How can the use of Social Media Influence the way Organisations Interact with Their Customers?

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “How can the use of social media influence the way organisations interact with their customers?” is entirely my own work, and it has never been submitted nor is it currently being submitted for any other degree.

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the impact social media is having upon organisations and how these organisations are adapting to numerous changes in the public’s perceptions of social media in order to retain and boost market share. Through secondary research, it has been demonstrated that the majority of organisations are now using some form of social media platform for advertisement, building customer relationships and increasing awareness. Examples of organisations such as charities were given to provide relevant information about how such organisations use social media for marketing purposes.

It was also important to consider both the potential benefits and the drawbacks that adopting social media strategies are having on small and large organisations whether profit-making or not. The findings from primary research in the form of interviews showed that the majority of interviewees agreed that social media was a more beneficial form of advertising and examples were given to back this statement up.

An additional feature to this research was to discover if organisations are embracing “bring your own device” (BYOD) and whether this has a beneficial effect on the business or creates new problems. Through primary research this dissertation found that organisations do allow staff to bring certain devices into the workplace, however, both organisations only allow staff to work on the computer facilities provided by the company to ensure private data is not transferred outside the organisation.

This dissertation found that social media is a multifaceted tool to improve numerous aspects of business operations. Recommendations were given based on the primary and secondary research gathered, to ensure organisations use social media to the best of their ability and avoid legal breaches and tracking what employees are using these sites for.
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1. **Introduction**

1.1 **Aim**

To outline the importance of social media within the current industry focusing on the benefits and downfalls of social networking sites within a business. Also, to analyse the increase of security required due to the demand of social media and “bring your own device” (BYOD) policy used within organisations.

1.2 **Objectives**

1. To discover the importance of using social media within an organisation for advertisement and engagement, focusing on the benefits and drawbacks organisations have encountered.

2. To investigate whether or not employees take their own devices such as laptops/smartphones into the workplace and what security does the organisations have in place to allow safety over personal data using primary research in the form of an interview.

3. To critically evaluate what employees think about using social media in work including benefits and disadvantages of using social media for the company using
primary-research.

4. To analyse what a managers views are on using social media within the workplace for the benefit of the company, and what procedures are set in place to ensure staff are not using social media for personal use on company time using primary research.

5. To produce a recommendation list for organisations wishing to use social media to keep up with competitors and increase their sales and popularity.

1.3 Introduction

Social marketers can adopt various social media platforms to engage and communicate with thousands to millions of individuals at a very low cost, to promote social change and impact lifestyle choices (Thackeray et al., 2008). The focal point of this dissertation is the use of social media platforms, within an organisation, to improve marketing strategies. The main social media platforms investigated in this dissertation were Facebook and Twitter. Particular focus was paid to the relative advantages and disadvantages that occur when using social media; with emphasis on when employees use their own device in work (if allowed) and the effect this has on the organisation in terms of profit, security and recognition.

Social media can provide numerous opportunities for organisations to market their products to new and existing customers, while interacting with clientele to promote services at a high standard (Cross, 2013). The previous decade has seen a boom in social media (the use of such platforms is commonplace for most people, especially in Western countries). Organisations could use social media as a pathway to influence consumer’s perceptions of the firm through various marketing ploys and the growing use of advertising on social networks leads to an upsurge of engagement and hopefully popularity, which may have a knock-on effect of increased revenue. It is found that companies are increasingly investing in advertising especially where social media is concerned, spending an estimated $4.3 billion in total annually (Williamson, 2011). In more recent years, a report showed that since 2012 -2013 social media users had risen by 18%, and by 2017 there should be around 2.55 billion active users on social media sites (eMarketer, 2013). These results seem to be increasing each year, so it was of interest to investigate whether or not organisations are noticing these rises and are going to adopt social media within the workplace, if not implemented already, to hopefully result in many benefits for their organisation.
The reason for choosing this specific topic area was due to how widespread and popular social media has become, not merely for personal use but for businesses as a way of engaging with existing and potential customers. Of particular interest were the uses of employee’s own devices to meet organisations social media requirements and whether this posed a threat to the business. Once all research was conducted recommendations for organisations on how to improve their services while using social media and how to avoid catastrophic errors whilst partaking in marketing through social media were made.

The literature review that follows critically analyses previous research undertaken, providing evidence of whether social media has influenced organisational reputation and marketing approaches. The literature review will be broken down into specific sections in order to ensure all areas of the research question have been addressed.

The first section will look at how social media is used within organisations. Here, reference will be made to the burgeoning importance of social media and how organisations are adopting it for marketing purposes. The following section will demonstrate why organisations use social media. Research will be made into the importance of social media and why organisations are using it so prominently for marketing.

Furthermore, the sections to follow will outline the main advantages and disadvantages of using social media within organisations; with an abundance of examples of organisations that have encountered both success and failure whilst using social media.

Finally, reference will be made to “bring your own device” (BYOD) to outline the main areas of concern when allowing staff to use their own device on company time and how it can benefit an organisation.

Once the literature review is presented and the aims and objectives have been contextualised, a methodology will be developed. The methodology will outline the methods deployed in this dissertation to conduct this research and gather data from the organisations. A description of the primary research methods for this dissertation will also be included in the methodology. A conclusion will follow the methodology where the objectives will be revisited to ensure all areas of the study have been addressed to produce a firm conclusion and recommendation section.
1.4 Overview of Organisations Chosen for Discussion

All of the supporting research found and discussed helped to justify the discussion and conclusion section of this dissertation as reference was made back to work found through secondary research methods. During the discussion section of this dissertation Vitality Gym and Spa was addressed and interviews took place with management and employees to discover what they are using social media for and who their target audience is. The gym is a for-profit organisation, which uses social media to promote their offers, products and services while trying to gain new customers. The gym is based in Cardiff City Centre where many students live; the gym is aware of its market and offer deals for students which will help them to sell more memberships.

In contrast to this organisation, it was decided that Oxfam Online Cardiff, an independent Oxfam store with an office that sells and promotes Oxfam offers, events, products and services on Oxfam’s online website, was chosen. It was of interest to gather views from employees/volunteers at these organisations to see what they feel social media is doing for their organisation in terms of advertising. A manager and employees from these organisations were interviewed to gather as many different views and opinions on using social media within the workplace as possible.

The most appropriate technique to strengthen the validity of the results found from primary research was to conduct research in both an organisation driven by profit and one that is non-profit orientated. This is largely because both organisations should use some form of social media but this will be for different reasons and it was important for this dissertation to explore opinions from two opposite organisations, as one would use social media for profit and gaining new members, and the other to increase donations and awareness, to allow for a wide range of responses.

1.5 Background

“More consumers are connected than ever before, and every second your company is not engaging them in social media is a wasted opportunity. So, get on board” (Zarrella, 2010:p5). This book outlines how social media is playing a huge role in the way organisations are advertising their goods and services. According to Zarrella, (2010) over 250 million people were using Facebook, and Twitter had over 14 million accounts. These statistics were taken during 2010 and they have, and will continue to grow. There is proof of
this in recent years as Facebook has over 750 million visitors each month, while Twitter has over 250 million visitors each month (Davenport, 2014). It was also found that Facebook now has 1.3 billion active users each month (Facebook Statistics, 2014). This demonstrates the enormous potential opportunity firms are currently utilising to extend their organisational reach through marketing on social media platforms (especially Facebook and Twitter). This advertising often also comes at a fraction of the price of traditional above-the-line promotional strategies, such as flyers or media advertisements (Kirtis and Karahan, 2011) therefore organisations would benefit from using it due to money being saved.

This dissertation focuses on the importance of social media, and how it is progressing within industry. It will also focus on some areas of concern for firms such as security and monitoring staff while they use social media within work hours. According to Kim and Ko (2010), social media can have a dramatic impact on a firms’ reputation. Firms can dramatically improve their reputation if they adopt social media marketing strategies.

The majority of most company’s customers are using social media so it would be extremely beneficial for a company to integrate social media into the work place to keep up with the demands of the industry and competition with other marketing organisations. This dissertation focused on two particular social media platforms in particular: Facebook and Twitter.

Twitter was originally created in March 2006 and since then has seen many new accounts created (Zarrella, 2010). Twitter is a form of microblogging which allows an organisation to “tweet” anything they like, limited to 140 characters, which helps to reduce how much information an individual is to give in a particular “tweet” as this is likely to sway a customer’s focus away and not draw them in instantly.

Facebook was founded and created by Mark Zuckerberg in February 2004 (Phillips, 2007). In 2009, Facebook had around 175 million active users (Kaplan, et al., 2010). It was found that in 2013 Facebook users had risen to 1.1 billion users worldwide (Facebook Statistics, 2014), and now in 2014 it has over 1.3 billion active users (Facebook Statistics, 2014). This demonstrates how many potential customers are on networking sites such as Facebook and shows that an organisation would benefit from using this social media platform as a way of advertising to increase their potential consumer reach. It was found that during the most recent quarter of this year, Facebook had an income of $523 million (Riley, 2014). Facebook has drastically improved in popularity since 2009 which provides evidence that social media
users are rapidly increasing making it a key area for businesses to market their products and services.

The next section of this dissertation will critically evaluate the domain literature to produce evidence of how organisations can benefit from social media use, while also proving that there are risks associated with the use of social networking sites. Reference will be made to security issues organisations face with social media and also allowing staff to bring their own device to work, with focus on how organisations are adopting this and dealing with issues that occur from allowing this policy into the workplace.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

During this section an in-depth study and critical analysis will be made into the domain research for social media and its use in the workplace. The main purpose for this literature review is to gather information about the topic being addressed (Hart, 2001). By analysing work that other researchers have completed, a link can be made between their work and the research topic that this dissertation will be focusing on. When deciding on what literature to analyse we need to link back to the objectives of this dissertation:

- Identification of where organisations use social media and for what reasons.
- Contemplation of the benefits using social media has had for organisations.
- To analyse the errors organisations have using social media.
- To consider the benefits and drawbacks of organisations allowing staff to bring their own device into the workplace (if so) for purposes such as advertising goods on social media.

It is important considering the boom in social media what interesting opportunities can arise for organisations nowadays. “Social media offers numerous opportunities for public relations practitioners to interact with the public while adopting new forms of technology and integrating them into their everyday lives” (Curtis, et al., 2010:pp 90-92). Social media has become a key part of marketing for organisations, as the majority of them will use some form
of social media for advertising, whether that be Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, blogging etc.

2.2 Social Media used within Organisations

Social media is continuing to grow for marketing purposes universally allowing organisations to market their products and services globally and to a wider audience. According to Cross (2013), 72% of adults are now using a form of social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Google+ are the common platforms for businesses to advertise their products and services. With more individuals using these social media sites it seems that businesses will continue to use social media for marketing purposes in the future. In 2011, more than half of all users follow brands on social media platforms (Van Bellengham, et al., 2011). There is always vast competition within businesses, whose prices are the cheapest, who gives you more value for your money, etc. and by using social media, businesses can potentially increase their popularity and profit by reaching a wider range of individuals online, as they are aware that this is where their customers are and this widens their potential consumer reach.

In more recent years businesses are increasingly using social media as a way of advertising. “93 percent of business-to-business firms surveyed now use social media to market their business” (Boone, et al., 2013:p108), this figure was taken in 2013 which shows how much of an impact social media is having on businesses these days and how marketing is now mainly done via Facebook, Twitter, and other online social sites. “By having a presence on sites like Facebook, you have the potential to reach a large number of people” (Cross, 2013:p6). From this, organisations can promote their products and services to just about anyone all over the world, at any time of day, which makes it a key marketing strategy for businesses and explains why the percentage of firms using social media for marketing and advertising purposes is extremely high in recent years.

2.3 Why Organisations use Social Media

According to Parveen (2014), organisations use social media to maintain their personal business pages, improve their social network salience, enhance their business and create lasting relationships with customers. Organisations may also implement social media for marketing purposes. Through secondary research conducted it has been shown that social media users are rapidly increasing each year, therefore it is important that businesses keep up
with the latest marketing strategies if they are to retain market share. This is mainly due to the amount of competition there is within businesses as their integrated marketing communications are now mainly driven by the use of social media. “Social media offers organizations the ability to reach customers in new ways” (Cross, 2013 p.21), one of which includes the way organisations can communicate with their audience. The way in which organisations communicate with their customers has significantly changed due to social media (Mangold et al., 2009). Management can now communicate with their customers on a personal level, answering their queries directly for other potential customers to witness.

When looking at the impact social media is having on organisations it is important to discover why they have decided to use it and if it has helped them in terms of advertising, business opportunities, sales and popularity. Organisations need to be aware of how to reach their target audience, from statistics found it can be seen that 72% of adults are using social media in some form (Cross, 2013). From gathering statistics organisations can use this to determine where they need to focus their marketing approaches and therefore increase their customers and profit. The use of social media can help an organisation promote their products and services (Cross, 2013). With Internet users also rising each year it is vital that organisations adopt some kind of social media into their environment in order to keep up with technology demands within industry and reach customers on a personal level as this will improve customer service.
Figure 1.1 shows the growth of social media from 2005 – 2013. By looking at the statistics it can be seen that the most popular age group of social media users is between 18 and 29. However, when analysing these statistics there is proof that social media users have risen across all age groups from 2005-2013 and this is mainly due to the fact that technology is forever changing and becoming more advanced. Therefore, individuals from all age groups are now active on some kind of social media site and as a result it would be beneficial for a business to start using sites such as Facebook and Twitter as that is where their customers are based. This will allow an organisation to reach more individuals to promote and sell their products on these social media platforms resulting in more individuals hearing about a business’s products and offers. By reaching customers through the use of social networking this can result in several advantages that will be discussed during the next section of this dissertation.
2.4 Benefits of using Social Media within Organisations

“Marketing is moving dollars out of traditional advertising and into social media strategies at a breakneck pace” (Paine, 2011:p17). As previously stated, social media is a growing trend for marketers and without the use of sites such as Facebook and Twitter businesses could lose customer interest and therefore, profit and popularity. When analysing organisation data collected through primary research it was of great interest to discover what benefits and drawbacks each organisation has encountered while adopting social media into the workplace. Therefore, this section focuses on the benefits and drawbacks that can occur, through secondary research, when organisations decide to use social media for advertisement purposes.

It is useful for organisations to use social media as it helps them to talk to their customers and communicate effectively which will provide their customers with products that company has to offer (Magnold, 2009). With organisations recognising that social networking sites help largely in terms of marketing opportunities, many are creating their own businesses pages to get the same benefits and promote their products and services.

From Figure 1.1 it is clear that the most popular age group active on social media is between 18 and 29. It would benefit certain organisations that wish to target this age group to be active on social media as this is where the majority of their customers would be based. During primary research interviews took place at Vitality Gym and Spa. Vitality offer special deals to students and advertise on social media daily, they are aware that this is where their target audience is based, therefore by updating their social networking sites they are offering their latest deals and offers to hopefully reach out to new clients. It is important for fitness entrepreneur’s to use social media was a way of advertising as they can show their talents, skills, qualifications and any fitness videos on sites such as Facebook to build up their clientele (magazine Entrepreneur, 2012). As Facebook and Twitter is a free marketing tool, gyms and personal trainers would benefit from advertising on these sites as they can help to promote their offers and services globally. When using sites such as Twitter personal trainers or small gyms, such as Vitality Gym and Spa, can connect with “other credible fitness businesses and institutions as a means of staying current on industry events and news” (magazine Entrepreneur, 2012).
From this these organisations can build customer relationships by showing video tutorials online which could engage potential customers, who will then share videos or posts with their friends and family and therefore more memberships and sales can be made.

2.5 Non-Profit Organisations and Social Media

It is clear that the majority of businesses will use social media to gain profit and increase their marketing sales, but what is interesting is to discover why non-profit organisations may use social media and if using it has helped them in anyway. According to Boone (2013) not-for-profit organisations also use social media to promote fundraising via Twitter and write blogs to interest business partners. They could also use social media to educate the public, increase donations and generate online petitions (Boone, 2013). With all these potential opportunities arising it would benefit non-profit organisations, such as charities, to introduce some form of social media.

Within this dissertation primary research was undertaken at two organisations, one of which was a non-profit organisation called Oxfam Online Cardiff. “For-profit organizations have used these sites to help launch products and strengthen their existing brands; however, little is known about how non-profit organizations are taking advantage of the social networking popularity” (Waters, et al., 2009:pp 102-106). It is important for organisations to develop their business and expand their global market and this can be difficult for organisations that have a restricted marketing budget. Charities, for example, will want individuals to donate and be familiar with their upcoming events but how do they get this information out to as many people as possible with spending as little money on advertising at possible? Oxfam Online Cardiff is a small store that sells donated goods to the public via their own personal website, so for this independent Oxfam store it can be difficult to increase sales without social media present. It was of interest to discover what large charities have done with social media and how it has helped them increase donations and awareness.

An example of a non-profit organisation that has benefited massively from the use of social media is Cancer Research UK. Cancer Research UK benefited from the no makeup “selfie” campaign that many individuals took part in across Facebook and Twitter. All over the UK users social media pages were flooded with images of individuals taking a picture with no make-up on to raise money for the charity (BBC News, 2014). Cancer Research UK raised over £8 million through a campaign called the no make-up selfie, which went global over social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Twitter had over 51,000 tweets made using
the hashtag ‘#nomakeupselfie’ and the charity received 800,000 donations made via text message (BBC News, 2014). Thousands of individuals would take a photo of themselves with no make-up on and a picture of a text showing they had donated to the charity and post it to sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Within just one day the public has raised over £1 million for Cancer Research UK due to social media support (Lewis, 2014). This just shows how social media can be just as beneficial to organisations that do not wish to spend money on advertisement as those who do due to the large amount of individuals that are now interacting with social media. Not only did Cancer Research UK gain donations but it was found that other charities such as Breast Cancer Care also received an increase in donations around the same time as the no make-up selfie campaign (BBC News, 2014) proving that social media can be of benefit to non-profit organisations as it can help to increase donations and awareness.

Another example of where social media has helped a non-profit organisation is the American Red Cross social media centre. The American Red Cross helps to provide support to victims of disasters, supplies blood and teaches skills to save lives (American Red Cross, 2014). They mostly use Facebook and Twitter to publicise their local events, follow media reporters and keeping up with the latest technology adoptions (Briones, et al., 2011). On the American Red Cross official website they have links which direct users to their Facebook and Twitter page making it easy for visitors to find, follow and like their social media networking pages. This would be a useful tool for organisations to adopt as quick access can be made to the social networking sites hopefully increasing awareness and building stronger customer bonds.

During 2012 Dell, a computer technology company, donated money to the America Red Cross to help them open up their own personal social media centre in Texas. The American Red Cross could now connect with individuals during disasters with their new centre. This is useful for businesses that wish to use social media as more employees/volunteers can expand their knowledge about marketing through the use of these networking sites, which will benefit the organisation in many ways including reaching a wider audience and increase productivity. Using the new social media centre for the American Red Cross has allowed over 30 digital volunteers to respond to thousands of posts from people all over Facebook and Twitter (American Red Cross, 2014) which shows how useful social media can be as individuals get fast responses and therefore the charity can help as many people as possible in a short amount of time. With the grant from Dell many volunteers can get the training they require to ensure they can use the social media pages to the best of their ability (American
Red Cross, 2014). According to Piczao-Vela (2012), one downside of using social media is the lack of employee training in the use of social media. However, with the right kind of training there is proof that this can be changed. A huge benefit for the American Red Cross is that in the last 24 months over 160 volunteers have been trained in the centre to use social media to help individuals that have been in disasters such as hurricanes and tornados (American Red Cross, 2014). This shows just how beneficial social media can be for organisations such as charities as they will continue to use social media in order to assist individuals from all over the world. Through primary research undertaken it was discovered how Oxfam Online Cardiff use social media without a centre and how it is working for them in terms of improving their sales and awareness. An example of a social media platform that is used within The American Red Cross centre is Twitter. Twitter is a great way for the organisation to keep in contact with individuals that need support and advice as quickly as possible. Twitter allows organisations to gain followers, promote sales, news and offers and form close customer relationships with individuals from all around the world.

Twitter has become an extremely important factor for marketing within business. It allows users to promote their business worldwide and gain followers to increase popularity (Charles, 2014). Using Twitter can help a business communicate with other businesses and their customers on a personal level to gather useful feedback from customers and to promote their products.

“It’s a great way to fix customer problems and hear what customers have to say, it’s a great feedback forum and it leads to sales — how can you miss?” (Miller, 2009). This statement was made by Richard Binhammer, a director at Dell who leads all of Dell’s social media activities. He discusses the benefits of using Twitter for advertisement purposes by explaining how the company Dell have benefitted from creating a Twitter account. He works directly from Dell’s office he will have useful facts about how Twitter has benefitted Dell on a whole. Twitter has helped to benefit Dell as since 2007 as they have earned $3 million in revenue (Miller, 2009) proving that social media really can benefit organisations if used correctly and for the right reasons.

Back in 2009 DellOutlet had over 600,000 followers and by looking at Dell’s Twitter page it now has 1,448,978. This reinforces Figure 1.1 which shows social media users are increasing therefore more individuals will follow and interact with businesses that have a Facebook and Twitter account. Businesses are becoming aware of this increase and therefore more are
creating pages on these sites to help reach customers on a more personal level. As well as Twitter, Facebook is an excellent way for an organisation to increase popularity and sell products as it allows a company to branch out, get followers and post useful links whenever they like.

In April 2006 Facebook allowed organisations to register pages to expand their business (Waters, et al., 2009). In doing this, organisations can ensure they are reaching customers on a personal level and increasing popularity using social media can help a business to reduce their marketing expenditure. For a business, adopting social media for marketing will allow for a wider reach of customers with little to no cost (Cross, 2013). Setting up a business account on Facebook, for example, requires no initial spending to create the page, apart from the employee cost (Zimmerman, et al., 2012) this is major benefit for organisations when starting their social media journey. A lot of time however, and investment would need to go into these pages in order to keep them up to date producing useful timely advertisements and valid, useful information customers will benefit from. It would prove beneficial to have a certain amount of employees working on the social media sites while others focus on separate sections of the organisations daily workload as this can ensure work gets complete successfully without social media posing a problem for time control.

Although there are many benefits for organisations when using social media, it is important to address the drawbacks that can occur for an organisation that uses social media for marketing purposes.

### 2.6 Drawbacks of using Social Media within Organisations

When gathering secondary research it was important to look at all the aspects of using social media within the workplace. Certain articles have been written focusing on the drawbacks of companies adopting social media. “*Although there are many benefits and promises from social media and related technologies, several risks are associated with their use*” (Picazo-Vela et al., 2012:pp 504-511). By understanding that there are also risks with social media a broad and non-biased discussion can be made into the effects it has on advertising within organisations, and during the discussion section of this dissertation primary research was gathered based on organisations that have encountered problems while using social media.

According to Scott (2011), 58% of executives have said that a company’s reputation is at risk when using social media due to self-expression. This can be seen in Figure 2.1 where back in
2009 a staff member from New Media Strategies wrote an inappropriate tweet from automobile manufacturer Chrysler’s official Twitter account (SMARTPLANET, 2014).

![Inappropriate Tweet](image)

**Figure 2.1: 10 brands damaged by social media disasters (SMARTPLANET, 2014)**

Many of Chrysler’s followers had seen this tweet and the firm’s PR department had a difficult public image to repair. It was of interest to discover through primary research if errors such as this one had occurred within the organisations in question and if so how they dealt with the error. This informs businesses that not every employee should have access to the company social media accounts as certain tweets produced in a moment of anger can damage the company for life. Management would need to know who they could trust as one small tweet could damage the reputation of the company and result in many people unfollowing them and their name being damaged for a very long time.

Recently, US Airways made the same mistake by tweeting a negative photo in response to a customer complaint. The tweet was removed about an hour after it was made but had hundreds of retweets and had been seen by many individuals (BBC_News, 2014). With over 400,000 followers on Twitter the company wrote an apology tweet as they knew that their reputation could be damaged due to one inappropriate tweet. During primary research it was of interest to discover how organisations ensure the right kind of Facebook posts and Twitter messages are sent out to the public and how management make sure employees/volunteers do not put the company name at risk of reputational damage by writing inappropriate posts.
2.7 Security Issues

“All too often people and companies will use social media without making proper decisions on security” (Cross, 2013:p:16). Although using social media for advertisement purposes can be useful and beneficial to an organisation there are definitely concerns surrounding security while using certain sites. Looking back at Dell and what they are doing to ensure the right security over company data while using social media sites it was found that they have adopted a special centre for all Dells’ social media activities. Dell has a listening “command centre” where employees are trained in using Dell’s social media pages and listen to feedback from customers (Rooney, 2012). This is an excellent way to monitor what staff are using social media for, by having a specific centre for all social media activities management can be aware that employees are not using these sites for any other reason than for advertising and reaching customers which will help benefit the company and ensure the correct kind of security is put in place while using social media. Having a centre made just for social media would be a great idea for all businesses as this way security over company data and employee data can be guaranteed as work cannot be transferred outside the centre and management can monitor what employees are doing on these social networking sites. Can all companies afford this however? Organisations such as Oxfam Online Cardiff would not be able to afford such a centre, but there are things that this charity, and charities found through secondary research, can do in order to use social media to the best of their ability. As previously stated in this chapter Cancer Research UK benefitted enormously from users interacting with social media.

When using social media within the workplace some employees may wish to use it from their own device and this could prove to be beneficial for a company but may also pose problems, as how would they know that their employees are using these devices for the benefit of the company and not for personal reasons. According to Cross (2013), it is important to monitor what employees are doing on the Internet to ensure safety over company details. With or without social media present by allowing staff to use the facilities or even bring their own device into the work place it is vital that as a manager you ensure the right security procedures are put in place to protect the company from external threats. There is risk of company data being transferred outside the organisation, during the discussion stage of this dissertation, management were asked what security features they have in place to ensure this does not happen. Many organisations will have an employee confidentiality agreement that restricts them from writing certain information on social media pages (Cross, 2013:p.33).
Organisations must be aware that by allowing staff to use social media on the company’s facilities or their own device, information could potentially be passed outside the organisation that could harm and damage the reputation of that company. The next section of this literature review will address the areas of concern when allowing employees to use their own device and not work from a centre or from company’s own hardware.

2.8 BYOD

While the main focus of this dissertation is on using social media within the workplace, there is some focus surrounding whether or not employees should bring their own device to work for purposes such as advertising via social media. There are many advantages and disadvantages found through secondary research that relate to staff bringing their own laptop/smartphone to work for advertisement purposes.

A statement made by the Chief Information Officers Council said that private and public sectors who have welcomed BYOD into their company have noticed an increase in employment efficiency and job satisfaction (Whitehouse, 2012). The growing trend of BYOD has meant that organisations need to introduce polices to allow for correct use of employees personal smartphones and laptops. The statement provides evidence that organisations adopting this policy have found it to be quite successful as employees feel that trust is given to them when using their own device on company time.

However, one of the main concerns for an organisation when allowing a BYOD policy into the workplace is security over company data. According to an article by Chute et al, (2014) it was found that with recently created software and respectable mobile solutions more and more organisations are adopting BYOD policies and allowing their employees to use personal devices during work hours.

Many companies are adopting a BYOD policy as it can help to reduce company costs and reduce the time spent on maintaining hardware devices supplied by the organisation as employee’s now use their own device (Eddy, 2014). A survey by Eddy (2014) shows that 55% of organisations around the world do not update their security systems when allowing employees to bring their own device into the workplace, despite the recent hacking made on Snapchat and Skype, where a hacker gained access to 4.6 million users telephone numbers (Wisniewski, 2014). This proved that the company had poor protection over their user’s personal and important information. As mobile devices are increasing in numbers within
organisations it is vital that these organisations address mobile security to ensure the correct safety measures when adopting a BYOD policy. With the correct security features put in place BYOD can help organisations as it allows employees to use their own device to advertise company products and services which will hopefully increase popularity and a rise in sales.

2.9 Summary

It is important that managers know that employees are not just using social media sites on their own device for their own benefit. Organisations need to be aware that employees are using their own personal device so management should know who to trust and monitor what employees are using the sites for. With the correct monitoring put in place managers can feel at ease and know that their employees are not taking advantage of the trust given to them while using their own device in the workplace.

Social media is a growing trend within business as it has proved to be a successful way to advertise products and services without spending money. With managers at many organisations discovering how useful social media can be to the development of their company, more and more businesses are allowing staff to use social media to advertise. Businesses are also warming to the idea of allowing staff to bring their own device into the workplace as this can help to reduce hardware costs and allow staff the freedom to advertise on their own device which can actually benefit the organisation as more advertisement can be made as each staff member will have their own personal device to tweet, write Facebook status’s, etc., depending on who has access to the company accounts.

As organisations are keeping up with the most up to date ways of advertising there are many areas of concern that need to be addressed and dealt with in an appropriate manner. For example, the security issues when allowing staff to use their own device for advertisement purposes and who managers trust to have access to the company’s Facebook and Twitter accounts. Although using social media has proved to be a huge success within organisations there are a number of potential drawbacks that may arise and organisations need to be aware of this and know exactly how to deal with these situations if they are present.

Furthermore, this literature review has provided an in depth discussion into the work produced by other researchers based on the benefits and drawbacks of social media and how it can influence an organisation. The literature review has also touched on the effects of
bringing your own device to work and why organisations adopt such a policy, outlining the main areas of concern when this policy is adopted.
3. **Methodology**

3.1 **Introduction**

During this part of the dissertation the research methodology will be outlined and discussed with a clear justification to why each research approach and method has been chosen. “A methodology shows how research questions are articulated with questions asked in the field. It’s effect is a claim about significance ...” (Clough, et al, 2007). Research methods will include data collected through primary research.

The research approach will be discussed and justified in this section by analysing whether a qualitative or a quantitative approach best suited this piece of work and why. Deductive and inductive methods will be looked with a clear choice of which one was used for this dissertation.

A description of semi-structured interviews will be looked at with focus on why this theory works best for this dissertation. Interviews contained a mix of open-ended and questionnaire style questions to ensure both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to strengthen the findings of this dissertation.

A sampling method was chosen based on the interviews completed with both management and employees; with a summary at the end of this chapter outlining all areas discussed.
3.2 Philosophies

This section of the methodology presents how the data was collected. To help assist this process the research onion from (Saunders, et al., 2012) was considered as a template to give structure to the steps taken in order to gather useful data from primary research.

Philosophy refers to how knowledge develops with reference to the nature of the knowledge (Saunders, et al., 2012). When looking at gathering data some will view it as facts and figures, while others will base their research on feelings and attitudes from an interviewee. The outer layer of the onion presents four parts of philosophy. These are positivism, realism, interpretive, and pragmatism. There is no better way in choosing a philosophy path; it all depends on the type of the research required. The philosophy best suited for this dissertation was realism. Realism allows the researcher to have an open mind and expand on data collected (Saunders et al., 2012). This is due to the fact that the researcher did not have a biased opinion concerning the primary research, resulting in fair and realistic results which provided data that was novel, interesting and realistic.

3.3 Approaches

The second layer of the research onion focuses on the available research methods a researcher could undertake. The two main approaches are deductive and inductive. According to Saunders et al (2012), the inductive approach involves collecting data to create theory/generate new theory. The deductive approach involves starting with theory, then gathering data from research and then analysing the data to come to a firm conclusion. (Saunders et al., 2012). The research approach best suited for this dissertation was the deductive approach. There is a clear research question, followed by objectives with literature to support the research question then finally interviews produced a discussion and conclusion.

3.4 Strategies

There are many different research strategies that can be adopted when undertaking in research, each one can be effective and which one that is chosen solely depends on the specific research question chosen. The research strategy best suited to qualitative research would be action research, case study research, narrative research and grounded theory (Saunders et al., 2012). Each of these strategies offer a unique research trait that include
analysing data, using observations and predictions and acting on research found (Saunders et al., 2012). Qualitative research methods will be used in this dissertation in the form of interviews to gather management and employees views on using social media within the workplace.

Qualitative research is the gathering of non-numeric forms of information; examples include interviews and questionnaires that allow for extended answers (McLeod, 2008). This is backed up by Saunders, et al., (2012) who explains how qualitative data is based on words that the interviewee gives during an interview; it also offers a more complex and ambiguous result as opposed to the quantitative method. The main purpose for using qualitative research methods during this dissertation was to gather a more personal and in-depth response to the questions asked to management and employees. Using this type of research allowed the researcher to gather a more varied response instead of just simple yes or no answers or “tick which box applies to you” options.

The research strategy best suited to quantitative research design would be survey research. This usually consists of questionnaire or structured interviews (Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, according to Saunders, et al., (2012) quantitative data is raw data that needs to be processed and examined to allow it to actually have some sort of useful meaning. Quantitative research was also used within this research, as questionnaire style questions were available on the interview sheets to allow for data that can be analysed statistically. This helped to save time and gain a quick and easy response from interviewees also allowing this dissertation to gather information using varied research methods.

3.5 Choices

To continue, the forth layer of the research onion consists of choices. This is where the method of collecting the data is decided. For this dissertation a mixed method was used in the form of both quantitative and qualitative data.

The reason for using a mix of research methods within the interviews was because when analysing the data gathered the researcher believed it would be best to have a varied response from the interviewee; therefore some quantitative questions were asked which involve the interviewee simply answering a tick box question. This enabled the researcher to gather a few simple responses as the majority of the questions asked will be qualitative and open-ended.
By using multiple research methods the researcher could explore different results and this allowed for a varied, in-depth and accurate response from interviewees which resulted in well-structured and varied analysis of data gathered. Two organisations were visited where two managers and three employees/volunteers at each organisations were interviewed. Enough useful information was gathered from these interviews that meet the aims and objectives of this dissertation and allowed the researcher to produce an accurate and informative response with useful recommendations that suit the organisation’s needs.

3.6 Time Horizons

The fifth section of the research onion focuses on the time constraints of a project. There are two options within this layer of the onion; these are cross-sectional studies and longitudinal studies. Cross-sectional studies are adopted when there is a time constraint on the research undertaken and it has to be complete at a specific time (Saunders et al., 2012). Whereas longitudinal allows for research to be developed and changed over a long running time (Saunders et al, 2012). In the case of this dissertation a cross-sectional study was adopted as there was a deadline to be met.

3.7 Techniques and Procedures

At the core of the onion this is where the data collection and data analysis lie. When considering data collection this involves discussing how the primary data for this dissertation was collected.

During the development of this dissertation primary and secondary research were undertaken to help assist the researcher while a study was carried out. In order to gather useful information from organisations and employees the research design and approach must be identified in this section. Primary research allowed the researcher to gather a personal and clear response from the interviews which was useful in the analysis stage of the dissertation. Secondary research was useful for this dissertation as work linked to this research question could be found allowing for further knowledge about the topic area to be discussed and a firm conclusion to be made from the discussion. Face to face interviews took place within two these two organisations for the purpose of this dissertation.
3.8 Interviews – Participants

For the interviews to be undertaken managers and employees were required to answer questions about social media for advertisement purposes and their opinions of bringing their own personal devices into the workplace. One manager from each organisation was asked to answer the questions provided along with three employees/volunteers who were interviewed with separate questions provided by the researcher.

From this an in-depth study with a wide range of answers was provided to help with the development of this dissertation. This allowed for a variety of responses which delivered a more generalised conclusion about the research question. Asking just one employee would not deliver a reliable answer to the question as this would provide the researcher with a rather brief evaluation containing lack of information to provide a well-organised and structured conclusion about the research question. As managers and a number of employees were questioned this ensured an in-depth, information rich response to the research question, as focus was drawn to asking numerous employees opposed to just one employee for a variety of responses.

In order to gather a range of opinions, employees of the younger generation and a few senior employees were selected from each organisation to help balance the type of answers provided. By interviewing employees from a range of ages this meant that results were more varied, as it represents the entire data samples opinions. Asking more employees gives a well-rounded perspective of what’s actually going on within the workplace relating to social media and bringing employees own devices to work.

3.9 Apparatus

In order to gather responses from both the manager and the employees of these two organisations, interview sheets were produced by the researcher and taken along to each organisation. An interview was set up with one manager and three employees/volunteers from the same organisation where the questions were asked to each individual. Each interview lasted around half an hour and each was voice recorded while small points were written down. A participant information sheet was provided to the manager and employees at these organisations stating exactly why the interviews took place and this sheet answered any questions the interviewees had about the interview; for example, risks such as where their information was used and if they remained anonymous, etc.
3.10 Procedures

Furthermore, contact was made with two organisations to interview a manager and three employees/volunteers from each. An interview day was set up in which both managers and employees were available to answer open-end questions to allow the researcher to gather knowledge about the research question. Half an hour was enough time to interview each member of the organisation. Once the interview was complete interviewees had the reassurance that their interviews remained anonymous then the researcher took the responses to be analysed in order to complete the dissertation. The researcher then took the reordered interview home, to write up the interview details. Within the write up the researcher played back the reordered interview and typed out word for word responses from the interviews to ensure all feedback was included. This took time and close analysis, as it was important the researcher did not miss out any information provided by the managers and employees. From this the researcher could find patterns within the responses to see what the majority thought about social media.

3.11 Semi-Structured Interviews

When deciding how to structure each interview it was important to look at the situations being faced in each interview that was undertaken. For example, looking at the time required for an interview, the purpose for the interview and how contact will be made with the researcher and the interviewees (Saunders, et al., 2012). From looking at all these situations it could be decided what type of interview approach is best to take. For this dissertation it was decided that semi-structured interviews would be used.

According to Wengraf (2001), semi-structured interviews involve the researcher gathering a number of questions before an interview, but such questions are designed to allow the interviewee to give an open answer involving their own opinions. This allowed for a more information rich response to each question provided as it gave the interviewee a chance to answer each question to the best of their ability, meaning the researcher had a varied response once leaving the interview. As this type of research was looking into the opinions of individuals on bringing their own devices to work and using social media within the work place, the answers provided needed to be varied and complex as the more information provided the more organised and information rich the conclusion could be. By allowing the questions to be open-ended the individuals that had been interviewed could expand on any
question the researcher asked giving their own thoughts and experiences within the organisation which was beneficial for the researcher as a more varied and detailed discussion was produced.

Finally, the choice to use semi-structured interviews was decided based on the large number of questions required. Saunders, et al., (2012), explained this along with other circumstances for choosing semi-structured interviews such as the interviews were going to be complex and continuous allowing the interviewee to answer as freely as possible. As the interviews undertaken contained some simple answer questions it was important for the researcher to ensure as much information was gathered about the research topic area so open-ended questions were the best type of questions to ask within each interview.

3.12 Snowball Sampling

The sampling technique that was used within this dissertation when conducting interviews was snowball sampling. According to Bailey (1994), snowball sampling has become increasingly popular in recent years and is used when conducting interviews. Snowball sampling was useful for the progression of this dissertation as when the interviews were taking place certain interviewees nominated others to answer the questions provided by the researcher. When reading a secondary source by (Knoke et al., 2008) it was said how one participant will nominate another, who they believe would be able to answer the questions asked to allow the researcher to get a broad and varied response.

As the researcher required three employees/volunteers from each organisation this type of sampling method worked well as employees were found easily without hassle of who to pick and who would be best to answer the interview questions. The researcher explained who they would like for the study and from this an appropriate suggestion was made from individuals at that organisation.

It was important for the researcher to gather views from a broad range of employees therefore interviewees were asked to select the next employee of maybe a different age range or someone who was less/more experience in IT, etc., to ensure that this dissertation be as varied as possible allowing for a wide response and a more accurate and close analysis of the research question undertaken.
3.13 Summary

This chapter has outlined why certain methods of research were chosen and it was discovered which methods would be best suited to this dissertation. It has been explained why this dissertation will mostly contain qualitative research methods and why only a few interview questions were quantitative.

It has been outlined who was involved in the interviews that were undertaken and why these specific individuals were useful for the progression of this dissertation. The researcher has ensured the reader know where the interviews had taken place, with whom and what was involved in the process of each interview. All interview sheets containing open-ended and questionnaire style questions are present within the appendices at the very end of this dissertation.

The next section of this dissertation will present all primary research data collected, with specific trends identified when interviews had taken place about using social media for marketing purposes.
4. **Discussion/Results**

4.1 **Introduction**

This chapter analyses and discusses the results gathered from the primary and secondary research completed. This research has allowed for appropriate addressing of the research question of the dissertation. A critical lens was also used when addressing the research question, including limitations of the research and future suggestions.

4.2 **Semi-Structured Interview Analysis**

The interviews consisted of eight questions for employees and seven questions for management. From these interviews the researcher was able to gather all the required information to fully understand the benefits and drawbacks of using social media for marketing purposes along with an understanding of why organisations would allow staff to bring their own device to work or not, and how this would benefit the company. Each interview was recorded and lasted around half hour per individual to later be transcribed and documented ready for close analysis to find patterns and trends from the interviews.

4.3 **Managers Response**

The researcher asked the same set of questions to a manager at Oxfam Online Cardiff and a manager at Vitality Gym and Spa. As stated in previous sections of this dissertation both of these organisations are very different in terms of what they are trying to do. Vitality’s main aim is to increase clientele and bring more members into the gym and spa, whereas Oxfam
Online Cardiff’s main aim is to increase awareness and donations made by the public. Both managers said that they use some form of social media within the workplace.

4.4 Using Social Media

At Oxfam Online Cardiff the manager told the researcher that they use social media as an independent store to expand their popularity and online sales. They use Facebook and Twitter to advertise their own personal website with the idea to drive potential customers to their website and hopefully increase donations and awareness.

“We see posts made by volunteers and customers each day to ensure social media is being used to benefit the company and not too much time is spent on volunteers own personal social media pages in one day” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

In contrast a manager at Vitality Gym and Spa told the researcher that they use social media for several reasons. These include using Facebook and Twitter, plus extra social media platforms that were not looked at in detail, these include Google +, Instagram and Yelp, to direct members and clientele into the salon and raising awareness for the clinic side of the organisation in more of an editorial way to get clients for increased revenue. It was useful to discover that both organisations were using social media as this meant that the questions to follow would be answered in some depth allowing broad answers to be given about the organisations experience with social media.

4.5 Benefits and Risks of using Social Media

“The benefits for us are driving individuals to the website and hopefully become a customer and buy from Oxfam to help end poverty and suffering” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

This shows how the organisation is using social media for advertisement for reasons other than gaining business profit. Furthermore, with a simple organisation driving individuals to the website and buying goods there are a limited amount of risks for this specific organisation.

“I believe the risks are people will abuse the system, people might criticise Oxfam and say some unpleasant things by writing on the Facebook page or making Tweets that could give Oxfam a bad name” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

Agreeing with this statement is the manager from Vitality Gym and Spa.
“*When using Facebook competitors may post on Vitality’s wall detrimental things and link comments that may not be true damaging our reputation*” (Vitality Gym and Spa, 2014).

Reputation is a hugely important asset which needs to be nurtured. Warren Buffet once said that it can take 20 years to build corporate reputation and five minutes to ruin it; this is most certainly true with social media (Pratt, 2010). Both managers seem to be aware of the drawbacks social media can have on their organisation; however the benefits both are seeing from using social media seem to outweigh the negatives.

“The main benefit for us is that social media is a free marketing tool and the only thing it costs is time” (Vitality Gym and Spa, 2014).

Social media is a great way to find clients and advertise to individuals outside the local area, and Vitality manager agrees with this statement and gives an example of where using social media has allowed the company to reach individuals from all over.

“I received a message on Facebook at 2am from an individual in Malaysia who wanted to come in to receive clinical treatment for his child. From this I have seen how social media allows us not to just connect with Cardiff but to connect with the world, and by having a Facebook page I was able to receive this message instantly and take the sale before a competitor had a chance too” (Vitality Gym and Spa, 2014).

From this statement it can be seen how organisations are adopting social media as it is allowing them to expand and reach customers from all over. Evidence found during secondary research outlined how having a presence on social media sites can help to reach more individuals (Cross, 2013) and this is shown during primary research as Vitality reached a customer from Malaysia through social media. This is slightly different for Oxfam Online as they are one of 170 shops within the UK, so social media doesn’t really make a massive difference to the popularity of the exact store in Cardiff, however the manager did say that by having a personal Facebook and Twitter page for the specific store in question allows them to deal with customers comments for their personal store and therefore reach customers on a personal level. This is hugely increased customer relationship marketing (CRM) that is increasingly more popular nowadays as both the transparency of society and competence of technology demands it.
“Any activity on social media will help the whole of Oxfam and we know that Oxfam Online does benefit as we target people through social media and individuals return to us which is exactly what we want to achieve” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

An organisation like Oxfam will not wish to spend money on advertisement, due to restrictive budgets from many additional expenses, especially a small store like Oxfam Online Cardiff, therefore using social media will help them to target a wide range of customers all over without the use of spending money which is a huge benefit for the organisation. Just like The American Red Cross, Oxfam Online Cardiff have their own personal Facebook and Twitter account linked to the website which ensures that customers can find their social networking pages easily and without hassle.

4.6 Security and Monitoring with BYOD

The main trend found when analysing both interview data from the managers at these organisations was the trend of trust. Both managers have said that they trust their employees and volunteers when it comes to using social media within the workplace.

“I believe that if a good amount of volunteer work has been done that day then there is no problem with volunteers using social media within the workplace” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

Although it would be difficult to monitor what staff are using their own devices for and many would have to rely on trust, Oxfam Online do have security on the company’s computers within the office. Therefore every website visited is recorded meaning that if they ever feel that there is too much use of social media for personal reasons they can check up on what volunteers have been using the company computers for. At Oxfam Online they allow staff to bring their own device in to work in the form of a smartphone but laptops are not to be brought into the workplace.

“We allow volunteers to use their phones to take photographs of products we sell, however we do not allow laptops to be used as we supply all the software needed for volunteers to do their work also we do not want to risk volunteers taking any data from the company computers and transferring it onto their own personal device” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

This ensures that Oxfam protect their data and personal documentation which shows they are taking good security precautions to protect important information. At Vitality they also
largely rely on trust, however the researcher was told that the manager is the only employee with the authority to make social media posts, all posts made from the company’s social media pages were completely by herself and no one else. Therefore, this ensures that all posts are appropriate and will not damage the company in any way. The manager at this organisation explains how only the designer can bring a laptop into the workplace and all other employees must use the computers provided as they contain all software needed to complete any company work such as adding a new client to the system. Vitality used to have a policy about smartphones in that employees had to keep them in lockers; however the manager explains how this actually turned out to be detrimental for the company.

“The team we select at Vitality are loyal, long term and we can trust that if they have work to do they will not be using their smartphones” (Vitality Gym and Spa, 2014).

The manager at Vitality explains that it is in the contracts of each employee that they are not to use social media in a negative manner towards the company and are not to mention the company unless it is for corporate benefit. This will ensure the right kind of information will get posted and the manager can be sure that negative comments will not be posted by any member of staff. At Vitality they have an employee confidentiality agreement which restricts employees from releasing specific information about the organisation without acceptance of the manager first. This ensures the company keeps a good reputation and important, confidential information is kept safe and within the company.

4.7 Volunteers and Employees Response on using Social Media

When gathering individuals for the interviews it was important to choose a range of different individuals based on their ages, experience and position within the organisation. Interviews were conducted with individuals aged between 19 and 42, female and male and a mix of British and foreign employees. By selecting a mix of employees and volunteers this allowed the researcher to gather useful information from a number of reliable sources that enable a varied amount of opinions to help analyse the majority views on using social media for advertisement purposes with reference to BYOD. The majority of the questions asked were qualitative and open-ended allowing the interviewees to continue to give as much information as possible to the researcher, however, some quantitative questions were asked based on the employee’s knowledge about information technology and using twitter. Below are the figures of quantitative questions asked to employees at these organisations.
Figure 3.1: Employees that bring their own device to work

Figure 4.1: Employees rating their IT knowledge
Once the quantitative questions were analysed the researcher goes on to discuss the open-ended questions interviewees gave.

All interviewees seemed to be rather confident about using computers and social media which would be of great benefit to the organisation as not a large amount of training would be required for staff members (see Figures 4.1 and 5.1). Interviewees of a younger age rated their knowledge slightly higher than those of a more mature age range, however as Figure 1.1 showed, all age groups that use social media seem to be rising each year, resulting in more individuals of a mature age range IT and social media knowledge rising also. This is proved by the volunteers of a more mature age range at Oxfam Online Cardiff rating their IT knowledge quite high and they seemed to be very aware of how social media works with confidence on using Twitter. Each interviewee seemed enthusiastic and eager to learn more about social media within the workplace as everyone could see the substantial benefits it is having on organisations within industry.
4.8 Benefits and Risks of using Social Media

All interviewees had worked at their organisation for no longer than two years and all but one bought their own device to work (see Figure 3.1). When asked about their views on using social media within the workplace all agreed that it was the best way for advertisement due to the amount of people it will target. The reach is vast compared to handing out leaflets where most individuals will tend to throw these away, all interviewees believed that it would be in the best interest for their organisation to continue to use social media to display posts about deals and news the organisation has to offer.

“Social media is a good idea for the company as it can be used to give our customers information about upcoming offers/events” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

One specific volunteer was originally from France where they went on to explain that they has noticed more advertisement done on social media in the UK than in France and from this more information reaches individuals resulting in greater popularity and profit for the organisation. This proves how the use of social media can reach individuals from all over the world increasing a business’s chance of higher profit, sales and popularity.

“Social media is a great way for us to reach customers on a large scale, we can write posts on our Facebook pages and hope that followers share and repost about our offers. Social networking sites are where our customers are mainly based so we make sure we use it every day to ensure individuals hear about us and therefore increase our popularity” (Vitality Gym and Spa, 2014).

All interviewees agreed that social media is an excellent form of marketing and believe that businesses will continue to use social media as technology is forever changing and most businesses will advertise via the use of a website, Facebook or Twitter. From this is was clear to the researcher that continuous use of social media will attract new and existing customers which will help keep the market up and allow customers to be equipped with as much useful information about the organisation as possible.

Although each interviewee seemed to be enthusiastic about social media and its effects on the organisation, they did share some light on certain risks that could occur while using social media within the workplace. One employee said that although social media can be a great marketing tool, organisations will have to deal with certain drawbacks that result from using
Facebook and Twitter. Examples were given of where complaints have been made publically on the organisations Facebook timeline and although the problems have then been met and answered to ensure a happy customer, hundreds of people could see the negative posts which goes against the organisation and could result in damaged reputation and a fall in company revenue.

The main trend found when discussing the risks for an organisation using social media was slack time. Interviewees believed that certain employees or volunteers may take advantage of the use of social media within the workplace and this could result in less work being done for the company and too much time spent on sites such as Facebook or Twitter. Interviewees recommend that organisations continue to monitor what employees are engaging on these sites, this will ensure the right amount of time is spent on advertising and it is not extended.

4.9 Security

Based on certain policies that the organisations have in place all interviewees would use the company facilities to complete any work, this includes social media use. The majority of employees interviewed would use their phone in work but not on company time, they would use their smartphone for their own personal social media accounts as well as personal email use and work emails. This could be of benefit to the organisations as allowing staff to use their own devices will ensure employees are on top of their work business that include important emails, responding to customers via social media pages and continue work outside the office.

The researcher noticed a pattern forming while interviews were underway for certain security questions. All interviewees seemed to agree that it would be down to management to ensure the right security is present while employees are using the company devices for work or personal use. Individuals may log onto social media sites on the company’s facilities.

“At this organisation if I log onto my own Facebook account it automatically logs me out after a certain amount of time, meaning that my personal information will be kept safe and protected” (Oxfam Online Cardiff, 2014).

This is a useful feature for companies to include as part of keeping data safe as logging off the systems correctly will ensure work cannot be transferred outside the organisation by an individual, or access cannot be easily granted to the wrong employee. Employees seemed to
be aware that companies will monitor what they are doing during work hours so each interviewee said that they try to “avoid using their personal accounts on the system, instead use the company’s if instructed to do so for advertisement purposes”, this ensures all company work is complete for managers and trust will be formed based on this theory. It was interesting to find that the majority of interviewees felt that with trust given to them by management they would feel guilty taking advantage of the use of social media within work hours, therefore they ensure all company work and advertisement is complete before they use their own device to check personal information.

4.10 Strengths

The main strengths from this discussion are clear, the positive attitudes shown by managers and employees at two completely opposite organisations about using social media for advertisement purposes. It was nice to hear that a range of individuals view social media as a benefit and would like to embrace it within the workplace now and in the future. There have been several benefits shown from the interviews conducted that are in favour for use of social media and staff bringing certain devices (such as smartphones) into the workplace. The management at these organisations can see the effects social media is having in terms of improving their marketing, profits and popularity in order to keep up with the demands of the industry and forever improving technology. With social media present in an organisation, advertisement of events, products, services, news and offers can reach a global audience for a minimal price and therefore, increase profit and sales. A key example of this has been discussed within the manager’s interview where an individual contacted the organisation from Malaysia through Facebook by hearing news of the company from social media sites.

4.11 Weaknesses

When summarising the interviews conducted a key weakness for organisations was apparent, this was the issue of monitoring employees while using social media within the workplace. The managers interviewed seem to have a large amount of trust for their employees and this may work in their favour but issues can occur where trust has been taken advantage. For example, one interviewee told the researcher an example of where an employee took advantage of the trust given to them when using social media in work hours. An employee used the organisation’s social media page, instead of their own, to sell their personal goods. The reason for doing this was due to the fact that the organisation had a large amount of likes
and followers so the employee in question thought that they would get a better sale for their personal goods if they advertised them on their company’s profile.

“The employee was fired and it took a few months for posts on the social media pages and visits from individuals to stop. What we thought were potential customers coming to the gym, were in fact individuals interested in the employee’s personal goods. This served no benefit to us as an organisation and took time out of our day to send them away” (Vitality Gym and Spa, 2014).

This resulted in the manager having customers coming into the office for non-beneficial reasons which resulted in time spent sending individuals away and discussing amendments for employee contracts regarding the use of social media within the workplace. Just like the inappropriate tweet made by an employee at Chrysler, shown in the literature review of this dissertation, the employee was fired to ensure the same mistake didn’t happen again. This shows how both organisations are putting their reputation first to ensure a successful image is portrayed of their organisation to new and existing customers.

When analysing secondary research and primary research there seemed to be a link within organisations for how social media can be a drawback and actually damage an organisation that uses it. It seems that by allowing any employee to use the company’s social networking sites that damage could be done by a single “tweet” or Facebook post that can take months for the reputation of that organisation to be of an acceptable level again. At Vitality the manager has a contract put in place that limits staff to what they can do on social media pages and all posts made come from the manager herself. This allows Vitality to monitor exactly what gets posted on the social media pages to ensure nothing slanderous will be seen by existing and potential customers.

Another weakness in organisations that use social media is protection over data. Staff should introduce a centre, similar to Dell’s social media centre shown in the literature review of this dissertation, where social media activities can take place on facilities provided, if it can be afforded. However, this may prove difficult for non-profit organisations and therefore relying on trust is something that has to be taken seriously as volunteers need to be made aware of the serious harm and damage that can occur with slander made via social networking sites.
4.12 Summary

Quantitative research methods were used for certain questions during the management interviews, but as only two managers were interviewed it seemed more effective to discuss their interviews without the use of graphs.

The open-ended questions discussed were recorded within the interviews and later transcribed. Patterns such as security and benefits such as marketing opportunities were easily obtained through the research. Links were made between the secondary research found and the primary research conducted. The next section of this dissertation is the conclusion, where the aims and objectives will be revisited to ensure each has been answered correctly and all relevant information has been produced.
5. **Conclusions**

5.1 **Introduction**

The aim of this dissertation has been to discover the many benefits and drawbacks organisations face while using social media as a form of corporate marketing. Background has been given about social media and where it has helped organisations both for profit and not, with examples from organisations such as Cancer Research UK, The American Red Cross and independent entrepreneurs such as personal trainers. Evidence has been given which shows how social media users are increasing each year from secondary research, which in itself provides evidence that organisations can benefit from adopting social media into the workplace due to how the amount of potential customers they can reach through social media platforms. Links were made between the secondary research found and the primary research conducted within the discussion chapter of this dissertation. Trends were found when analysing both primary and secondary research that go against the use of social media. The trend of security seemed to be an issue for organisations and this was discussed in detail through previous chapters. Primary research allowed the research to analyse what management thinks about allowing staff to use their own device in the workplace mainly for social media use. During this section of the dissertation reference will be made to what was found during the discussion section with recommendations for organisations wishing to use social media within their company and advice to help make the use of it a success.
5.2 Objectives Set

1. To discover the importance of using social media within an organisation for advertisement and engagement, focusing on the benefits and drawbacks organisations have encountered.

2. To investigate whether or not employees take their own devices such as laptops/smartphones into the workplace and what security does the organisations have in place to allow safety over personal data using primary research in the form of an interview.

3. To critically evaluate what employees think about using social media in work including benefits and disadvantages of using social media for the company using primary research.

4. To analyse what a manager’s views are on using social media within the workplace for the benefit of the company, and what procedures are set in place to ensure staff are not using social media for personal use on company time using primary research.

5. To produce a recommendation list for organisations wishing to use social media to keep up with competitors and increase their sales and popularity.

The first objective set was to discover the importance of using social media within an organisation. Through the literature review benefits and drawbacks organisations may encounter were outlined and discussed with examples of where organisations have been successful while using social media had also been noted. Secondary research was produced to help complete this objective through the use of books, journals and online resources. It was found that social media can benefit organisations in many ways in terms of advertising by helping them to build customer relationships, advertise products and services online at no cost and ensure they are kept up to date with the latest advertisement trends. Examples such as Cancer Research UK’s no make-up “selfie” campaign were given to show how organisations are adopting social media and using it to embrace future marketing opportunities, profit and awareness. Statistics were given to show how popular social media has become and why organisations embrace it for marketing purposes.
It was found that certain organisations have faced problems when allowing social media to be used for marketing purposes, examples of which were seen within the literature review and discussion chapters. Through secondary research undertaken it could be seen that organisations face problems when allowing staff to use the company’s social media accounts, examples include inappropriate tweets made from US Airways and automobile manufacturer Chrysler. During primary research evidence was given of where staff have used the company’s social media pages for their own personal reasons instead of using it for the benefit or the company and this had caused many problems.

The second objective set was to investigate into whether or not employees take their own devices such as laptops into the workplace. In order to complete this objective successfully primary research was needed in the form of interviews that contained both qualitative and quantitative methods. Interviews were conducted at two opposite organisations. One organisation being for profit called Vitality Gym and Spa and another being non-profit called Oxfam Online Cardiff. Interviews were conducted with a manager at each organisation followed by three employees/volunteers to discover as much information about the research question as possible. It was found that the majority of employees and volunteers do take their own devices into the workplace, however each organisation would only allow them to use smartphones, any company work that is to be done would be completed on the company’s facilities. This ensures employees do not transfer private data outside the organisation and allows management to track what employees are doing on the devices. Through secondary research it was found that BYOD may cause problems for organisations as there is risk of data being transferred outside the organisation and without the correct protection and security within set within the company important data is at risk of being accessed and used irrationally.

The third objective set was to understand what employees thought about using social media in the workplace. The interviews consisted of a number of open-ended questions which allowed the interviewees to expand on their answer and give a large amount of information on their opinions of social media. All interviewees agreed that social media is a benefit to their company and will continue to use it for advertisement purposes in the future. Vitality Gym and Spa gave examples of where they have benefitted from using social media and how using it has helped to increase their clientele and spread the word to many individuals without spending money. Although the majority of feedback from these interviews was positive,
employees were aware of the negative effects social media can have on an organisation such as employee slack and security issues.

The forth objective was to analyse what manager’s views were on using social media. Through primary research this objective was addressed by producing a discussion, which contained valid and useful information that the researcher could use to determine if organisations are viewing social media as a platform for corporate success or see it as creating unnecessary drawbacks. Management gave examples of where social media has caused a few unnecessary errors and told the researcher how they dealt with the errors and continue to use social media correctly and safely within the workplace.

The final objective set was to create a recommendation list for organisations wishing to use social media in the future. Through primary and secondary research undertaken it was found that security was a key issue for organisations while using social media within the workplace, as well as monitoring what employees are doing on social networking sites.

A recommendation list will be created at the end of this dissertation based on data collected and research found to advise management on how to deal with these issues when allowing social media to be present within the workplace in the future.

5.3 Reflections

When looking back at the original research question it was unclear to the researcher just how many benefits organisations would encounter while adopting some sort of social media platform within the workplace. Through in depth research from secondary research methods useful facts and figures could be drawn upon that support how successful using social media can be for organisations in terms of advertising, building customer relationships, creating awareness and branching out to a wider audience. Evidence of organisations such as charities and independent fitness entrepreneurs have been outlined providing evidence oh where they use social media within their organisation and how effective it has been in terms of marketing.

When interviewing members at each organisation it was found that all agreed that social media was beneficial for the company in terms of marketing and reaching a global audience. Each employee seemed to have a good understanding of how social media can help their organisation and gave useful examples to support their claim. Employees and management
did understand that social media does come with its drawbacks and therefore by incorporating policies, such as who can have access to the social media accounts, what technical items staff are allowed to use during work hours and monitoring the company’s PCs, into the workplace they believe that this will ensure social media is used correctly and not abused by staff members in the future.

If more time had been permitted further primary research could have been undertaken to discover more employee and management experiences with using social media within the workplace. Also, a more in depth study could have been produced on employees that bring their own devices into the workplace, discovering more about how this effects organisations and if allowing staff to use their devices makes a huge difference to increasing sales and popularity.

Although interviews conducted gave the researcher enough information to write within this dissertation, focus groups and questionnaires may have been beneficial to gather more statistics on employee’s views about social media.

5.4 Limitations

When conducting this dissertation there were a few limitations that arose. The first limitation was time management. Although a Gantt chart had been produced to enable the researcher to follow a plan to complete each section (provided in appendices), this proved difficult especially when gathering primary research. It was difficult to interview members at two organisations around the same time due to their work schedule and this pushed the deadline for primary research back a few weeks. However, to counteract this problem, while waiting on primary research to be undertaken, more time was spent on gathering useful secondary research from a number of relevant sources.

Another limitation is that research was undertaken at two small organisations, it may have been of interest to discover what larger organisations are using social media for and if they have seen any improvements by using it for marketing purposes.

The last limitation found was that questionnaires could have been handed out to more individuals if larger organisations had been part of this research, this would have allowed for more varied responses about social media and the effects it has on an organisation.
5.5 Recommendations

From analysing all data found through primary and secondary research it is clear that social media is of great benefit to organisations in terms of advertising to new and existing customers. Recommendations (based on the data found from primary and secondary research) for any organisation wishing to adopt social media into the workplace would include:

5.6 Recommendation 1

- An employee contract that states that employees are to only use social media for beneficial reasons to the company. With a contract put in place this can ensure the organisation enhances business success while using social media as they can control what gets posted on the networking sites and by whom.

5.7 Recommendation 2

- Another recommendation would be that organisations should introduce facilities where employees work specifically on social media pages. This will enable management to know exactly what employees are using the facilities for and allow them to set times that they want employees to engage with social media. Looking back at the literature review it can be seen that Dell had introduced a centre where all social media activities could take place.

5.8 Recommendation 4

- Taking into account that not all organisations could afford a centre it would be in the best interest of the managers at organisations to monitor what their staff is using social media for to ensure they are not using it for personal reasons during work hours. Through primary research it was found that both Oxfam Online Cardiff and Vitality monitor what their employees are doing in some ways such as having software on the computer facilities to track what employees are using the Internet for and restricting who can access the company’s social media accounts. This ensures that safety is present over company and staff data with less chance of slanderous behaviour taking place on social media platforms that could damage the reputation of the company.
5.9 Recommendation 5

- In order to direct more customers to the organisations Facebook and Twitter pages it would be beneficial to have links to these sites via the company’s website. It was found that The American Red Cross have links on their website that will take an individual directly to their social media accounts and this helps to promote their pages to gain more followers and more recognition.

5.10 Recommendation 6

- Organisations should keep their social media pages up to date to ensure customers are aware of the latest news and offers which will ensure information will be given to many individuals across all age groups and all over the world.

5.11 Opportunities for Future Research

During this study both for profit and a not-for profit organisations were explored and focus was made on how they are using social media within the workplace for marketing purposes. Following this study, further investigation could allow for larger scale organisations to be analysed to explore their use of social media and “bring your own device” (BYOD), focusing on whether or not they have encountered success, failure or a mix of both by using this form of marketing.

An opportunity to explore larger organisations, for example banks, could allow for a more in depth study and varied response from individuals about the research topic.

5.12 Summary

Summing up this dissertation several advantages and disadvantages of using social media have been found through primary and secondary research. An in depth methodology has been produced outlining the appropriate methodological approaches to ensure data capture is a success. An information rich discussion has been produced that back up secondary research found and answer all objectives set. To conclude, useful recommendations have been outlined that advise organisations on how to ensure social media is used for the benefit of an organisation and in a safe and controlled manner.
6. References


• Cross, M (2013) Social Media Security, Syngress, USA.


• Knoke, D, and Yang, S (2008) Social Network Analysis, (2nd edn), SAGE Publications, USA.


• Riley, C (2014) Move over Facebook, Alibaba’s mega IPO is coming: CNNMoney.


• Wengraf, T (2001) Qualitative Research Interviewing, SAGE Publications.


• Zimmerman, J and Ng, D (2012) Social Media Marketing All-In-One For Dummies, (2nd edn) John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Canada.
Appendices

Appendix A – Ethics Approval

When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency such as the NHS or MoD, you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your NHS application in order that your School is aware of the project.

The document Guidelines for obtaining ethics approval will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to your School Research Ethics Committee.

PLEASE NOTE:
Participant recruitment or data collection must not commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

PART ONE

| Name of applicant:                  | Phillipa (Pippa) Bethan Corbyn Hale |
| Supervisor (if student project):    | Dr Tom Crick                        |
| School:                             | Cardiff school of Management        |
| Student number (if applicable):     | ST20000520                          |
| Programme enrolled on (if applicable): | BSc (Hons) Business Information Systems |
| Project Title:                      | How can the use of social media influence the way organisations interact with their customers? |
| Expected Start Date:                | January 2014                        |
| Approximate Duration:               | Start 14th January and last approximately 3 weeks. |
| Funding Body (if applicable):       | N/A                                 |
| Other researcher(s) working on the project: | N/A                               |
| Will the study involve NHS patients or staff? | No                                 |
| Will the study involve taking samples of human origin from participants? | N/A                                 |

In no more than 150 words, give a non technical summary of the project

To analyse the many benefits and drawbacks organisations encounter while using social media for marketing purposes. Also, to drawn upon the increase of security required due to the demand of
Furthermore, to find out if management allow employees to bring their own devices to work and why. From this, look into the security and monitoring put in place by management to ensure specific data/details are safe and how do they monitor what staff are doing while on their own device using social media. Interviews will be taken place with employees and a manager to get their input on social media and how safe and beneficial it is to the organisation.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human tissue samples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice based not involving human participants (eg curatorial, practice audit)</td>
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<td>Compulsory projects in professional practice (eg Initial Teacher Education)</td>
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If you have answered YES to any of these questions, no further information regarding your project is required.
If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form

**DECLARATION:**
I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of the applicant:</th>
<th>Date: 8/1/14</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phillipa (Pippa) Hale</td>
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**FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of supervisor:</th>
<th>Date: 8/1/14</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Crick</td>
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Signature of supervisor:

**Research Ethics Committee use only**

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<tr>
<td>Project approved</td>
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<td>Project approved in principle</td>
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<td>Decision deferred</td>
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Signature:

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:
PART TWO

A RESEARCH DESIGN

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Both primary and secondary research will be undertaken as part of this dissertation.</td>
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<td>- Primary research will consist of semi-structured interviews with mostly open-end questions and some tick box and closed questions. Interviews will last around 10-15 minutes per interviewee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Qualitative research methods will be used in this dissertation in the form of interviews to gather management and employees views on using social media within the workplace. Some quantitative methods will be used also such as tick boxes for certain questions, e.g. How good is your knowledge on how to use Twitter? Etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Investigate into whether or not employees take their own devices such as laptops/smartphones into the workplace and what security does the organisation have in place to allow safety over personal data using Primary research in the form of face-to-face Interviews. Also, to evaluate what employees think about using social media in work including benefits and disadvantages of using it for the company by carrying out primary research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Analyse what a managers views are on using social media within the workplace for the benefit of the company and what procedures are set in place to ensure staff are not using social media for personal use on company time using primary research.</td>
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<td>- 2-3 organisations with 2-3 employees at each organisation and 1 manager from each to get their views on using social media within the workplace. Research into what organisations will be used for this dissertation will be acknowledged over the Christmas period. Preferably would like 1 large profit organisation and 1 small non-profit organisation.</td>
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<td>- Sampling methods include gathering several employees to get different opinions and a range of views on social media and how each manager feels about using social media within their company with emphasis on the benefits/risks. Snowball sampling will be used as each employee can recommend another employee to be interviewed to allow for a range of employee opinions.</td>
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<td>- Analytical techniques would involve deep research into my topic area and analysing my findings in depth to reach a firm conclusion at the end of my dissertation. All interviewees will be kept anonymous.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

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<td>B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?</td>
<td>Interview staff member at Oxfam Online Cardiff to get his opinion on E-business management and using social media within a charity for my work experience during second</td>
</tr>
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1 An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here.
Tom Crick will be supervising this dissertation and he has had many years’ experience in supervising students at dissertation. Tom also has a PhD.

**B2 Student project only**

What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?

**C POTENTIAL RISKS**

**C1 What potential risks do you foresee?**

- Risks for the participants include:
  - Participants may not wish to take part in the interviews.
  - May not completely understand the questions asked and therefore not have rich answers that could be used.
- Risks for the dissertation as a whole include:
  - May not get all primary and secondary research gathered in enough time.
  - May not follow the Gantt chart due to error in a specific section, e.g. Primary research takes longer than originally planned.
- Risks for the research include:
  - Organisations not willing to be interviewed.
  - Not enough time to interview employees and managers at each organisation.
  - Difficulty finding a case online of where an organisation has completely different views to that of the organisations used in the primary research stage.

**C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?**

- Ensure the Gantt chart is followed to allow for good time management.
- Communicate with employees and management to ensure they know exactly what they are participating in, understand the questions asked and be able to answer them to the best of their ability.
- Make sure dissertation is well organised to ensure each section has a start and end date.
- Allow enough time for plenty of secondary research online to conduct a comparative analysis.

When submitting your application you **MUST** attach a copy of the following:

- All information sheets
- Consent/assent form(s)

Refer to the document *Guidelines for obtaining ethics approval* for further details on what format these documents should take.
Appendix B – Participant Consent Form for Employees, Volunteers and Management

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number: 201312018

Participant name or Study ID Number:

Title of Project: How can the use of social media influence the way organisations interact with their customers?

Name of Researcher: Phillipa (Pippa) Hale. ST20000520

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

The following statements could also be included on the consent form if appropriate:

1. I agree to the interview / focus group / consultation being audio recorded

2. I agree to the interview / focus group / consultation being video recorded

3. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications
   I agree to my quotes being attributed to me

Signature of Participant ____________________ Date:

Name of person taking consent _______________ Date:

Signature of person taking consent:
Appendix C – Participant Information Sheet for Organisations

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(FOR INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP TYPE DATA COLLECTION)

How can the use of social media influence the way organisations interact with their customers?

Cardiff Metropolitan University Protocol Number:

Project summary
The purpose of this research project is to analyse the increase of security required due to the demand on social media within organisations using comparative analysis.
Most businesses these days will use social media for some reason and this work will establish why each organisation use social media and what benefits/downfalls they have encountered while using social media.
Your participation will enable the collection of data which will form part of a study being undertaken at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?
You have been asked to participate because you fit the profile of the population being studied. You are either a manager of an organisation or an employee of an organisation which uses social media within the workplace or doesn’t use social media but has opinions as to why you do not use it.

To participate in this study you must be:

- Over the age of 18
- A manager of an organisation
- An employee of an organisation
- Have some general knowledge about social media and bringing your own device to work

During the interviews you will be asked about your views on bringing your own devices to work and what you think are the benefits/downfalls of this. Also, you will be asked about your opinions on using social media within the workplace, if you use social media and why, if you don’t use social media and why, and also what you believe the benefits/downfalls are for the company when using social media for advertising purposes.

Project risks
The research involves the completion of an interview with a manager of an organisation (2 organisations to be used for comparative analysis) and a few employees at each organisation which will be recorded for analysis. We are not seeking to collect any sensitive data on you; this study is only concerned with your personal views and opinions of social media within the workplace and if you have had any experiences with using it or bringing your own device to work. We do not think that there are any significant risks associated with this study. However, if you do feel that any of the questions are inappropriate then you can stop at any time. Furthermore, you can change your mind and withdraw from the study at any time – we will completely respect your decision.

How we protect your privacy
All the information you provide will be held in confidence. We have taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be directly identified from the interviews taken place; there is no information on these interview sheets that will identify you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) and your interview will be kept in secure locations by the research team. When we have finished the study and analysed all the information, all the documentation used to gather the data will be destroyed. The recordings of the interviews with management and employees will also be held in a secure and confidential environment during the study and destroyed when it is complete.

YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

If you require any further information about this project then please contact
Phillipa (Pippa) Hale / Cardiff Metropolitan University
CMU email: ST20000520@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Appendix D – Interview Questions Asked to Employees/Volunteers

Interview Questions for Employees

1. How long have you worked at this company for?

2. Do you bring your own device to work, such as a laptop or smartphone?
   Yes □ □ No □ □

3. If yes, what do you use it for?
4. What do you think about using social media for beneficial purposes for the company, e.g. advertising for profit?

5. How would you rate your IT knowledge

Very Poor □    Poor □    Average □    Good □

Very Good □

6. How would you rate your knowledge on using Twitter?

Very Poor □    Poor □    Average □    Good □

Very Good □
7. What security procedures do you think should be put in place to protect your personal data while using social media during work hours?

8. Do you think it will be beneficial to the company with social media present in the workplace, or do you think this may be a downfall?
Appendix E – Interview Questions Asked to Management

Interview Questions for Management

1. Do you use social media for any purpose within the workplace?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. If yes, what do you use it for?

3. If no, would you consider using social media for advertising purposes?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐
4. What security/monitoring measures do you have to ensure employees are using social media for the benefit of the company and not for personal use?

5. Do you allow staff to bring their own devices to work, such as laptops or smartphones?

   Yes  [ ]   No  [ ]

Why?
6. What security features do you have in place to ensure safety over staff/company data while using their own devices for social media purposes?

7. What do you believe the major benefits and risks are of using social media within your company?
Appendix F – Gantt Chart

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<th>December</th>
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<th>April</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decide on research question with aims and objectives</td>
<td>Decide on my method of research</td>
<td>Gather appropriate research questions</td>
<td>Start to organise my dissertation</td>
<td>Carry out my research</td>
<td>Begin to write up my dissertation</td>
<td>Organise all data collected</td>
<td>Begin my literature review</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review data and write it up correctly</td>
<td>Analyse the data to gather what depth of importance it has</td>
<td>Complete first draft of dissertation</td>
<td>Complete second draft</td>
<td>Correct any errors and complete second draft</td>
<td>Finish and submit dissertation with 2 week leeway for binding</td>
<td></td>
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</table>