

Chapter 17

A Model for Product Design Process via Social Media

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ABSTRACT

Recently, with the rapid development of information and communication technologies, alternative solutions have emerged to respond to changing user requirements. The most important of these are digital media and technologies that allow users to share with each other and create media content within individuals or groups. These platforms, called social media, offer a technological infrastructure where sharing and discussion are principle concepts. Social media can provide not only increase in communication, but also it allows customers to take an active role in creating value in business. This means that social media have changed the way companies innovate with individuals. The purpose of the research is to reveal how social media is used for product development in the context of one of the most used technique by open systems called co-creation approach. This chapter can be considered as a model designed to demonstrate the use of social media's power.

INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of mobile technology and with it, the increased use of Internet, the length of time people spend on social media has significantly increased. . According to reports from Hootsuite and We are Social, users in Turkey spend an average of four hours a day on social media. As a consequence of that, companies are encouraged to play an active role in social media. Because of that, websites of companies are inadequate or no longer important; companies being aware of the potential of the social media to engage with customers use this channel for different purposes such as improving search engine

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rankings, forming better customer satisfaction, improving brand loyalty, boosting sales and partnering influencers. Besides that, plenty of institutions benefit from social media for communication purposes such as managing their reputation management, communicating about crisis, engaging customers and audiences customer service and customer support.

Recently, important multinational firms have left their closed structure and innovation practices. As a result of this companies have started to behave according to open systems using social media. It is obvious that social media has many advantages in terms of co-innovation with external partners. These advantages include, better interaction with customers, idea generation and feedback, business intelligence that helps companies identify social environment, identification of new people outside the ecosystem and branding activities. From the co-creation perspective, social media enables conduct result-oriented research, from the evaluation of an existing product to the development of an innovative product.

The purpose of the research presented here is to study the power of social media to create a new product. It is also aimed at developing a model for those organizations that have similar systems within other organizational structures. The logo of Management Information Systems Department, which is founded few years ago in Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Dokuz Eylül University, was designed via social media through this research.

BACKGROUND

The term social media includes online tools and websites that enable users to interact with each other by sharing their knowledge, views and interests (Ozel, 2014). According to Social Networking and Media Association, social media refers to the effective use of Web 2.0 tools to provide a more participatory Web environment. Besides that, social media is mainly focused on the concept of user-generated content (UGC). It also includes the ability of people to share, comment, discuss and even evaluate. Innovations such as corporate and personal blogs, social networks, wikis, photo and video sharing sites, forums and newsgroups, virtual worlds, social bookmarking are technologies in the social media category (Grutzmacher, 2011).

Asur and Hubermann (2010) showed in their work that social media, thanks to its ease of use, accessibility and speed, can change the social agenda and bring new trends to light. Kaplan and Heinlein (2010) believed that social media has become more preferable because of the lower cost and greater impact compared to the traditional media. Mayfield (2008) asserts that social media shares most of the features of participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. Taprial and Kanwar (2012) characterize five properties that distinguish social media from traditional media. They are accessibility, speed, interactivity, longevity and reach. Chen (2014) presents additional characteristics of social media which include speed and accessibility as well.

Contrary to popular belief, social media does not consist of only social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn but it also includes applications enabling collaborative projects, blogs & microblogs, content communities, virtual social or game worlds. In other words, social media applications are beyond the social networking sites and cover a broad range of tools and platforms (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Above mentioned features of social media tools have become increasingly popular. This popularity attracts not only individuals but also businesses. Besides that, social media has changed the paradigm of innovation for organizations. This provides a novel approach based on openness for firm innovation

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