

## Chapter 36

# The Role of Social Media in International Advertising

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter introduces the role of social media in international advertising, thus explaining the concept of social media; the overview of international advertising; the relationship between social media and international advertising; the significance of network capability describing the concept of network capability, the application of network capability, and the emerging research trends in network capability; the significance of image transferability describing the concept of image transferability, the application of image transferability, and the emerging research trends in image transferability; and the significance of personal extensibility describing the concept of personal extensibility, the application of personal extensibility, and the emerging research trends in personal extensibility. Social media has the opportunity to capitalize on network capability to bring people together, image transferability which enables marketers to build the brand with larger audiences than ever before, and personal extensibility which allows interactions and relationships in international advertising.*

### INTRODUCTION

The modern wave of communication brings challenges and risks in developing new communication channels between organizations and customers. Social media opens the channels of communication among stakeholders such as businesses, universities, research institutes, suppliers, customers, users, and competitors. Social media is defined as a series of technological innovation in terms of both hardware and software that facilitates inexpensive content creation, interaction, and interoperability by online users (Berthon, Pitt, Plangger, & Shapiro, 2012). The diffusion of social media has opened new possibilities for stakeholder communication (Saxton & Guo, 2014). Social media is implemented in modern organizations as the communication tool among employees (Leonardi, Huysman, & Steinfield, 2013). The use of social media is pervasive and growing rapidly (Fardouly, Diedrichs, Vartanian, & Halliwell, 2015). Employers utilize social media as a mechanism to screen potential job candidates (Curran, Draus,

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Schrager, & Zappala, 2014). Organizations use social media in order to raise community awareness (Campbell, Lambright, & Wells, 2014). The application of social media is a positive predictor of the level of network heterogeneity on social network service and that the relationship is mediated by several news-related activities, such as getting news, news posting, and talking about politics on social network service (Lee, Choi, Kim, & Kim, 2014). The utilization of social media increases open communication and knowledge sharing in global business (Gibbs, Rozaidi, & Eisenberg, 2013).

In the context of today's socially-networked-society, the new perspectives of social media applications are required to be considered (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). Social media goes to mobile, breaking ground in traditional time-location restrictions (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). Advertising plays a prominent role in the overall economy (Erickson, 2014). Advertising is an increasingly important business activity (Rauch, 2013). Advertising is a crucial tool for the demand creation and market expansion (Liu, Cai, & Tsay, 2014). Advertising contributes to consumers' knowledge about quality products which lead to positive attitude toward advertisement (Feiz, Fakharyan, Jalilvand, & Hashemi, 2013). To the extent that advertisements themselves shape overall attitude toward advertising, offers aimed at helping consumers better understand the role of advertising in the marketplace; and running advertising that is honest, fresh, entertaining and informative, will make advertising a more viable part of the marketing mix (Feiz et al., 2013). The strength of this chapter is on the thorough literature consolidation of social media in international advertising. The extant literatures of social media provide a contribution to practitioners and researchers by describing a comprehensive view of the functional applications of social media to appeal to different segments of social media in order to maximize the business impact of social media in international advertising.

## **BACKGROUND**

Social media can be an effective vehicle for international advertisers based on executing and making good use of the three social media capabilities (i.e., network capability, image transferability, and personal extensibility) in the international marketplace (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). The combination of network capability, image transferability, and personal extensibility creates opportunity for advertisers by cutting across these boundaries. Network capability allows for communications across boundaries that are faster and more frequent than ever before and has had a big impact on global marketers. Image transferability offers considerable brand building capability for marketers as advertising in social media can be used to build and reinforce brand image with consumers across the world. The personal extensibility allows marketers to capitalize on consumers' desire for more interaction with others across cultures (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013).

Advertising has become the most efficient way for companies to transmit product information to consumers (Wang, Cheng, & Chu, 2013). Advertising plays an important role during the phase of information search (Adhikary, 2014). Advertising is a paid message used to promote a product, service or an idea to a specific audience. International advertising refers to advertising which is carried out in multiple countries around the world. Effective international advertising requires specialized cultural knowledge that considers differences between target audiences in different countries. International advertising is considered not only a communication process, but a business activity, an industry and a reflection of society as a whole. The primary goal of advertising is to effectively communicate with the target audience. The communication process involves multiple aspects which are affected by media, culture, literacy

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