each other and influencing each other, which is relevant as people tend to believe their friends and family more than an organization that tries to sell its products or services. By changing the term “word” to “world,” it is emphasized that the Internet allows to potentially reach out to almost everyone around the globe. The latter also counts for organizations, e.g., by means of viral campaigns which take advantage of a wider spread.

Infographics can be found with a snapshot of what an Internet user will miss when he/she shuts down the Internet for only a minute. For instance, in 2013, the following examples were frequently cited:

- BuzzFeed: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uiy-KTbymqk#t=35>
- Domo: <http://www.domo.com/blog/2012/06/how-much-data-is-created-every-minute/>
- Go-Globe: <http://gizmodo.com/5813875/what-happens-in-60-seconds-on-the-internet>
- Intel: <https://plus.google.com/photos/+Intel/albums/5725383370350498033>
- Qmee: <http://blog.qmee.com/qmee-online-in-60-seconds/>

These infographics do not use the same data sources, which makes a direct comparison difficult. Nonetheless, the amounts per minute are astonishing and give an indication of the rising Internet and social media use. For instance, in 2013, they already reported on approximately six new Wikipedia™ articles published per minute, almost 200 million mails sent (of which mostly spam), more than 100 new LinkedIn™ accounts, or more than 2 million Google™ search queries per minute. Such infographics illustrate that many people seem almost addicted to the Internet. Every free minute, they check their mailbox, browse the Internet, or participate on social media. The Internet may even distract you while studying for an exam or while working. Hence, it might be tempting to open a web browser and start browsing, looking for what others are currently doing, etc.

1.1.2 Could You Live Without the Internet?

In 2012, an American journalist decided to find out what his life would be like without the Internet. He was tired of the modern way of living with its constant impulses from the Internet. Hence, *The Verge* magazine paid him to stay off the Internet during a whole year and to report on his findings. After 1 year offline, he did not feel better. He disagreed with the assumption that the Internet would make people “lonely” and/or “stupid,” as the Internet is “where people are” and allows to keep in touch with people. For instance, the journalist missed the regular Skype™ sessions with his family and the pictures of his rapidly growing nieces and nephews that were usually sent by email. To conclude, he explained that it is a matter of finding the right balance between a digital identity and a real identity, since the Internet will never replace personal relationships (The Verge 2013).

The Internet has become so ingrained in our daily lives that we might not always realize its omnipresence. For instance, take a moment to look at your own environment and find out how many people have a smartphone or a tablet, in addition to or in place of a traditional computer or laptop. The power of the Internet has also challenged the typical distinction between men and women, resulting in a third and gender-neutral category, called “geek.”

Figure 1.1 shows that the “geek” category can be symbolized by the typical power button of electronic devices. Similarly, it refers to those men and women who are extremely interested in IT (which also comprises new technologies, such as social media). For instance, “geek” people will be the first to know whenever a new smartphone is released. They are typically highly active on social media tools (e.g., Facebook™), and many geeks have their own blog to share their experience. These examples illustrate that geeks are not limited to technical profiles (e.g., software developers), but may involve anyone (even you?) who agrees that IT and social media are exciting and fun.

Nevertheless, the word “geek” still has a negative connotation and it is frequently seen as a synonym for “freak,” “fool,” or “nerd.” When looking in Wikipedia (2013), the word “geek” has also positive meanings, namely, “odd or nonmainstream people,” ranging from (1) “a peculiar or otherwise dislikeable

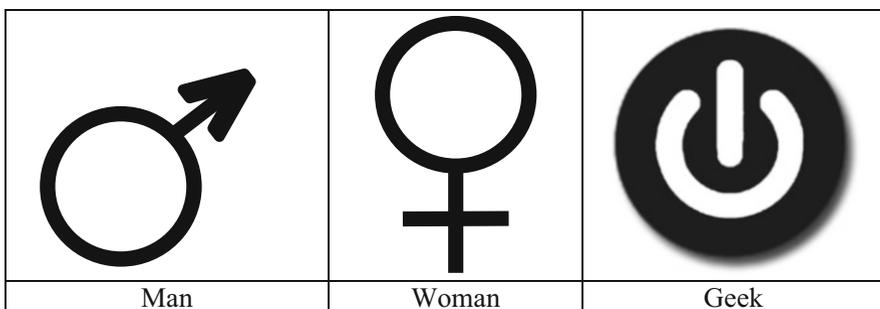


Fig. 1.1 The gender-neutral category of “geek”

person, especially one who is perceived to be overly intellectual,” to (2) “a computer expert or enthusiast” and (3) “a person heavily interested in a hobby.” In sum, although often considered as a pejorative word, the term “geek” should rather be used self-referentially, namely, as a way to refer to oneself as being a believer in or an early adopter of (technological) innovations.

The latter is an illustration of the theory on the diffusion of innovations (Rogers 2003). According to this theory, innovations in general are gradually adapted by different groups in society, typically starting with a small group of believers (i.e., “innovators” and “early adopters”), followed by the mass (i.e., “early majority” and “late majority”), and finally also nonbelievers or latecomers (i.e., laggards). Since IT and social media (i.e., social technologies) can be seen as innovations in society, in particular technological innovations, the theory can also be applied to this topic.

In order to find out whether you are rather an early adopter or a laggard, the following questions on the use of IT and social media may give an indication:

- **Which computing device do you use?**
 - (a) A traditional desktop or notebook
 - (b) A tablet or smartphone

- **How do you connect?**
 - (a) With a traditional telephone and with wires
 - (b) With a wireless cell phone or smartphone

- **How do you share memories or life stories?**
 - (a) In written letters, printed books, or exhibitions
 - (b) In personalized media that are widely accessible (e.g., a Facebook™ timeline)

- **How do you share news?**
 - (a) In a printed newspaper
 - (b) In news feeds with digital breaking news (e.g., on a website or a Twitter™ page)

- **How do you take notes in class or during a meeting?**
 - (a) Using pencil and paper
 - (b) Using a word processor (e.g., MS Word) that you possibly share in the cloud (e.g., Dropbox or Evernote) to be in synch on multiple devices

- **How do you navigate?**
 - (a) Using physical, printed copies of a map or traffic information reported on television or radio
 - (b) Using a navigation system with a digital map, possibly with live crowdsourced traffic data (e.g., Waze or Coyote)

- **How do organizations collaborate?**

- (a) In a physical meeting room with whiteboards
- (b) In a virtual meeting room, using tools to collaborate remotely, to share data, to chat, and to send instant messages (e.g., Skype™, Yammer™, Jive™)

The second options of the questions above refer to more innovative technologies or trends in the domain of IT and social media. The more questions you answered with the second option, the more likely it is that you are an early adopter and thus a geek (whether you like the term or not). If so, then studying informatics or IT management and working in the IT sector might be something for you? Maybe you are even a future innovator, such as Steve Jobs (founder of Apple Inc™), Marc Zuckerberg (founder of Facebook™), Bill Gates (founder of Microsoft™), or Larry Page and Sergey Brin (founders of Google™)?

Despite the fact that many people make use of the Internet and social media, the IT industry faces an important challenge to recruit IT-minded candidates. Although IT jobs are characterized by a dynamic work environment (e.g., not in a typical work office, with possibilities to travel and a competitive salary), the need for more IT professionals is increasingly growing. This worldwide labor shortage ranges from Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and managerial roles to business or functional analysts, developers, and IT support staff, among others. For instance, different talent shortage surveys of international recruiting firms put IT skills in the top 10 of global skills that are in the greatest demand (Hays 2012) or IT staff in the top 10 of jobs that are globally most difficult to fill (Manpower Group 2013).

As women are generally underrepresented in the IT industry, specific initiatives have been launched to promote IT courses and jobs for female candidates in particular. Some examples are as follows:

- **Events** “Girl geek dinners” (<http://girlgeekdinners.com/>): dinners where IT geeks per country can meet, share experience, and stay up to date about the latest IT innovations. Also men are welcome, but the focus is on women who are fascinated about IT and social media (e.g., consultants in public relations or IT). The dinners are perceived as being hip and trendy. Besides networking (which is important in the marketing or IT sector, among others), guest speakers are invited to inform the audience about the latest news on technological innovations.
- **Book** “Tech girls are chic (not just geek)” (<http://www.techgirlsarechic.org/>): Jenine Beekhuyzen of the Griffith University tries to stimulate girls between 12 and 16 years old to become fascinated about technology by collecting stories of Australian women working in IT. These women do not fit the stereotypical “geek” image and use their technical and nontechnical skills to have a successful career.
- **Events** “Technology takes you anywhere” (<http://techgirlsarechic.blogspot.be/2010/08/technology-takes-you-anywhere-2010.html>): based on the previously discussed book, Jenine Beekhuyzen organizes events for young Australian

girls to experience IT in a fun way. With this attempt, she tries to tackle a gender difference which is already created by the toys that children get to play with during their childhood. For instance, boys are more likely to get technology-driven toys (e.g., a microscope) than girls (e.g., dolls).

The subsequent sections and chapters will narrow the scope from IT in general to social media in particular.

1.2 Introduction to Social Media

Many social media tools (or platforms) already exist for different purposes, as illustrated in Table 1.1. Similar infographics exist for drinking, peeing, eating donuts or bacon, etc. (instead of drinking in Table 1.1). They can be found by using the search query “social media explained” in a search engine (e.g., Google™, Bing™, or Yahoo!™). These and more social media tools will also be explained in Chap. 2.

This book does not intend to give statistics per social media tool, e.g., the number of users, posts, images, videos, etc. Although such statistics are remarkably high, they are also rapidly out of date and may vary from region to region, and different sources tend to give varying numbers (which makes it difficult to compare). If interested, the following websites regularly monitor and provide a summary of social media statistics:

- Worldwide data: <http://www.statisticbrain.com/social-networking-statistics/>
- Worldwide and regional data: <http://www.statista.com/>
- Worldwide and regional data: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/>
- Longitudinal regional data for Belgium (in Dutch): <http://bvlg.blogspot.be/>

Nevertheless, the following trends are confirmed by the sources above and provide the reader with some idea about the emergence and relevance of social media tools:

- Facebook™ is the largest social media tool over the years, e.g., in terms of user accounts, the number of daily active users, and the average time spent per month. This trend is present both worldwide and per region. Facebook™ had approximately 100 million users in 2008, while this number had increased towards

Table 1.1 An example of the different purposes of social media tools

Twitter™	I need to drink	Spotify™	Now listening while I am drinking
LinkedIn™	I am good at drinking	YouTube™	Look at me while I am drinking
Facebook™	I just drank	Pinterest™	Here is what I like to drink
Swarm™	This is where I drank	Quora™	Why am I drinking?
Google+™	Let’s all drink together	Flickr™	I take pictures while I am drinking

almost 1.1 billion users at the time of its initial public offering (IPO) in May 2012. To give the reader a relative idea about the impact of Facebook™, this number is approximately 16 % of the world population with 7 billion people (although organizations can also have an account and the same person may have multiple accounts).

- Other social media tools, such as Twitter™ and LinkedIn™, are increasingly growing in the last few years. As they have fewer accounts, their yearly growth tends to be larger than Facebook™ nowadays.

If you take a few moments to visit some websites, you will soon observe that most of the websites already incorporate some form of social media use. Particularly, websites can apply social media by means of social actions and business actions. A social action refers to sharing an opinion, while a business action refers to a desired action that an organization wants website visitors to do because it involves a business return.

As shown in Table 1.2, examples of business actions are clicking on an online advertisement to reach the company website (e.g., for brand awareness), visiting the company website, subscribing to a newsletter, joining a corporate community, registering for an account on the company web shop, taking a survey, being an influencer who creates leads with product information, or purchasing a product or a service online. The distinction between social actions and business actions shows how social media can create value for an organization, i.e., by sharing content and, most importantly, by providing business returns.

Table 1.3 summarizes the main advantages and disadvantages of social media.

- A first advantage is speed. Social media can be used to react to or share content faster than traditional media (e.g., television, radio, postal letters). They are also less limited by geographical distances. For instance, the minimum response time for an electronic message on social media is much lower than for a postal letter, independent of the location of the sender and the receiver (e.g., Europe versus Australia).
- The second advantage, scalability, means that organizations can potentially reach out to more people with a lower budget. This advantage gives new

Table 1.2 Social media explained by social actions and business actions

Social actions	Business actions
Like	Click
Follow	Visit
Retweet	Subscribe
Blog post	Join
Post a comment	Register
Rate this	Take a survey
Bookmark	Qualify a lead
Recommend	Purchase
Etc.	Etc.

Table 1.3 The advantages and disadvantages of social media (Royer 2012)

Social media advantages	Social media disadvantages
Speed	New environment (learning curve)
Scalability	Transparency
Analytics	Undeletable
Interactivity	Privacy
Etc.	Etc.

opportunities to organizations with budget constraints or small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

- Thirdly, analyzing and monitoring social media use are less expensive than, for instance, collecting customer data in face-to-face interviews at a railway station or at a supermarket. The big data that are sent and shared by social media tools can also be (quantitatively) analyzed by means of business intelligence (see Chaps. 7 and 8) and IT support tools (see Chaps. 3 and 5).
- The final advantage refers to interactivity between multiple parties instead of two-way communication. For instance, by using social media, customers can give their opinions about a brand, product, or service whenever they want or ask questions to organizations whenever they feel the need to do so (i.e., also known as the “pull” principle). This contrasts from only receiving product information when an organization launches an advertisement or publishes information on the company website (i.e., the “push” principle).

Social media are, however, also confronted with disadvantages:

- As social media are relatively new, many organizations are still learning how to properly take advantage of social media and create business value. Hence, the wrap-up chapter of this book will illustrate some bloopers or common mistakes that organizations have made while using social media.
- Secondly, social media are transparent in the sense that they are traceable (i.e., it can be tracked who posted which comments, when, where, etc.). As social media are accessible to the crowd, people may also risk revealing too much private information (e.g., secret business information) and may need to take responsibility for the consequences (e.g., by resigning, when it is clear who revealed the business secret).
- Thirdly, social media content is to some degree undeletable because of the possibility to take electronic backups. Even when posts or pictures are not visible anymore for the crowd (i.e., and thus assumed to be deleted), social media tools or individuals might have stored a copy elsewhere. For instance, in the Terms of Service of social media tools, it can be mentioned that a profile picture is reusable for campaigns, even after deleting it from the profile. A separate chapter of this book will deal with such ethical and legal issues (see Sect. 11.2.2). Some attempts to remove yourself from the Internet can be found here: <http://www.wikihow.com/Delete-Yourself-from-the-Internet>. Besides trying to delete information

from websites and social media tools yourself, search engines can be contacted to request a removal of information from the search engine results pages. The latter is, however, only allowed in a few cases, as stipulated in the removal policies of particular search engines (e.g., <https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/2744324>, <https://www.bing.com/webmaster/tools/eu-privacy-request>) and following a 2014 decision of the European Court of Justice about the European citizen's "right to be forgotten."

- Finally, one of the biggest concerns of social media remains privacy. Also this topic deals with ethical and legal issues and will be discussed in the remainder of the book (Chap. 11). For instance, is it ethically correct to post a picture of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in a swimming pool? Furthermore, as people tend to release much (private) information, real risks are created in the domain of IT security (e.g., identify theft, fraud, or combining information of different social media tools by social engineering) or regarding selling big data about customers to third parties.

One possibility to predict the future of social media (i.e., as emerging social technologies) is by relying on the technological evolution graph of Gartner, Inc. (2013). This graph assumes that every new technology follows a similar evolution over time. Based on this technology evolution graph, we may suppose that social media are somewhere between their highest point of visibility (i.e., leading to social media acceptance and high expectations) and their lowest point of visibility (i.e., with organizations getting disillusioned after losing money in projects that use social media in an inappropriate way). For instance, the technology evolution graph can explain both the current social media hype and the social media bloopers of today (see also Chap. 12). Either organizations will find a more mature way of working with social media or the social technologies will disappear (or will only stay for a while with a low productivity level). Only in the first situation, organizations will better understand how to properly use social media, resulting in a relatively steady visibility level and with a relatively high productivity.

Following the above, we may expect that social media will rather stay in the future than totally disappear. In the opinion of Royer (2012), it is even possible that their productivity level remains relatively high, since human nature is characterized by a certain degree of curiosity and exhibitionism: (1) curiosity, because many people want to see what others have or do, and (2) exhibitionism, because many people also want to show what they have or do. Nonetheless, based on the traditional product life cycle (Levitt 1965), specific social media tools (i.e., as concrete applications of social media technologies) may come and go, while the principles or common characteristics may remain. For instance, we may expect that particular social media tools (e.g., Twitter™, Facebook™, YouTube™, and Google+™) may disappear over time and be replaced by other, more advanced social media tools.

1.3 Social Media as a Multidisciplinary Approach

This book intends to take a holistic view on social media from the perspective of organizations, particularly by discussing how organizations can create business value by taking a multidisciplinary approach. In order to introduce this multidisciplinary approach of social media, the current section first shows the usefulness of social media for various specialization areas of a business student, before turning to the typical departments in an organization.

The examples in Table 1.4 illustrate that social media should not be examined by marketing or IT students only, but should be part in the curriculum of every business student.

Furthermore, the multidisciplinary approach of social media can be explained by using in a typical organization chart (i.e., organogram). Therefore, Fig. 1.2 distinguishes management departments from operational or core departments and supporting departments.

Empirical studies have examined which departments are typically in charge of social media (Econsultancy 2010; IBM 2011). In most organizations, the marketing and communications (MarCom) department and/or the IT department are responsible for managing and implementing social media initiatives. Both are supporting departments. In one-fifth to a quarter of the surveyed organizations, a dedicated social media department or cross-functional team exists. This option is shown in Fig. 1.2 as a new management department, called a “social media task force,” which is led by a “Chief Social Media Officer” or a social media manager.

The business title of “Chief Social Media Officer” or “Chief Social Officer” (CSO) is only recently introduced. It refers to one of the highest-level executives in senior management, who typically reports to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CSO is usually ranked on a similar level as other CxOs in the organization—such as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) or the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)—and works cross-functionally with them. In sum, a CSO is a senior manager who is typically responsible and accountable for all social media initiatives in the organization. Although supported by a task force and the other departments, this role has to deal with all social media topics discussed in the present book (i.e., with regard to determining, executing, and evaluating the overall social media strategies; see also Sect. 1.4, Fig. 1.3) and focuses on the integration of social media into the functions of each employee (Cohen 2010).

Since this book presents a multidisciplinary approach of social media, a cross-functional task force consisting of one manager per department (as shown in Fig. 1.2 as the “social media task force”) seems the best solution. Consequently, not a single department should own social media in an organization, since social media rather belong to every department and can create business value across departments. However, with regard to value creation, McKinsey (2012) asserts that while social media may significantly raise the productivity of knowledge workers, many organizations still face challenges to change their business processes and organizational structure accordingly. They also seem to experience difficulty in creating an open, nonhierarchical culture of trust. Hence, each specific organization

Table 1.4 Examples of social media use in specialization areas for a business student

Domain	Social media use	Examples
Accountancy and taxation	For knowledge sharing	How do organizations or accountants experience the influence of (new) taxation rules?
		How can social media be used to create a specific community to explain and to talk about issues and regulation regarding accountancy and taxation?
Finance and risk management	For sentiment analysis	Will negative or positive messages in social media influence the value (i.e., rise or fall) of stocks and market shares of a certain organization?
	For social network mining	How can social media data be used to predict the risk of an investment, a loan, or an insurance?
	For crowdfunding	How can social media be used to help finance an organization’s projects?
Marketing management	For online advertising	On which social media tools should an organization advertise and how (e.g., pay-per-click versus pay-per-view)?
	For viral campaigns	How can an organization create a popular YouTube™ commercial, i.e., that viewers are eager to share with friends, colleagues, and family?
	For employer branding	How can an organization improve its image of being a good employer?
	For crisis communication	How can social media help an organization when a crisis arrives?
Strategic management and human resources	For a social media strategy	How do social media fit within an organizational strategy?
	For e-recruitment	How do human resources (HR) managers make use of LinkedIn™ to screen potential employees?
	For internal communication	How can an organization connect with its employees by using social media, e.g., to stimulate team spirit?
Public administration	For citizen participation (e-government, e-democracy)	How can a government inform, consult, or advise its citizens or let them collaborate in decision-making through social media?
IT management	For all the applications in the previous domains	IT is the foundation for all social media applications. Hence, all previous examples require people aware of IT management
	For supporting the previous domains	How can an organization monitor social media to calculate the return on invest (ROI) of social media investments (i.e., with analytical techniques of social actions and business actions, e.g., how many clicks, how many messages spread over time, how long do visitors stay on a website, how many members/topics/comments does a blog have, etc.)?

(continued)

Table 1.4 (continued)

Domain	Social media use	Examples
		<p>How can an organization screen large amounts of data and get the right information to the right people at the right time through the right channel (i.e., business intelligence, particularly data mining for sentiment analysis or social network mining)?</p> <p>How can an organization improve its visibility and rank of its social media use in a search engine such as Google™, Bing™, or Yahoo!™, thus appearing as unpaid search results (i.e., search engine optimization or SEO)?</p> <p>Etc.</p>

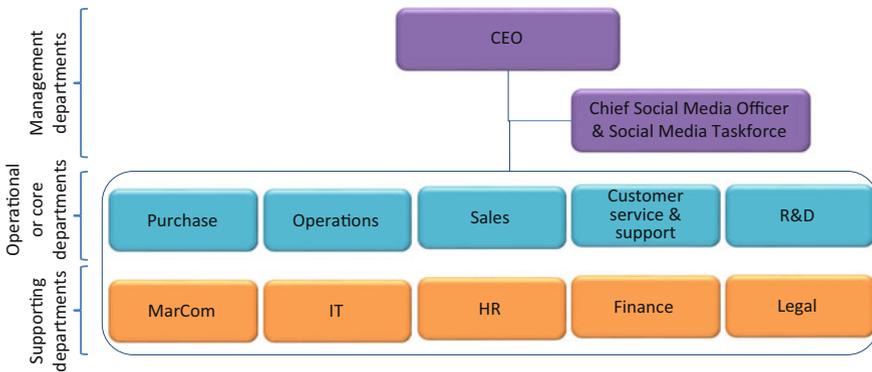


Fig. 1.2 A typical organization chart

should adopt the role of a CSO depending on its particular context. For instance, Altimeter Group (2013) presents different organization charts, ranging from a traditional and centralized chart to a so-called “hub and spoke” model which acts as a central Center of Excellence for social activities in order to support the other departments (i.e., comparable to the task force in Fig. 1.2, but without hierarchical relationship).

Figure 1.2 will be used throughout the book to specify in which departments social media have the potential to create business value for recent business topics. Depending on the chapter topic, one or more departments are primarily involved. By combining all topics together, this book addresses the different departments and thus gives evidence of the multidisciplinary approach of social media from the perspective of organizations.

1.4 Learning Objectives of this Book

This book is not about an individual reader who can apply social media for personal use in his/her spare time. Thus, this book does not intend to explain how the reader can socialize or create a personal page on Facebook™, tweet on Twitter™, keep a personal blog up to date, create an electronic résumé for future jobs, etc. Instead, this book is written from the perspective of (public or private) organizations (i.e., primarily targeting readers in their role of business students and—future—employees or employers). It intends to answer the question: “How can organizations create business value by using social media?”

The **main learning objectives** of this book are as follows:

- **Proper use.** Being able to use social media management in a proper way, taking into account the do’s and don’ts
- **Knowledge.** Obtaining knowledge of the impact of social media management for organizations, namely, by (1) understanding the theories and applications of social media and (2) understanding which social media tools are appropriate for which situations
- **Strategic insights.** Acquiring insight into the social media strategies of organizations, for instance, regarding collecting and analyzing information on the social media use of a specific organization
- **Critical reasoning.** Sharpening critical reflection and reasoning skills, particularly by (1) evaluating how value can be created from social media and (2) formulating suggestions for improvement
- **Lifelong learning.** Stimulating lifelong learning by illustrating recent developments in IT management, particularly social media

The practical relevance of this book can be explained by the way people communicate with each other and the differences over time. In particular, the following evolution has taken place: (1) from “people as people” in ancient times (i.e., one-to-one communication), (2) over “people as mass” as from the fifteenth century (i.e., mass communication, e.g., printed books, but also newspapers, radio, television), (3) to “people as data” and “people as designers” in the twenty-first century. Similar to the first evolution phase, the third phase refers to more personalized communication, albeit now via online activities such as (un)subscribing, (de)friending, (un)liking, etc. The focus is on sending and receiving messages relevant to the people involved (instead of to the mass) and on “pulling” instead of “pushing” information (see Table 1.3).

- **People as data.** Social media can reveal much personal information about its users (e.g., hobbies on Facebook™, job experience on LinkedIn™, etc.). Organizations can use this background information to provide the Internet user with information that is most relevant to his/her profile in order to better meet his/her specific needs. This evolution relates to topics such as targeted marketing with online advertisements or viral campaigns (see Chap. 4), social customer

relationship management (see Chap. 5), but also business intelligence with opinion mining (see Chap. 7) and social network analysis with predictive mining (see Chap. 8), as well as crowdfunding (see Chap. 10). Social media also allow targeting future employees by means of e-recruitment (see Chap. 9).

- **People as designers.** Since content has become increasingly important, power is rather within social media communities than within an organization. For instance, new products or services are more likely to survive the first year after having received community feedback during the conception phase (R&D). Instead of controlling the message in a top-down hierarchy, organizations should rather involve and collaborate with all parties in an equal partnership as good ideas may come from everywhere. Some examples of codesign or cocreation are “bring your own device” (BYOD) to give employees the freedom to choose the type of laptop or cell phone they want (instead of standardization) or fine-tuning products to individual customer needs (e.g., giving the choice between either a weekend trip or a midweek with 40 % off). Other real-life examples are (1) Ice Watch™, an SME with more than five million Facebook™ “likes,” which proved that user feedback can lead to more enthusiastic followers (<https://www.facebook.com/ice.watch>); (2) LEGO™, the producer of toy building bricks, which proved that enthusiastic fans can propose new product ideas with profit sharing (<http://www.legoclick.com/>, <https://www.youtube.com/user/legoclick>, <https://twitter.com/legoclick>); and (3) Nike™, which let customers customize their ideal pair of shoes, e.g., by choosing the color (http://store.nike.com/us/en_us/). In these examples, employees, customers, and Internet users in general have become co-owners or cocreators and are thus sources of value creation because they are more likely to become advocates of the organization and its products and services. For more information, see Chap. 5 on social customer relationship management. Before people may become codesigners, however, they must be aware of the organization’s existence and related initiatives. Therefore, an organization can apply search engine optimization (see Chap. 6) to help Internet users find the corporate web pages. Finally, ideas that are collected from the crowd might also be sponsored by means of crowdfunding based on early promotion and public discussion (see Chap. 10).

The social purpose or strength of social media is that they are able to unite people based on common ground (e.g., the reasons why like-minded people love a certain product or service), with common ground being a better motivator than money. For instance, fans of a brand may influence other people to buy certain products or services and become brand advocates as such. Enthusiastic fans are also more likely to voluntarily manage a community, which can reinforce employer branding and product branding, among others. Furthermore, by means of social media, SMEs may appear bigger (e.g., by increasing their voice), while larger organizations may appear smaller (i.e., more accessible and responsive) (MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte 2012). Independent of the organization size, social media might help organizations survive or become more competitive by

being more responsive to change after listening to customers and collecting innovative ideas from the crowd.

1.5 Overview of the Book Chapters

The topics in this book are summarized in Fig. 1.3 and aim to determine, execute, and evaluate a social media strategy. The figure shows that social media use by organizations should follow one or more social media strategies, which in turn should be in line with the overall organizational strategy. In particular, social media actions should not be separated from other business actions, as organizations should act in accordance with their overall strategy in order to support the organization's mission and business objectives.

Subsequently, an overview of the different book chapters is given.

- **Social media definitions, types, and tools.** Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the mainstream social media tools (e.g., Facebook™, Twitter™, LinkedIn™, etc.) and how they can be classified in social media types. This chapter defines what is actually meant by social media and what not. It also gives an idea about which social media types are more suited for certain purposes or business goals.
- **Social media strategy and return on investment (ROI).** Chapter 3 allows the reader to strategically think about social media, to derive business actions in order to realize a social media strategy, and to evaluate whether the business goals have been reached. This chapter emphasizes that social media should not



Fig. 1.3 An overview of the topics in this book

be used ad hoc, but should serve a broader organizational strategy, which in turn contributes to the higher vision, values, and mission of the organization. Regarding the multidisciplinary approach, the CEO together with the MarCom department usually copes with strategy setting. The CEO is also responsible for communicating about policies and organizational goals. Social media monitoring and analytics can be done by the MarCom and/or the IT department, whereas an evaluation of the return on investment (ROI) also involves the finance department. The subsequent chapters present possible social media strategies involving different departments.

- **Online advertising and viral campaigns.** Chapter 4 is typically situated in the MarCom department for executing a social media strategy by means of online ads or viral marketing campaigns. This chapter does not intend to elaborate on general marketing insights that relate to ads and campaigns, but will rather focus on those aspects typical for an online context. Furthermore, the chapter explains how the corresponding social media monitoring and analytics are typically done by the MarCom and/or the IT department.
- **Social customer relationship management (CRM).** As social CRM is the collection of social media initiatives in an organization that try to enhance customer satisfaction and ultimately loyalty, Chap. 5 deals with all forms of direct contact between an organization and its customers and suppliers. Hence, social CRM is broader than advertisements or viral campaigns and also gives an important role to helpdesks, among others. Regarding the multidisciplinary approach, typical CRM departments are closely linked to customers, particularly: (1) the MarCom for organizing marketing activities, (2) the sales department for those activities to sell products or services, and (3) the customer service and support department, also called after-sales, with a helpdesk to respond to customer inquiries or questions and to handle requests or complaints. Other departments linked to social CRM are (1) the Research and Development (R&D) to innovate in close collaboration with stakeholders (e.g., employees, suppliers, or customers) from idea generation to the final development of products and services, (2) the operations department for internal collaboration with social media (e.g., internal social media use, e.g., Yammer™; see Chap. 2) and for changing business processes or the organization's way of working based on customer feedback received by social media, (3) the purchase department for business-to-business social media (as the organization itself is also a customer of its suppliers) and for better forecasting, (4) the IT for monitoring and social media analytics, and (5) the finance department for evaluating ROI (similar to Chap. 3).
- **Search engine optimization.** In Chap. 6, the reader will learn how to make a website, blog, or social media page more visible and thus more accessible to people. It is shown that if a page appears higher on a search engine results page (e.g., Google™, Bing™, or Yahoo!™), significantly more people will click on the URL and visit the web page. Hence, tips and tricks are explained that facilitate a higher ranking for websites, blogs, or other social media pages in

search engines. Regarding the multidisciplinary approach, SEO is generally situated in the IT department.

- **Opinion mining and sentiment analysis (Business intelligence 1).** Chapter 7 deals with the first part of business intelligence, in which social media content is analyzed as big data in order to elicit knowledge. This chapter investigates the degree to which customer reviews and ratings may affect the behavior of others and thus business outcomes (e.g., sales). Regarding the multidisciplinary approach, this chapter is mainly situated in the IT department.
- **Social network data (Business intelligence 2).** The business intelligence approach is further explained in Chap. 8, which focuses on identifying and analyzing how people profiles or client types are linked to each other. For instance, it can be used to predict trends like future sales or customer retention by answering a question such as: “Given that a particular person—say John—has bought a service (or churned), what is the probability that his friends or people with similar characteristics as John will buy the same service (or churn)?” As in the previous chapter, social network mining is mainly related to the IT department. The mining results can be input for targeted marketing, e.g., to increase sales, but also for other domains such as fraud detection, credit risk scoring, etc.
- **e-Recruitment.** Chapter 9 clarifies how organizations can recruit and how people can get recruited via social media. Social media tools, e.g., Facebook™ or Twitter™, can be used to find the right people for a job vacancy, but also specialized professional communities exist, such as LinkedIn™. Legislation regarding e-recruitment is briefly discussed in this chapter. For instance, can someone get fired because of the content he/she writes in social media posts? Regarding the multidisciplinary approach, this chapter is mainly situated in the human resources (HR) department.
- **Crowdfunding.** How can we convince other people to invest in our projects or ideas, for instance, if we are a starting company, an SME, an artist, etc.? Chapter 10 shows how social media can help organizations raise money from the crowd and ultimately relates to the finance department.
- **Legal and ethical issues in social media.** Chapter 11 elaborates on the do’s and don’ts regarding social media use in organizations. By focusing on the legal department, this chapter tries to clarify who is responsible for social media content written by an employee (i.e., the employee or the employer?), what the possible consequences are for hiring and firing, who the owner is of social media content when getting fired or after death (i.e., the employee, the employer, or the social media tool?), etc. Concepts such as privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, intellectual property, Terms of Service, and digital afterlife are discussed.
- **Wrap-up.** Chapter 12 reconsiders the main learning objectives of the present book, as previously stipulated in this chapter. It concludes with multidisciplinary case studies and assignments to apply the insights and knowledge obtained throughout the different chapters. The purpose of this final chapter is to encourage the reader to critically reflect on how specific organizations can combine the different perspectives discussed in this book in order to take advantage of social media and create business value.

1.6 Takeaways

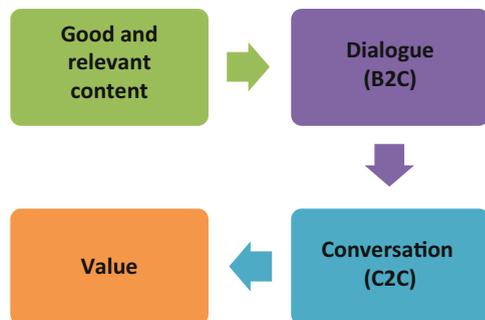
Today, social media are omnipresent and may influence online relationships between people, as well as their offline relationships. Since many people already use one or another social media tool, organizations are increasingly adopting social media to create business value.

The major value-increasing factor for social media is content (see Fig. 1.4). The more relevant social media content is to people, the more likely they will share and talk about it, which may lead to diverse business outcomes (e.g., increasing sales or customer loyalty, acquiring new customers, image building, brand recognition, employer branding, etc.). A snowball effect may start with a dialogue between two parties, e.g., formal business-to-consumer (B2C) communication, and may evolve towards conversations with other parties (C2C), e.g., informal consumer-to-consumer communication.

As it is all about good and relevant content, content management has become a real currency for organizations (instead of only money). This way, social media can give new opportunities to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that have smaller budgets than, for instance, internationals. It is, however, increasingly important that customers and prospects follow an organization before a snowball effect with content sharing and talking can take place. Hence, organizations should also pay attention to conversation management (i.e., to properly communicate with customers and prospects) as well as knowledge management (i.e., to gather information about customers and prospects in order to determine what they find relevant) and this among others by combining information from different social media tools through so-called social engineering.

Value creation happens across the departments of an organization and is not limited to marketing (e.g., for online ads or viral campaigns) or IT (i.e., in the sense of social technologies). Although social media ownership is still mainly located at these departments, a better alternative would be to create a social media task force as a cross-functional team with one manager per department and a Chief Social Media Officer. Since social media are relatively new, such a task force is still absent in most organizations.

Fig. 1.4 The value-enabling effect of social media



One example to illustrate the multidisciplinary approach of social media concerns monitoring complaints on social media and web care (i.e., IT department) for customer support (i.e., after-sales department), which insights can be used in future marketing efforts (i.e., marketing department) and/or to improve products or services accordingly (i.e., R&D and the operations department). This kind of interconnectivity is facilitated by IT and social media, but is not necessarily restricted to the boundaries of a single organization. Also collaboration between organizations can be facilitated in connected networks or partnerships, which allows organizations to specialize themselves. The latter is of particular interest for SMEs which may not have a large budget to invest in all departments.

1.7 Self-Test

- Can you explain how social media relate to the theory on the diffusion of innovations?
- Do you think social media will stay or not? Give a rational argumentation to motivate your choice.
- Can you explain why and to which degree social media require a multidisciplinary approach? Which departments are involved when?
- How would you describe the role and profile of a Chief Social Media Officer? And in your opinion, to which degree does this role differ from the role of CIO and CMO?
- Can you specify how the different chapters in this book relate to each other?

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