Analysing the use of Multimedia in Marketing for Small Medium Enterprises

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Business Information Systems

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled Analysing the use of Multimedia in Marketing for Small Medium Enterprises 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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ABSTRACT

This research has been conducted to analyse the use of multimedia for marketing in Small Medium Enterprise’s (SME) with a view of discussing what forms of multimedia is used and then discussing how effective these methods are. This research topic has been chosen as their seems to be research into each separate field but not much into combining the fields to give a comprehensive overview that SME’s can use to establish the best form of marketing their business through multimedia. The research was conducted using a pragmatic approach that uses both primary and secondary data while using both qualitative and quantitative data. This has been done to gather a wide variety of data and to ensure that should there be a shortage of data in one field then the other data will gather enough data to be useful. The results show that multimedia is being used in a variety of ways in marketing for SME’s and this is down to variety of variables each SME has, from target customers to what they are selling. It all has an impact in the type of multimedia marketing they need to be conducting. However there is still a lack of understanding of what multimedia actually is. The conclusions of this are that further research is required to establish a firm understanding of multimedia, but as it is social media is the most effective form of multimedia marketing for SME’s.
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1 INTRODUCTION

This project will explore the use of Multimedia within Marketing aspects of Small and Medium Enterprises. The aim is to establish first what multimedia is used and how businesses market themselves. The paper will hope to discuss what methods small and medium enterprises (SME’s) are using and to offer a view as to what is good and bad for said companies with regards to multimedia being used for primarily marketing but along with other fields that contribute to the marketing side of the companies. Concluding with the knowledge of what multimedia is currently being used for marketing in SME’s and also offering an insight as to what could be used both now and in the future to improve the marketing for these businesses.

This Project will use both primary and secondary data to analyse the positive and possible negative effects on the marketing of Small and Medium Enterprises. The primary data for this project will be collected in two forms; first using surveys to gain broad information from a number of SME’s, before then interviewing several SME’s to gather a more in depth knowledge of their use of social media and other multimedia to market their company. The secondary data will be collected by conducting a literature review on the topics on hand in order to gain a further understanding of the topic and to compare these finding to the collected primary research. Both primary and secondary data will include quantitative and qualitative data to ensure nothing is missed in the research.

The first aspect of this paper will be a literature review. Here is where secondary the research will be found and analysed. The literature review will aim to establish a clear outline as to what the main aim of the research is in order to ensure it is met. This section brings forward the research that is already available and thus enables the future research to be refined and not simply adding to the information already out there. This research will enable key themes to become visible throughout collections of literature and how these themes are connected to the primary data that will be presented later on in the paper. This will then conclude with a brief summary of the research gathered and also show where else the field can be researched further.

The following chapter will discuss the methodology in which the research framework will be explained and discussed. Establishing the methods that were used to research and gather
primary and secondary data, while also discussing what data analysis will be done, how this will be undertaken and why it is relevant for the research. This chapter will display the methods used for both primary and any secondary research gathered.

The results and discussion chapters are a very important part of this research as it will present the primary data that’s been gathered. By first describing the data with the help of using graphs and such like the data will then be explained in order to understand what the data actually means. These findings will then be evaluated to establish what the data has discovered about the research topic and so how it can be used to expand on the information already available.

To conclude the conclusion will be where the question is answered so in this case what are the uses of multimedia for marketing in Small Medium Enterprises and how are they effective. With a strong justification, this chapter will display the stages of research undertaken and how it has led to establishing the use of multimedia in marketing for a Small Medium Enterprise. Here is where any future research will be set, and where the research needs to go in order to make a step forward. While also offering suggested methods to other businesses of how multimedia can be used for marketing now and in the future.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the literature review is to increase the awareness surrounding the research topic to bring forward theories regarding the topic you had not previously considered. Conducting this research will also ensure that there is not an excess of simply repeating what is already out there but the primary data adding to it. While undergoing this research, it is also possible that the discovery of paths for the current research to go down and can lead the way for your research to follow. The review will give the paper an outline to ensure that the main aim of the research is clear and obvious.

This review will aim to aid the understanding while analysing the use of multimedia in marketing for small medium enterprises as “a search of the literature is an essential part of every research project” (Hart, 2001). The use of multimedia in marketing for SME’s is an important field to research as with the ever-evolving field of multimedia and marketing especially online then it is vital that small businesses keep up with the times and not to be left behind still conducting marketing projects that no longer work.

The review will be structured as follows; first the use multimedia will be researched in order to set out a basic outline of what multimedia is and will begin to show how it can be used. Then moving on to SME marketing and how it is use in modern business today, before discussing the use of Social media in marketing. These 3 topics will then be researched together to gather what information is already available in order to understand where the information can be advanced on. To do this marketing using multimedia will first be researched, followed by marketing in SME’s and how SME’s use multimedia in general. Concluding with research of the entire topic to establish the gaps in the field that this paper will hope to fill.

In order to analyse the literature that is available this paper will aim to access 3 types of literature for each topic in order to gain a complete understanding of the research available. These 3 types are primary, secondary and tertiary literature. Primary has the higher level of detail however the tertiary literature goes through a more rigorous publishing process so would be seen as a good reliable source on most occasions, this will not always be possible due to the literature available but will be attempted. The aim is to use the most up to date literature but it will not always be possible to do so, so when using literature that dates before
2000 then it must be taken into context when reading the contents of said literature. As the field of multimedia is very much linked to online items then much of the research is usually distributed online, so caution will have to be taken to ensure the websites used are reliable and have reputable sources. For example, the use of open websites such as Wikipedia cannot be used due to the fact it is in theory a blog with untrustworthy sources.

This research will also exclude any published literature that is not in English or Welsh as I do not speak any other language so would be unwise to translate the work into English in case the translation is incorrect in anyway. As previously mentioned any unreliable sources will also not be used as the information given may not be accurate or correct.

2.1 Use of Multimedia

Multimedia is a very hard thing to explain as it has several different meanings, “Multimedia is all things to all people. The name can convey a highly specific meaning or less than nothing, depending on your audience” (Feldman, 1994). The aspect in question here is the use of more than 1 component to convey information. Social media is a great example as it contains text and imagery but also occasionally sound. Multimedia is often used to teach people and so is a good tool in marketing as it itself can be used to teach people about a business.

Authors such as P. Brett and C. M. Montgomery have both identified the advantages of using Multimedia in learning and that the use of more than one component, identifying sound as a very important part of peoples learning. Marketing is basically informing someone about your business. “Results of performance on tasks showed more effective comprehension and recall while using multimedia than either audio or video plus pen and paper” (Brett, 1997). This point is very evident in the literature found about the use of multimedia in learning and would seem to be a well-founded theory.

The first journal by Montgomery is a comprehensive study about the use of multimedia for a wide range of students learning needs, this is related to this paper by the fact that it also is analysing the use of multimedia. It supports the theory that multimedia is a better learning tool than just one component i.e. just text or imagery. Its significance to the topic is strong as being published in 1995 it was one of the first times the use of multimedia was categorically proven to be a useful tool when attempting to teach people and could be more effective than simply one form of information.
The second journal by Brett, published in 1997 is slightly later than Montgomery’s but still holds the significance as it continues the discussion on the advantages of using multimedia. Coming at it from a different angle its aim is to analyse the listening so looks to use multimedia with this to show which is better for learning. This research is connected to this papers research as it hopes to prove the advantage of multimedia which allow this paper to display the advantages in this journal and how they are used by SME’s for marketing purposes.

This brief look into the use of multimedia has shown that it is a very valuable tool when used for learning and so is an obvious tool to be used for marketing. This initial research will allow further research discussion and enable the next research to be more refined to the research topic.

2.2 SME MARKETING

Marketing is one of the most important things for many businesses as it will determine how many customers the business gets and so how successful the business is. “Marketing is a philosophy of business that places the customer, not the marketing department, at the centre” (Doyle and Stern, 2006). This quote shows the whole point of marketing, showing the customer that they are the most important and not the company. Marketing is a very broad topic and can be done in many different ways, from advertising on television to a simple poster up on a wall. Marketing comes in all shapes and sizes.

One of the first themes that comes to light when researching marketing for SME’s is the understanding that SME’s do not have the finances to conduct a marketing in the same way as a larger business. So have to find alternative methods of marketing. This evident in 2 pieces of literature by D. Carson and A. Gilmore, one piece with S. Rocks and an earlier journal with K. Grant. T. Their findings are that a marketing network is usually required in order to strategically set out how they will market their business.

The earlier journal by Carson, Gilmore and Grant is very relatable to the research project as it enables comparisons to be drawn by future research of whether the identified methods of marketing are the same as the primary research. As the journal shows, the importance for marketing is evident for all size of business and the SME’s are possibly under more pressure as they do not have the ability to spend vast amounts of money on marketing as the funds
are needed elsewhere. The marketing network set out in this journal however is a great step for any SME to take and efficiently promote themselves as a business in any way they can.

The second journal by Carson, Gilmore and this time Rocks has a similar but slightly different in that they also look at the effects of the strategic planning by SME marketing to show evidence of the marketing network in place. This is again relevant to the research as it shows how vital marketing is for SME’s and solidifies the aim analysing how they market using multimedia. Being a slightly later release this has had more time to view the ever-changing way business market themselves, from simple posters up on the town noticeboard to interacting with customers via social media which will be discussed later on in this chapter.

Another theme being discussed while researching SME’s marketing was how the business were actually promoting themselves. Reijonen states that SME’s use marketing as a “means to inform the customers about the enterprise and its offerings” (Reijonen, 2010) while also stating that the one simple desire from marketing was to increase sales, which has proven to be true to most SME’s. This journal states a problem with this type of research that I will identify further later in this chapter, that the use of marketing in SME’s is a very under researched topic and so has a lot of room to grow. The research undertaken by Reijonen is closely related to the research this paper is undertaking by the fact that they have been researching a very similar topic to the paper. This has led to many similarities in research while also showing what information is out there and what needs to be added upon to it.

One of the best collection of theories comes from a book edited by S. Nwankwo and T. Gbadamosi which states that Marketing can be set to 3 categories; Culture, Strategy and Tactics, all 3 marketing approaches but all have different benefits and negatives, but also admits along with Reijonen that Marketing in SME’s is a topic that needs further research which this paper hopes to provide. This is where this boo has been very relatable to this research paper as it is attempting to analyse the same things and progress the research in this narrow field.

A new theory and concept was introduced in another journal, “SMEs are performing e-CRM that enables customer communication and customer information capabilities” (Harrigan, Ramsey and Ibbotson, 2012). E-CRM stands for electronic customer relationship management, the idea that marketing is a way of improving the business to customer
relationship. This theory is a very new theory and is so far not commonly known, however after reading their work it makes perfect sense that the interaction between customer and business should be on the back of a good healthy relationship and that marketing can contribute to that relationship. This theory has and will be very important when talking to SME’s as it will give them a clearer understanding of how marketing can help them and their business moving forward.

Researching marketing in SME’s has enabled the research topic to be refined further to ensure all of the research is relevant and is posing good and meaningful questions to this papers finding.

2.3 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

This section will be discussing research on Social Media and its use in marketing. Social media is a very complex thing to explain but the following quote goes some way to doing that, “Social media are the online means of communication, conveyance, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected and interdependent networks of people, communities, and organizations enhanced by technological capabilities and mobility” (Tuten and Solomon, 2015). So simply put social media is a way for people to stay connected online through multiple forms, from YouTube to LinkedIn to Facebook, all are a way for people to connect with each other. One of the most noticeable things while researching this topic is that almost all literature is very recent, supporting the idea that social media is a very new thing and people are only starting to realise its potential for marketing.

One of the main uses found when researching was using social media marketing to improve the business to customer relationship. Kaur states that “one of the most notable phenomena of new media is how it has increased and created new form of social interaction” (Kaur, 2016). This shows the further understanding businesses are getting about how social media can be used to interact with customers, either directly or indirectly. This journal present several good statistics to enhance the concept that is social media’s rise in importance especially for marketing purposes. As so this journals relatability to the research topic is very strong as it is showing qualitative data that this paper hopes to analyse.

Similarly, Charlesworth puts forward the same theory in his book. “Social Media has given marketers a way of connecting with consumers in an unprecedented way” (Charlesworth,
2014) which in turn will improve the business to customer relationship. Charlesworth is a well renowned author, being a marketing lecturer his work is extremely useful when researching anything to do with marketing. This publication is well suited to this research paper and so proves to be extremely useful as it directly links to the use of a multimedia for marketing through social media, and so can be used to compare with the primary research that will be discussed in a later chapter.

When researching social media marketing, an industry report from 2016 was found containing several interesting quantitative figures that are closely related to the research topic. The report by Michael A. Stelzner had the aim of understanding how social media was being used by marketers in order to expand their business. Being an industry report from last year means that the facts and figures within will be up to date and relevant. Stelzner is a social media expert and founder of the blog Social Media Examiner, so knows what he’s talking about when it comes to social media. His research into the use of social media in the industry is very important to the research paper as it aims to conduct similar research so is important that it adds to the research already available and does not repeat what has already been published. He states “Fifty-nine percent of marketers surveyed have at least two years of social media marketing experience.” (Stelzner, 2016) This is just one of many statistics that are useful when comparing with other primary data.

2.4 MULTIMEDIA MARKETING FOR SME’S

This section of the literature review will have to purpose of finding research available that is almost the same as this research papers topic in a bid to establish where the information need to progress to and to spot any notable holes in the research for either this projects or future projects to fill. For research sake, social media will often be used as a form of Multimedia as that is the most prominent use of multimedia in marketing for SME’s.

A stand out theme in this research is that the use of Social Media for Marketing by SME’s is that many businesses do not put as much effort into social media marketing as they either could or want to. “The results however indicate that there is a lack of allocation of resources mainly in staffing and training when adopting the social media” (Chan and Kumar, 2017) This publication shows how businesses do not use social media to the best of their advantage and so could improve their sales if they put more effort into their multimedia marketing. This
research is closely related to this research paper as it poses the same questions and indicates where the research for this topic is at. The only critique of this research is that it was based in Malaysia and so may be different to a more westernised culture but the facts are still valid and useful for research.

Similarly, a report in Bangladesh states “only 17% Bangladesh SME’s are using SMM platform for business development” (Rashid, 2017) this supports what the previous research said that SME’s are not using their Social Media Marketing much at all. This report despite again being in a foreign country resonates with this research paper as it poses a similar question, that of the use of social media which is a form of multimedia by SME’s for marketing. So its view that social media marketing is not being used is highly significant as it will be good to compare with the primary research that’s gathered in a later chapter.

Another theme that was very evident during the search was that the social media marketing for SME’s was different to larger organisations in that the SME’s have to plan their marketing as to who their target audience and what they plan on getting out of it as its purpose is very different to a large organisation. A large organisation usually already has the customer base, simply want to sell something, whereas the SME’s are looking to gain new and existing customers trust. This is evident in a journal by He and Negahban where they state “The results of their study suggest that the overall consumer engagement behavior has a significant predictive relationship with the growth rate of brand community in both short term and long term” (He and Negahban, 2017) this shows that marketing of an SME is more than short term sales, it’s about long term customers. Being such a recent journal it is very significant that this data exit as it enables the right questions to be asked of this research paper.

Possibly the more notable theme is that the use of Multimedia Marketing in SME’s is dependent on age, “Online advertising represent a highly effective method for reaching today’s young generation” (Albert, 2016) showing that the use of multimedia and social media to be exact is often effected by age. This journal article is very useful as it not only displays this information but also how SME view marketing in general which is closely connected to this research topic. The significance of this is that it is data that can be used to compare with primary data later in this paper. Closely linked is another journal which follows the same theme, but shows how the businesses at questions age and experience is also dependent on their use of Social Media Marketing. “This finding likely stems from differences in cognitive
frameworks between novice and experienced entrepreneurs, which impacts their ability to recognize opportunities and respond to technological change.” (Mack, Marie-Pierre and Redican, 2017). Similarly to the previous journal this data is very important to the research being undertaken in this paper, however its significance may be slightly increased due to the fact that firstly it is a more recent article but secondly analyses data that is closer to the primary data this paper is researching however both are useful to compare in the future chapters.

This literature review has been a massive contribution to the research of analysing the use of multimedia in marketing for small medium enterprises as it has shown where the current research is at and where said research need improving. Possibly the more significant studies for this particular research, despite not being exact research of the entire topic at and was Alan Charlesworth’s book on social media marketing as it covers all basis in a very prominent form of multimedia being social media. One of the other studies that strongly relates is the report by Stelznar. Being an annual report it will and has enabled comparisons over the years to be made and establish where SME’s need to take their marketing in the future.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The level of research into this topic is extremely varied as the research into social media has soared in recent years while the research into multimedia as a whole has not followed suit, possibly people misconception of it may be the cause of this as will be further discussed in the later chapter. One of the major gaps in this field is the statistics to categorically state that one type of marketing is better, this may be because there are so many variables for a successful marketing strategy that it is impossible to say this will work and why as the situation of the business will vary drastically from one to another. One of the most common inconsistencies is how researchers are describing multimedia, as there are a variety of theories and definitions it sometimes causes confusion when literature does not set out what their definition is from the outset. The areas in need of future research is the marketing by SME’s as mentioned earlier there is a need to establish what form of marketing is best for every SME, it may have to be a complex formula with several variable but their needs to be an understanding that SME’s can research and know how they can best marketing their business in the future. In relation to other research for larger enterprises the research is out
there, however the research for smaller business need to be increased. The research for multimedia needs to be updated to consider with the increase in social media activity and the ‘rest’ of multimedia needs to catch up before being left behind.
3 Methodology

The research for this paper will be done in a pragmatic approach so that the data collected both primary and secondary will be quantitative and qualitative. During this chapter the reasons behind this decision will be set out and the methods of collecting this data will be explained thoroughly in order to present the best and most accurate findings for this report. Often a mixed methods approach is best because “the use of a single methodology often fails to explore all of these components” (Amaratunga et al., 2002) showing that when only a single approach is used then some aspects of research that are critical to the paper are missed. This approach has also been used to ensure that in a situation where there is a lack of evidence in some research methods then other forms will be able to be used so that there is still valid data to be discussed and analysed in the later chapters.

All of the research will be undertaken in a professional manner, whether interviewing business owners or conducting surveys, the presentation of both the researcher and documents in question will be of the highest standard. The aim of this report is to make deductive research that will end in the answering of the questions set out at the beginning of the paper, not being inductive and creating a brand-new theory from the data. This approach has been decided after using the research onion as it’s known to go through several different levels of research to find what type of research this paper will undertake.

3.1 Secondary Research

The first research will be undertaken briefly in a literature review which has already been presented. One of the main reasons this secondary research has been made is to understand where the field as a whole is at the moment, thus enabling the comparisons to be drawn between the primary and secondary data collected. As social media, especially is such a new tool for SME’s to us the literature on the subject as spiked so it was important to gather what information is already out there in order to see in what direction this research will need to go in order to ensure the information gathered adds to the data already available. One of the main advantages of using secondary data is that it is much more time and cost effective in that somebody else has gone through the arduous task of collecting the data and presenting it in a way that’s readable, all you as the researcher need to then do is work out what data is
applicable to you and your research. Another advantage is that other researchers may have collected data you have not thought about and so may open up more questions that you as the researcher may not have initially considered. However, one disadvantage especially today is that this data may be out of date by the time it is published to the public. Take social media as an example, these websites and apps are consistently bringing new features and updates that the newest of research has not factored in. If the researcher is aware of this, then they can proceed in a way that enables them to use the data effectively for their research.

3.2 PRIMARY RESEARCH

Despite the amount of related secondary data that was found during the research, a pragmatic approach requires primary research to be done also. Primary research is very useful as it means that the researcher is able to lead the data to answer their own questions and not having to rely on other researchers to ask the questions you want to know. “The obvious advantages of primary research are that it is timely, focussed, and involves no unnecessary data collection which could be wasted effort” (Nargundkar, 2017). Possibly the main disadvantage is that the cost tends to be greater than that of secondary, however it should be noted that the data you as the researcher get out of it should outweigh the cost.

The first data collection method is using surveys to get an overview of SME’s opinion before conducting more in-depth data gathering later. The aim is to gather feedback from over 40 SME’s to ensure that the data really does represent what SME’s opinion is. It is important to get a sizable amount of surveys to ensure the data collected is valid and that there is enough data to analyse. These surveys will be given to SME’s around Cardiff and my home town to ensure that the data is balanced and ensures the results are fair. These businesses will either be contacted through email as this is the quickest way to spread the survey, with some with the discretion of the SME’s emailed they will create a snowball effect and pass the survey onto other businesses or suggest companies for the survey to be emailed too. The surveys will be accompanied by a letter of permission that the participant will sing before completing the survey to ensure complete disclosure with the businesses that their data can be used for research into the use of multimedia in marketing for SME’s. The survey will not take longer than 10 minutes to complete as any longer may lead to the participant feeling bored and may stop thinking about the most relevant answer to them only pick the quickest. The questions
will be made up of closed questions to gather quantitative data with a few open-ended questions to gather a small amount of qualitative data before the interviews are conducted. One of the main advantages of conducting a survey to gather data is the time. With deadlines to meet one of the best ways to gather data fast is this method, unless you as the researcher are going to each business individually the process of emailing it to them and then filling it out shouldn’t take longer than 20 minutes and this can be simultaneously for many businesses. Another advantage especially for a thesis is the low costs “Newer online survey creation software and web survey services costs can vary from very little to thousands of dollars depending upon the types of features and services selected; however, this is relatively inexpensive compared to the cost of traditional paper-and-pencil surveys” (Wright, 2006). Thankfully however due to excellent software called ‘Qualtrics’ we have available at Cardiff Met University which is completely free to use there are no physical costs of conducting this research. This software will also be used to analyse One possible disadvantage however is that you cannot be 100% sure that firstly the correct people are completing the survey, secondly that they’re completing it correctly, which can lead to inaccurate information and confuse the result of the data.

The second research method is Semi structured interviews which will aim to gather qualitative data for analysis. The intention is to conduct face to face interviews with 3 separate businesses that range from a clothing store to a charity organisation to a luxury accommodation business that also offer health and beauty treatments. Contact will be made with these companies either by phone, email or even in person to arrange conducting the interviews in January during the Christmas period, however this may change due to Christmas being a busy time of year for some businesses. In order to get full consent from the interviewees they will be asked to complete a consent sheet so that there is full disclosure as to what the interview is about and the realisation that what they say may be used for research purposes, this will allow the participant to ensure their data is not used in any way that they are not comfortable with. The interviews will mostly consist of open ended questions as here is where the majority of the qualitative data will be gathered. Open ended questions often allow the participant to relax and feel like they are able to say what they want rather than be led down a path by the interviewer, all the interviewer must do is point them in the right direction, questions like this will also encourage the participant to be honest with their answer.
and not falsify data. The interviews may vary in time as some of the businesses may do more or less regarding the use of multimedia for marketing, however the interviews should last between 10 and 25 minutes. In order to document the interviews and ensure the interview flows well the interviews will be recorder and a transcription created to ensure that any note taking does not put the participant off during the interview itself, however there will be minimal note taking to keep track of questions that are yet to be asked and to have some sort of recollection should the recording fail. The main advantages of semi structured interviews are that it allow the discussion to be specific to certain topic, with this possibility it also allows the interviewer to ask questions that they had not previously thought of after the participant mentions something in their response. The advantage of a semi structured interview over a heavily structured interview is that it allows the interviewer room to edit their questions to tailor the participant. Possibly the biggest disadvantage is that this method of data collection can be time consuming along with having to transcribe the entire interview it can take a lot longer than the surveys, however the data gained from them may prove invaluable to the overall research paper and thus create a more complete piece of research. This data will not be as easy to evaluate as the quantitative data as it will require a detailed observation of the responses given by the interviewee in order to deduct the findings.

4 Results

During this section of the report the findings will be presented with a quick description of what the results show before then being analysed in more details in the next chapter. The chapter will start with the data collected through the surveys to give a broad view of what SME’s are doing in relation to the use of multimedia for marketing. Then the data gathered from the interviews will be portrayed that will enable the facts to be understood before they are then discussed and analysed in the next chapter of this research paper.

4.1 Survey Results

The first form of primary data gathering was done through conducting surveys that were distributed amongst SME’s in order to gather an understanding of how they used multimedia for marketing. The initial plan was to email the survey to businesses around Cardiff and my local area to gather a wide range of opinions. This however was not as successful as first
hoped and after sending over 50 emails there were only 7 responses, so the initiative was taken along with another person to go and physically talk to people in order to engage them with the topic and gather many more responses to the survey. Despite this the surveys unfortunately did not reach the amount that was being aimed for falling a few short, but the information is still reliable and related to the topic, so can still be used to see an overview of what these SME’s are thinking in regards to this topic. The first section of the survey was a consent form and thankfully all participant agreed to this so no data had to be removed.

The first few questions of the survey were to gather some initial information about the business that were being surveyed. This was done by firstly asking how many people they employed to ensure they were a small medium enterprise per UK definition. The UK states that an SME is a business with no more than 250 employees, interestingly a micro business is a business with less than 10, a small business employees less than 50 and a medium is ten less than the 250 mentioned before. Looking at the results from the survey it is clear that as expected there is no data from businesses with over 50 employees. The figures read as follows from the survey; the number of businesses with 5 employees or less, 57.58%, the number with between 6 and 25, 33.33%, then the other 9.09% of businesses employed between 26 and 50 people. This has not changed the aim of the study however as many medium businesses will have a similar opinion as small businesses and the phrase SME is used because of this so the aims of the research has not changed. The next question of the survey was to establish what type of organisation the businesses were, on review this question needed more options as the majority of businesses stated that they were ‘other’ from the options given. These included beauticians, café’s and mechanic. This question enabled businesses to choose more than one answer so this may have contributed to this. Aside from that, most of the businesses were in retail, computing or charity followed closely by financial. The education businesses were classed as businesses that helped teach people, one example of this was a computing store that not only sold games consoles and computers but also gave a service where they could go to customers houses or customers come to them to learn the ‘ins ad out’ of their computer. Other businesses included construction and sports and outdoors.

The survey then moved on to talk a little about multimedia to gage the understanding of the businesses that participated. When asked if they knew what multimedia was all had an idea in that none answered with ‘probably not’ or ‘definitely not’ which was promising for the rest
of the survey. 17.65% answered with ‘might or might not’, however the yes had an overwhelming majority, as 47.06% answered ‘probably yes’ and 35.29% said ‘definitely yes’ to being aware of what multimedia is. On the survey, there was a brief explanation of what multimedia is in case people were not 100% sure, so that they could feel comfortable answering the rest of the survey. The following question needed an understanding as they were asked if their business used multimedia at all, of which 91.18% said that they did. However, having looked at the data I would suggest that all of the businesses asked do use it they just felt that it wasn’t enough to justify, one for example who said ‘no’ also said they “used social media a little” later on in their survey so maybe this question is slightly inaccurate and all of the businesses use some form of multimedia as expected. In order to gain a further understanding of how these businesses used multimedia a follow up question asked those who answered yes to specify what forms they use, the most common being through a website and social media. This question enabled more than one answer and is shown by 77.42% using a website and 67.74% using social media. When asked how effective the businesses thought multimedia was, 52.95% said it was extremely effective, 35.29% said very effective and only 11.76% said moderately effective, with this in mind the businesses were asked how important it is for businesses to multimedia nowadays? Gathering similar answers to the previous question. Possibly the most interesting question in this section was asking how much business these businesses though came from multimedia as is shown in figure 1. This chart displays the variety of the amount of business brought in by multimedia. This figure shows that the large majority believe that 25% of their business comes from multimedia however the variety ranges from 10% up to 100% thus showing the range of uses SME’s have for multimedia.
Then the survey moved on to discuss social media specifically as this is a big part of the use of multimedia. After initially asking if their business used social media where 79.41% said they did and 1 participant wasn’t sure the following question was put forward “in what way did they use social media?” The majority used Facebook with the likes of Twitter, LinkedIn and Snapchat being mentioned also, but heavily biased towards Facebook, with this in mind, the participants were then asked how effective they though social media was for small businesses? Here the results were good with 38.24% going with extremely effective, 47.06% going with very effective with the rest going for moderately effective. This shows that all of the businesses asked believe that social media is effective. So, when asked if they thought all businesses should use social media the answers were convincingly a yes, 52.94% for definitely yes and 41.18% for probably yes. After finding out how many businesses used social media a good question to ask was how they usually contact their customer was it through social media or through other forms of communication. As can be seen in figure 2 the business to customer relationship is heavily dominated by email at almost 50% closely followed by phone call and social media.

To conclude the survey there were a few questions regarding the marketing side of the participant business. To gather an idea the businesses were asked how important marketing was for them with a wide range of results. 1 participant (3.13%) stated they did not believe that it was important at all for their business. 9.38% only believed it is slightly important for their business rising to 34.38% for moderately important. The percentage then dips back down to 15.63% for very important and finally 37.50% believe marketing is extremely important for their business. The businesses were then asked to rank different forms of marketing in order with the view of seeing how they would most commonly market their business. This format is a very complex display system (shown in figure 3) however when the mean average is worked out it gives a much clearer picture as is shown in figure 4.
The figures show that somewhat surprisingly that word and mouth has a lower average however when looking at the breakdown of the figures in figure 3 it shows that Social Media came out on top on more occasions which is surprising when compared with figure 4 to see how the 2 charts can tell slightly different stories. Physical advertising came next with both public engagement and Special offers an obvious 4th and 5th respectively. This question was followed up with a supporting question asking what other forms of marketing the businesses used and these answered included repeat business, through partner organisations and one anonymous entry stated “people attending meetings and booking for their own business”. This showed that there were many more marketing options other than the 5 available to rank in the previous question. The following question did not come as a shock but was needed to ensure what the initial opinion was, when asked if their business has a marketing department, 100% of participant said no. This is a very bold statement from the survey and clearly shows that marketing is not a crucial aspect for the employees of these SME’s. To conclude the survey 2 questions were asked about the future of multimedia and marketing with first being asked if they thought multimedia will be used more and more in the future where over 90% thought it would, but then following this question by asking if they as a business planned on using multimedia especially for marketing in the future? 1 participant answered for each of the Definitely Not, Probably not and might or might not, this meant that 61.76% of businesses answered with probably yes and the other 29.41% answered with a definite yes. Thus, concluding the results from the survey.
4.2 Semi-Structured Interview Results

The second primary source of data that was gathered came in the form of qualitative data through interviews with 4 separate businesses however 2 were included in the same interview process. The aim was to talk to 4 businesses and in theory that has been accomplished, however the plan was not to talk about 2 separate businesses with one person. Unfortunate a meeting was not able to be arranged with another person before this paper needed to be finished, however the data gathered from these 4 interviews is still very useful and significant to the overall research of this topic. For all interviews a consent form has been signed and at the beginning of each interview the interviewee is asked if they are happy for the interview to be recording in order to enable a free-flowing semi structures interview.

The first interview was held with Angela Owen who works for a business called PAVO in Newtown, Mid Wales. In order to gain some background knowledge Angela was asked to simply state what their business did so that the questions could be tailored slightly to the interview. PAVO stands for Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations and they are a business that operate in the 3rd sector of business. They operate by offering support to other 3rd sector organisations, this support could be anything from helping organisations become sustainable to fulfilling their organisational goals. They are an organisation of 24 employees that are also a rather ageing workforce so Angela was keen to see how they could improve their marketing especially through their social media. The interview then begun on the questions relating to multimedia and Angela’s prior knowledge to the topic. To her multimedia was ways of informing people to what their organisation does, which is very close to the truth. After explaining that multimedia is the use of more than one component for example text and images or audio and video she realised that it was much more than she expected, even giving some examples to gain a full understanding. So, with a knowledge of what multimedia is it was important to learn how the organisation used it and in what ways. Giving a number of examples a very prominent use of multimedia was mentioned being social media, so the question was put if they used much of social media and what it was used for. PAVO have Facebook pages, twitter accounts and blogs but Angela stated “I’m not too sure that we actually use all of these to their full potential”. Because this was such a damning statement it was important to dig deeper as to the reasons behind not using it more. The question was posed that because they are a 3rd sector organisation it was harder to use social
media for interacting with their customer? She stated that because they cover the entire county of Powys the internet coverage is not the best so social media is not the best for them to interact with the public. However one of their “operational objectives is to be digital by default” so one aspect of this will be a stronger online presence. One key aspect of using social media was researching if people had trained professionals handling their social media activity or if it was just prior knowledge that they were relying on. The answer was a slight surprise as they do hold training courses but she seemed to think that the staff did not take what they had learnt and implemented it. So did Angela think that they would look to into having a specialist do their marketing or social media activity? The organisation had obviously been thinking about it as they were considering the role of a ‘communications officer’ but did not see them being a new employee, only a current member of the administration team to cover this role assumingly to cover costs. As they were obviously wanting a more prominent presence online it was asked what their use for social media was? Their use was very varied from job vacancies to giving information but did not see it as a marketing tool, however giving information is a form of marketing so they are promoting themselves that way despite not necessarily meaning to. With this in mind, it was good to know how else they promoted their organisation so that an offline use of multimedia could be found. PAVO attend events such as the National Eisteddfod where amongst other things like flyers and banners they do have a display screen where a video is played promoting their organisation, so without them realising it they were using multimedia very much for marketing themselves. This interview brought up some very good point of how this organisation uses multimedia and that they are hoping to improve their online presence in the future.

The second interview was conducted with Alan from a branding business called Constructiv. Constructiv supplies branded clothing for schools, sports teams, businesses and other customers that require any sort of personalised clothing. They are a regarded as a micro business as they employ 5 people. Alan was not sure of what multimedia was so after having it explained to him the questions begun with going straight for their use of social media as this was an area Alan seemed keen to learn more about but other multimedia was going to be discussed later. Constrctiv have apart time employee that uses social media but she is a student that is not always available to them. Alan however stated the wish to learn more about it as he himself did not use it that much in his private life. It was then asked if the part
time employee was trained with social media and they were not, only using their prior knowledge of using it personally. Similarly, to the previous interview, Alan stated that they were not looking to employ someone new to handle their marketing or social media only to have somebody inside the business cover the role. It was evident however that they wanted to obviously increase their online activity. When asked what they were using social media for he said that they use face book and twitter to communicate what they’ve got on sale or advising people that they are attending an event where there will be the chance to buy merchandise from them. Similarly, they thought that social media was second in their marketing behind word of mouth because they are in a rural area. So, did they plan on increasing their social media activity in the future? Constructiv are using social media more this year but Alan thought that they needed to increase their use “to get the most from it”. After initially thinking that they did not use offline multimedia much at all after slight digging it was found that they use popup banners and have used leaflets but did not think that this form of multimedia was useful to them so decided to not print out the leaflets for their most recent event. One other aspect Alan had expressed an interest in improving was the business website, so it was put to him what the negatives and positives were of the website? He said that it was good to get order from individual customers at they tended to buy more but still mentioned that it is easier to process orders made from a club as it is a bigger order. He went on to say that he felt the website itself however needed several improvements; “broadening of the products available, simplification of the buying process and the overall experience of visiting our website” this was the answer of someone who had clearly already began researching the improvements needed. When asked what other forms of multimedia they use he was very quick to acknowledge that they still print a catalogue and insists that it is still very useful possibly because they are in a rural community. The interview ended with Alan stating that he did not think they would use social media for marketing that much in the future, but for increasing their publicity and public awareness which without him knowing is a way of marketing their business.

The third and final interview was with Nerys Lloyd and she is the business owner of 2 separate businesses, one a beauty and spa service and the other a luxury accommodation. The interview was structured in a way that would allow the spa business to be discussed first followed then by the accommodation. The first business is called Out of Town Beauty and as
previously mentioned offers Beauty and Spa treatments, but also acts as a retail store for beauty products and employs only 3 people, so making it a micro business again. Nerys seemed to know a bit more about multimedia but again did not know that it has a wide range of forms not just online and not just to promote something. After taking this in, she realised how much multimedia they actually use, from posters to advice sheets, consultation forms to social media this business was very much turned on to using multimedia. But alternatively understood that word of mouth was still a very important part of their business. So the questions began with social media and how they used it. This business used social media a lot more than the others I had interviewed. Using Facebook for multiple reasons not only posting on their page but also taking booking through the messenger system and wishing their clients well with personal messages such as ‘Happy Easter’ to gain that personal attachment with the clients. Here was where something new was most definitely learnt. When asked, who deals with the social media Nerys said that they have an employee who works one day a week and they oversee the business marketing. So this business has a dedicated member of staff that oversees all the marketing aspects of the business including social media. Nerys’ knowledge of social media did not seem as surprising now. She continued to state that they had been granted a sum of money from Business Wales that allowed them to have a “5-day consultancy grant” which they used to improve the marketing of the business. It was in this consultation that the suggestion of taking on a specialist one day a week was put forward and Nerys obliged. However, when asked if it was a long-term goal to have someone work their full time she said that it wasn’t, seemingly happy to no increase the business to above a comfortable and manageable level. But she did say that she would look to have an employee who did more than the marketing, her current expert for example covers the role of receptionist for them when she is working. It was explained that the marketing expert had been through marketing and social media training so was not going of personal experience like the other 2 businesses interviewed. One thing Nerys mentioned that the expert said was to ensure that on social media the business is not always promoting themselves, but to leave personal messages also to again improve the business to customer relationship. But had this improved the amount business they were getting, it appeared so. The specialist started in September and the following winter was their busiest since the business started 8 years ago so Nerys has put this down to the social media improvements. The business also advertises itself in other ways, the website is something she would like to improve to have to data more regularly updated. Also,
thinking about doing a “leaflet drop” that would include some sort of special offer. The aim from Nerys’ point of view is to use more social media to promote their business and gain more customers, possibly through other site like twitter or Instagram.

The luxury accommodation was currently being marketed through a 3rd party website that take a percentage of commission but they are one of the biggest luxury cottage websites in the country. They are as a business though looking at going it alone without the help from this website as they do have 5 properties currently on 2 different 3rd party sites. Interestingly the interaction with customers is again predominantly on Facebook but still have booking through their website. Other than this the marketing strategies were similar. Nerys did however state that she hoped the marketing expert would work for both businesses in the future so that it could all be done together. These interviews most definitely showed how business can use multimedia to market their business.
5 Discussion and Analysis

This section will aim to analyse the data gathered and described in the previous section while also establishing strengths and weaknesses to establish the findings of the data and how they relate to the use of multimedia for marketing in SME’s.

5.1 Survey Analysis

It is evident from conducting the surveys that SME’s are not completely aware of what multimedia is and how broad it is. This evident through the variety of opinion if they knew what it was or not. This down to the lack of education that is out there regarding multimedia and its association with social media has led to many believing that social media is the be all and end all of the topic or at least its only technology based.

SME’s do not seem to using multimedia for a marketing purpose as much as possibly they should be, these businesses seem to rely more on word of mouth against the use of multimedia especially social media. That is not to say however that these businesses completely abandon the use of multimedia and social media. This is evident in how close the 2 are when ranked alongside each other in figures 3 and 4. This may be due to the rurality of the businesses that completed the survey and possibly more interaction from the emailed survey the thoughts may have altered. So, the survey states that SME’s agree that multimedia is important but are still undecided on whether they will use it more in the future.

Possibly the most damning figure is that not one of the SME’s have a marketing department which is not a surprise as they employ a relatively small number of employees, so does not warrant a department specifically for marketing however admit that there are employees that cover these roles along with their initial role within the business. This is down to the fact that SME’s often do not have the funds to occupy a dedicated department or member of staff to only marketing and so more related questions are needed to analyse who within their business actually is in charge of the marketing.

It’s clear to see that the amount of business brought in by multimedia is widely varied as is evident in figure 1. The variety firstly shows that different businesses will have different levels of business coming from multimedia, a painter and decorator that didn’t quite have time to fill the survey said that he didn’t need multimedia, all of his work came from word and mouth.
This proves that it is hard to identify whether multimedia works for all business fields without researching further.

The main strength for the data gathered by the surveys was that it very much allowed the views of these SME’s to be brought together and understood, however despite answering many questions they have also posed questions that need to be researched in the future.

5.2 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

The interviews that were conducted gave a contrasting view to some aspects of the research but were agreed on several points also. The interview process was a huge success for this research project as it allowed good discussion with several businesses about their use and contrary to the surveys, the questions could be tailored to each interview as seen fit while following a flexible structure.

The evidence again showed that these businesses were not 100% aware of what multimedia was and how many forms it can take up. This was evident in that all 3 interviewees had different sorts of ideas as to the definition of multimedia but didn’t know the whole picture. This is again down to the lack of education that is readily available to people, but they have got to only look for it and would be more aware.

There were however contrasting approaches of how the businesses were conducting their marketing which would adhere to the survey analysis that there are different amounts of business coming in from multimedia dependent on the business itself. This is evident by the fact that PAVO and Constructiv do not have employees whose role is marketing the business whereas Nerys’ 2 businesses have a woman who comes in and is a marketing expert. In relation to the last point this is because she has had the 5-day consultancy and learnt the advantages so maybe PAVO and Constructiv could look at getting similar funding for them to receive the education on marketing and how they could improve.

The ways in which the businesses used different multimedia not only social media was interesting also, the variety that was talked about showed how many uses there are for multimedia. From PAVO using blogs to share experiences with their partners, Constructiv still using a catalogue as a very useful tool to ensure the customer feels like they can choose anything they want and are not confined to a couple of website options, to the advice sheets
at out of town beauty that despite teaching customers how to do it themselves it all builds the business to customer relationship. It is important to have this variety as not every member of the public acts the same and so will warm to different types of interaction, so it’s up to the SME’s to cater their approach per their target audience.

All interviews however showed that the businesses wanted to use multimedia and especially social media in the future for marketing and promoting their business, possibly for slightly different business goals but still to market using multimedia. This shows by the fact firstly all were keen to be interviewed not only to assist the research but to learn more about how multimedia marketing works. This interest is because of the growing interest and usage of social media in today’s society so almost every business want to at least understand it so that they can make an informed decision as to whether to actively pursue using it or not.

One of the major strengths was the willingness of the interviewees to participate and answer questions as honest as they could, which meant that the research was accurate and then they could grow to understand the topic by engaging with the research topic. One weakness that isn’t a weakness as such, it would be a good tool to interview them know having conducted the most of the research to further the conversation, but maybe that is where the research can go in the future.
6 Conclusion

The data for this research has gathered many interesting points which will be discussed here, but has also posed several questions for the research to answer in the future.

The first point that both the secondary and primary data showed was that the understanding of multimedia is still lacking. When the experts are enable to come up with a definitive definition then what hope to the SME’s that have limited knowledge have in fully understanding multimedia and its uses. With the advances in social media also it is important that the use of multimedia does not get wrapped up in only social media talk and that the other forms of multimedia used for marketing are researched along with social media.

However, it is evident that the primary use of multimedia for marketing as expected comes through social media. As often the cheapest and easiest to access, social media has taken over multimedia marketing, despite this the primary data found most SME’s seem hesitant to take the leap along with Out of Town beauty and Bed warn Luxury Accommodation to commit to using social media. Possibly the reason behind it is that it is the unknown to them and they do not want to venture into something they do not understand.

This leads well into the fact that SME’s need to learn about their field. The grant from Business Wales is a great opportunity for businesses to get ahead of the game in a way and begin to introduce new ways of marketing. Especially through social media, there seems to be a reluctance to jump because of the lack of knowledge. Well maybe it’s time the SME’s learnt about what they are doing and what they need to do.

The fourth and final point is that every business is different and has different variables effecting their marketing strategy. Their all selling different things or offering different services to different sets of people. Maybe the lack of conclusive answers is not down to uncertainty but down to the variety of problems and solutions that face every single SME today. But if it is going to be positive to your business then work out what you need for yourself, don’t rely on a template to be given, consult, hire, research, however your business want improve itself in multimedia marketing then go out and do it.

Having analysed the use of multimedia for Marketing in SME’s there’s a wide variety of multimedia marketing available to SME’s and only a handful are being used. Social Media is
at the forefront of this however can still be used more along with other methods of marketing that the businesses are not realising is the capabilities. The fact almost all SME’s have differing opinion has meant a slight limitation to the study in that it has been hard to establish what every SME thinks thus main it hard to group data together with similar ideologies. In order to progress this research the ever-evolving field of social media need to be understood if possible in order to identify where business can use the free services available to improve their business in any way possible. The comparison of word and mouth and other marketing techniques need to be brought up to date to establish whether as it seems word of mouth still holds a great importance in any businesses marketing strategy. But the next step in this research should be comparing the finding here with that of much larger organisations and attempting to find any patterns that emerge from businesses as a whole, not only SME’s.
7 REFERENCES


8  BIBLIOGRAPHY


# Appendix

## 9.1 Ethics Form

### Devolved Ethics Approval Application Summary

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<th>Student Number: ST20074466</th>
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<td>Module Number: BCO6000</td>
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<td>Supervisor Name: Jason Williams</td>
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First Submission [ ] / /  
Resubmission [ ]

Date: 30/11/2016
For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:

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<td>Supervisor: Dr Jason Williams</td>
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<td>CSM Ethics Committee Rep: Prof T Crick</td>
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Date: 26/01/2016

**Outcome:**

- Project Approved [ ] Reference number issued: 2016D0332
- Chair’s Action [ ]
- Application not Approved [ ]

Comments for projects not fully approved:

The original to be retained by the supervisor and a copy given to the student and module leader.

In the case of a resubmission being required this original form should be submitted with the resubmission not a new, blank, one.
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 (e.g., NHS), 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 ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document Ethics application guidance notes will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents, please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

**PART ONE**

| Name of applicant:                  | Daniel Tomos Owen                        |
| Supervisor (if student project):    | Dr. Jason Williams                       |
| School / Unit:                      | Cardiff School of Management             |
| Student number (if applicable):     | St20074466                               |
| Programme enrolled on (if applicable): | BSc (Hons)Business Information Systems |
| Project Title:                      | Analysing the use of Multimedia in Marketing for SME’s |
| Expected start date of data collection: | 26/01/2017                           |
| Approximate duration of data collection: | 3 Months                              |
| Funding Body (if applicable):       | N/A                                      |
| Other researcher(s) working on the project: | No                                      |
| Will the study involve NHS patients or staff? | No                                      |
Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines? No

Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:

- Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain No
- Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human samples No
- Practice based not involving human participants (eg curatorial, practice audit) No
- Compulsory projects in professional practice (eg Initial Teacher Education) No
- A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS) No

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. 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

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

This project will explore the use of Social Media within Marketing aspects of Small and Medium Enterprises. This Project will use both primary and secondary data to analyse the positive and possible negative effects on the marketing of Small and Medium Enterprises. The primary data for this project will be collected in two forms; first using surveys/questionnaires to gain broad information from a number of SME’s, before then interviewing several SME’s to gather a more in depth knowledge of their use of social media to market their company.

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

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

Signature of the applicant: D. Owen Date: 23/11/2016

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY

Name of supervisor: Dr Jason Williams Date: 20/01/2017
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**Project reference number:** 2016D0332

**Name:** Click here to enter text.  
**Date:** Click here to enter a date. 

**Signature:**

**Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:**  
Click here to enter text.

### PART TWO

#### A RESEARCH DESIGN

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<td>A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project</td>
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**General:**
- The researcher will take a pragmatic approach to the study using the identified methods to triangulate finding.
- A deductive research strategy will be applied

**Questionnaire:**
- My target is to gather 40+ questionnaires from SME’s around Cardiff and my local area. This will ensure that the data is valid and ensure I have a significant amount of data to use.
- I will hand out questionnaires to SME’s both around Cardiff and my home area to ensure a variety of businesses.

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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.
• The questionnaire will be accompanied by a letter of permission to ensure I have complete disclosure with the companies that I can use the data they have provided to me
• Companies should be able to complete the questionnaire in no more than 10 minutes
• The questionnaire will be made up mostly of closed questions with a few open ended questions to gain both quantitative and qualitative data.

Sample
• The majority of SME’s that fill out the questionnaire will be contacted directly as I send the questionnaire directly to them
• Some companies may be identified using a snowballing method as companies I contact directly wither pass on the questionnaire or recommend companies for me to contact

Semi structured interview
• I will ask some open ended questions to gather qualitative data from my interviewees. I will also ask some close questions similar to the questionnaire.
• The open ended questions will give the interviewee the freedom to respond in a way they are comfortable with, thus allowing them to give their honest opinion
• I intend to have face to face interviews with 4 companies regarding the information I want to gather; these companies will range from charities to retail
• I will make contact with these companies with the expectation of arranging an interview in December or early January
• The interviews will last up to 20 minutes and will be recorded at the discretion of the interviewee

Analysis
• I will gather the quantitative data together on Excel as it can then be processed and understood through the creation of diagrams and graphs that I see fit to use
• The qualitative data however will be done by myself and the observations I make from them. I may attempt to bunch similar answers together to be able to reference a specific figure when discussing the relevant data.

Participation Consent
• For both the questionnaire and the interviews I will request the participant sign a consent sheet in order for me to give full disclosure as to what the data they give me will be used for, thus will not be used for anything they are not comfortable with.

| A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research? | No |
A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research
N/A

A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications? No

A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them
N/A

B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?
None

B2 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?
Supervisor has over 20 year’s experience of undertaking research.

C POTENTIAL RISKS

C1 What potential risks do you foresee?
1. The risk I foresee are that no SME’s will want to get interviewed by myself
2. Data security
3. Running out of time

C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?
1. I will attempt to get a guarantee from my selected SME’s before submitting the ethics form so that I can refer back to their willingness to work with me before they decide not to.
2. To ensure data security I will not take personal information that is not relevant, and so will not use this information without consent
3. To ensure I do not run out of time I will develop a plan that will allow me to complete all aspects of the dissertation within the time allowance. The first step being to have the ethics form submitted and cleared before Christmas.

When submitting your application you **MUST** attach a copy of the following:
- All information sheets
- Consent/assent form(s)

An exemplar information sheet and participant consent form are available from the Research section of the Cardiff Met website.
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Analysing the use of Social Media in Marketing a Small Medium Enterprise

Project summary
The purpose of this research project is to analyse the use of Multimedia for Marketing for Small Medium Enterprises. 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; that is, you are a business that has less than 250 employees and consider social media a valuable tool in marketing.
During the interview you will be asked a series of questions relating to the analysis of social media in marketing for SME’s (Small Medium Enterprise).
You will only be required to answer the questions you are comfortable with.
Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

Project risks
The research involves the completion of a questionnaire and participation in an interview which will be recorded for later analysis. We are not seeking to collect any sensitive data on you; this study is only concerned with the use of social media in marketing your small medium enterprise. 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 information given by you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) will be kept in a secure location by the research team. When we have finished the study and analysed all the information, the documentation used to gather the raw data will be destroyed except your signed consent form which will be held securely for 5 years. The recordings of the interview will also be held in a secure and confidential environment during the study and destroyed after 5 years.

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

If you require any further information about this project then please contact:
Daniel Tomos Owen, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff Metropolitan University email: st20074466@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Supervisor, Dr Jason Williams
JJWilliams@cardiffmet.ac.uk
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number: 

Participant name or Study ID Number: 

Title of Project: Analysing the use of Social Media in Marketing SME’s 

Name of Researcher: Daniel Tomos Owen 

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. Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. Yes [ ] No [ ]

3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. Yes [ ] No [ ]

4. I agree to take part in the above study. Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. I agree to the interview being recorded. Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications. Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. I am happy for my organisation to be named in all publications Yes [ ] No [ ]

_______________________________________  ___________________ 
Signature of Participant  Date

_____________________________________
Name of person taking consent  Date

_____________________________________
Signature of person taking consent
SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. Ask for approval of the recording of the interview and to sign and acknowledge the information on the consent form.

2. Gather some background information
   a. Name
   b. Name of organisation
   c. Role within organisation
   d. Experience within the organisation
   e. Any previous relevant experience

3. Begin with a few basic questions regarding their prior knowledge regarding the topic.
   a. Definition of Social Media
   b. Definition of Marketing

4. Understand their use of Social Media
   a. Do you as an organisation use social media?
   b. If so what do you use it for?
   c. How important is Social Media Marketing

5. Any training in the field
   a. Do you have a specified role for Social Media or is it done by anyone?
   b. Do they have any sort of training in Marketing or Social Media?
   c. Could this be an area you would like to improve on?

6. Future Development
   a. Do you see yourself as a Business using Social Media more for marketing in the future?
   b. Do you think Social Media Marketing is a priority for you at the moment?
Questionnaire to Analyse the use of Social Media for Marketing in SME’s

Participant Information

My name is Daniel Owen and I am a final year student on the BSc (Hons) Business Information Systems programme at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

I am undertaking a survey to explore the use of social media in marketing for Small Medium Enterprises.

I am hoping that you would be prepared to participate in my study and to complete this questionnaire and return to the person who gave it to you. You have been chosen as your company has less than 250 employees.

If you return the questionnaire it will be taken as voluntary informed consent.

If you required any further information about this survey, please contact Daniel Tomos Owen at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Email: St20074466@cardiffmet.ac.uk

Thank you very much for your time!
This questionnaire is to be used to analyse the use of social media in marketing for SME’s. Please attempt to finish all questions and return to whomever gave you the questionnaire. This questionnaire should take no longer than 10 minutes. Thank You in advance for your cooperation.

1. Your Age?
   18 years + [   ]  21-35 [   ]  36-50 [   ]  51-65 [   ]  66 or older [   ]

2. Job Title?

3. In what sector does your company operate?

4. How long has your company existed in years?
   Less than 1 year [   ]  1-5 [   ]  5-10 [   ]  10-20 [   ]  More than 20 years [   ]

5. How many people does your organisation employ?
   Less than 5 [   ]  6-25 [   ]  26-50 [   ]  51-100 [   ]  More than 100 [   ]

6. How do customers use your company?
   Website [   ]  Walk In [   ]  Over the Phone [   ]  Email [   ]  Post [   ]
   Other………………

7. How do you mostly communicate with customers?
   Email [   ]  Post [   ]  Over the Phone [   ]  Personal Visit [   ]
   Other………………

8. Does your company have a dedicated social media expert?
   Yes [   ]  No [   ]  Sort of [   ]

9. Does your company have a dedicated marketing expert?
   Yes [   ]  No [   ]  Sort of [   ]

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<th>On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not at all and 5 being all the time; (Please tick the relevant box)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tr>
<td>10. How much do you personally use social media?</td>
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<td>11. How often does your company use social media?</td>
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<td>12. Does your company use social media for marketing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. How important do you think Social media is for a company?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. How important is marketing for a company?</td>
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LETTER TO AN ORGANISATION when intending to undertake research in their company or at an event they are organising.

Dear Alan/ Nerys/ Nick/ Angela

I am a final year student at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The title of my research is ‘Analysing the use of Social Media in Marketing Small Medium Enterprise’. Its aim is to discover how organisations are using Social media for marketing and if possible be able to find the best use of social media for marketing SME’s. As part of my research I would like to undertake research with people who are employed at a small or medium enterprise who have the relevant knowledge that I require. I am writing to you because Constructiv/EvaBuild/PAVO/Out of Town Beauty fits the profile of this type of organisation and also employs a sufficient number of employees so as to provide a large enough number of potential participants. Before any primary data is collected this project will have been approved by Cardiff Metropolitan University and all data collection will be in accordance with the university’s ethics code of practice.

My purpose in writing is to ask if you would permit me to issue a questionnaire to your employees. Their participation would be entirely voluntary, neither they nor the company would be identified in the research and it would only take 10 to 15 minutes for each employee to complete a questionnaire. I would hope to gain as many responses from your employees as possible.

The areas which would be covered by the questionnaire include:

- Social media knowledge
- Personal Use of social media
- Opinion on the use of social media
- Social media marketing

I shall be very happy to make the results of my research available to you as a participant in the research when it is complete. If you would like to participate in this project and or are interested in discussing it further, please contact me.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Tomos Owen, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff Metropolitan University email: st20074466@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Supervisor, Dr Jason Williams
JJWilliams@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Here is confirmation of an interview arranged with one of the fore mentioned businesses.
9.2 **BLANK SURVEY**

School of Management, Cardiff Metropolitan University.

The purpose of this research project is to collect primary information to assess the views of Small Medium Enterprises of the use of Multimedia in Marketing.

My name is Daniel Owen and I am currently a final year student at Cardiff Metropolitan University. In order to complete my third year of study I am required to complete a dissertation. The primary data collected from this questionnaire will provide me with the information to complete my dissertation.

This project has received the approval of Cardiff School of Managements' Ethics Committee, Cardiff Metropolitan University.

By taking part in this questionnaire you agree to the following:

I understand that my participation in this project will involve completing a questionnaire regarding the views of Small Medium Enterprise of the use of Multimedia in Marketing which will take approximately 5 minutes of my time.

I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason or I can discuss my concerns with:

Daniel Owen of Cardiff Metropolitan University: st20074466@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk
Dr. Jason Williams – Dissertation supervisor and Head of Department of Computing and Information Systems at Cardiff Metropolitan University: JJWilliams@cardiffmet.ac.uk

I understand that any identifying information provided by me will be held confidentially, such that only the Daniel Owen can trace this information back to me individually.

I understand that my data will be stored on password protected computers, anonymity will be ensured after completion of the questionnaire and that no one will be able to trace my information back to me. The raw data will be retained for five years when it will be deleted/destroyed.

- [ ] Click to accept

How many people does your company employ?

- [ ] 5 or Less
- [ ] 6-25
- [ ] 26-50
- [ ] Over 50
What type of company are you?

- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Charity
- ☐ Financial
- ☐ Computing
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Sports and Outdoors
- ☐ Other [ ]

Are you aware of what Multimedia is?

- ☐ Definitely yes
- ☐ Probably yes
- ☐ Might or might not
- ☐ Probably not
- ☐ Definitely not

Multimedia is essentially using many components to display information. Using images, text and/or sounds is using multimedia. The most common forms are websites and social media sites.

Does your business use Multimedia at all?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How effective do you think Multimedia is?

- ☐ Extremely effective
- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Moderately effective
- ☐ Slightly effective
Do you think it's important nowadays for Businesses to use multimedia, especially when interacting with customers (directly with customers or indirectly)?

- [ ] Not effective at all
- [ ] Strongly agree
- [ ] Somewhat agree
- [ ] Neither agree nor disagree
- [ ] Somewhat disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

How much of your business comes from Multimedia?

- [ ] 10%
- [ ] 25%
- [ ] 50%
- [ ] 75%
- [ ] 100%

Does your business use Social Media?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] Not Sure
- [ ] No

How effective do you think Social Media is for small businesses?

- [ ] Extremely effective
- [ ] Very effective
- [ ] Moderately effective
- [ ] Slightly effective
- [ ] Not effective at all

Do you think all business should use some form of Social Media in today's age?

- [ ] Definitely yes
- [ ] Probably yes
- [ ] Might or might not
How would you as a business most commonly contact a customer?

- [ ] Email
- [ ] Social Media
- [ ] Phone call
- [ ] Direct Letter
- [ ] Personal Visit
- [ ] Other

How important is Marketing for your business?

- [ ] Extremely important
- [ ] Very important
- [ ] Moderately important
- [ ] Slightly important
- [ ] Not at all important

Where would you rank these forms of marketing for your business? (Drag to change order)

- Social Media
- Physical Advertisement (Flyers, Newspapers)
- Word of mouth
- Public Engagement (talking to the public)
- Sales and/or Special Offers

Please specify what other forms you use if necessary?

Do you have a marketing department in your company?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Do you think multimedia will be used more and more in the future?

- [ ] Strongly agree
• Somewhat agree
• Neither agree nor disagree
• Somewhat disagree
• Strongly disagree

Does your company plan on using more multimedia especially for marketing in the future?

• Definitely yes
• Probably yes
• Might or might not
• Probably not
• Definitely not

9.3 

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

9.3.1 Interview with Angela Owen, Head of Internal Services at PAVO (Powys Association of voluntary organisations)

Daniel Owen (DO) – Just to reconfirm that you are happy to proceed as per the consent form previously signed and are happy for the conversation to be recorded.

Angela Owen (AO) – Yes that’s fine.

DO – Just to get some back ground information, can you give me your name and the name of your Business?

AO – I work for a Third Sector Organisation, called PAVO which is Powys Association of voluntary organisations and my role is Head of Finance and Internal Services.

DO - So what does PAVO do?

AO – We are a Catalyst, Voice and Hub for the Third Sector

DO – and what does that mean then?

AO – We offer help and support to third sector organisations, that is voluntary organisations, to become sustainable, look for funding, help with governance to ensure the sector grow and are able to fulfil everything expected of them – that’s catalyst; We are a voice for the sector
with statutory partners and funders to express their views when required; and a hub of information.

DO – As you know what I’m doing is to researching the use of Multi Media for Marketing in small/medium enterprises. Are you aware of what multi media is?

AO – Yes I think so, it’s what helps us to inform people of what we do in various different forms.

DO – Yes it can be used for that, it is essentially the use of different components ie sound, imagery and text to convey information.

AO – Oh right - I think I assumed it was only for online programmes but it’s obviously more than just that – I guess any form of display even power point presentations would come into it.

DO – yes it would. So now you roughly know what it is do you use it?

AO – I would say that we use it a lot throughout the whole organisation from presentations to small charities and statutory organisations to monthly ebriefings, blogs and websites. I would probably say that we use a large range of different multi media within PAVO.

DO – One of the more prominent uses of multi media is now Social Media. Do you use it much?

AO – We currently have a main PAVO website and also our mental health department has their own; we have 3 facebook pages for volunteering, mental health and transport; a twitter account for PAVO as a whole, controlled by our Chief Executive and a number of Blogs but I’m not too sure that we actually use all of these to their full potential, in fact probably don’t get close and some are better than others.

DO – Because of the type of organisation you are do you find it hard to use social media to interact with customers as anonymity is very important in some of what you do?

AO – Because as an organisation we have many different projects running some of which use social media more than others. Part of the issue we have is a rural county is that many of the people we try to reach do not have access to regular internet due to poor connections and the age profile within the County. One of our Operational Objectives for this year is to be
digital by default and social media will obviously have to play a part in helping us to achieve this.

DO – You mentioned that different people use it in different ways, have the staff received any training on its use or is it something they use their previous or private knowledge on?

AO – we have ran courses but often staff are unable to put that training into practice so it tends to reply on what skills they bring with them.

DO – So you don’t have a dedicated social media member of staff?

AO – no we don’t have a communications officer or one member of staff who is responsible for all our out social media which is part of the problem we have.

DO – Do you see yourselves employing someone in the near future to fulfil this role or is it more of a long term plan.

AO – Interesting you ask that. A comment was made to me only last week by one of our senior managers who said she felt one of the biggest gaps with in the organisations is that of a communications Officer. We have also recently reviewed the role of our administration staff and one will be responsible for our website and other social media accounts just to make sure they do look similar with our branding on them etc and also that we are complying with the welsh language standards as far as our website and social media is concerned. Due to funding reductions it’s not something we can do at the moment but may build it into budget for the future.

DO – What would you say you are using social media for? Is it for marketing what you as an organisation do?

AO – I think is some respects we have some forms of Social Media because we think we should and are not using them to their full potential, but others like the volunteering facebook page does give volunteering opportunities for the public. We advertise job vacancies through our social media and other things. I think we probably use it more for giving out information than actually marketing what we do as an organisation although this could be seen as one and the same. As an organisation, we have always been poor in marketing ourselves but we do need to improve on this.
DO – how else do you promote your organisation?

AO – we do attend events around the County eg the National Eisteddfod when it was last in Powys where we had a stand. We took a TV screen and had a rolling video showing everything we do, this has been used at many events that we put on since. We have leaflets, posters and pop up banners. We try to do something interactive if we can.

DO – Is there anything you want to add with regards to your use of multimedia/social media?

AO – what we need to do in the future is be clear as to what we are using social media for as there’s nothing worse than having a facebook page that hardly ever gets updated. We need to ensure that whatever media we use it is suitable for the audience we are trying to communicate with.

DO – thank you very much for agreeing to do this interview it’s been very interesting to hear about what happens in a third sector organisation as opposed to a public or private one.

AO – No problem – its been interesting talking to you and has highlighted areas I need to push forward on with the organisation.

9.3.2 Interview with Alan Owen, Sales executive, Constructiv clothing

Daniel Owen (DO) – Just to reconfirm that you are happy to proceed as per the consent form previously signed and are happy for the conversation to be recorded.

Alan Owen (AO) – Yes I am happy for the interview to take part

DO – Just to get some background information, can you give me your name and the name of your Business?

AO – I am Alan Owen and I am a sales executive working for Constructiv Clothing in Newtown.

DO - So what does Constructiv do?

AO – We produce branded clothing for schools, sports clubs, work wear, and clothing for marketing companies.

DO How many people are employed in the business

AO - currently there are 5 people
As you know what I’m doing is to researching the use of Multimedia for Marketing in small/medium enterprises. Are you aware of what multimedia is?

AO – no not really.

DO – It is essentially the use of different components ie sound, imagery and text to convey information. Video and sound, text and images are the main examples of its use.

AO – oh I see so websites would be!

DO – yes that’s right. So now you roughly know what it is do you use it?

AO – would email be a form of multimedia

DO – not necessarily as that would only be using text and nothing else

DO – One of the more prominent uses of multimedia is Social Media. Do you use it much?

AO – Not myself but one of the employees does use it on a part time basis. It’s just about finding the time to learn how to use it as I don’t tend to use it much in my private life.

DO - Has the person that deals with you social media received any training on it or does it tend to be just from their personal use?

AO - tends to be own experience.

DO - would you consider employing someone full time to do this?

AO – we are not likely to employ anyone new but its does need to become someone’s role in the organisation as it’s shown as an important tool to engage with our customers.

DO – what percentage of your income is due to social media?

AO – 10% probably, we are starting to use club shops, school shops more on the website so we are expecting this to increase in the next 12 months.

DO – What would you say you are using social media for? Is it for marketing what you as an organisation do?

AO – Facebook, twitter to communicate if we’ve got a sale on, or to inform people if we are attending an event to sell merchandise. Yes we are using it to market the service we provide and as a marketing tool.
DO – you mentioned marketing there how else do you promote your organisation?

AO – Generally speaking I would say we are quite poor at marketing ourselves we tend to rely on word of mouth. In a Rural area like this work of mouth is very important

DO - when you go to certain events, do you use any sort of multimedia, for example in a previous interview a company would take a TV screen with them to events to publicise their services is this something you would do

AO – No there would be no need

DO - how do you advertise yourselves at events

AO – We generally do use social media, facebook and twitter and through email.

Do – when at the event what do you do?

AO – have used leaflets in the past, but not found them that beneficial, we do put up a pop up banner at the entrances to the venues but people tend to know we are there.

DO – do you see yourselves using social media more. Would you say that the amount social media that you currently use is far greater than this time last year.

AO – Yes we are using it far more now than we did last year probably needs all of us to be able to use it to get in order to get the most from it.

DO – I see from website that you have various club shops what is the benefit to you as a business to have this rather than the sports club coming direct to you?

AO – the negative side of it is that you have a lot of small orders coming from various clubs however the positive is that it is easier for the club members and they do order more because its much easier and they can choice when to place an order, It is also a safer way of ordering.

DO – So you mentioned your website. You ‘ve mentioned in previous conversations that we’ve had that your website is an area you would wish to improve – is this something you still wish to do?

AO - yes, we have identified several improvements that need to be made to our current website which include broadening of the products available, simplification of the buying process and the overall experience of visiting our website.
DO – Are there any other forms of multimedia that you use?

AO – we still produce a catalogue that people can physically look through as a number of larger customers particularly want this.

DO – Do you think this because you are in a rural community?

AO – I think partly it is.

DO – so do you think this affects your level of use of social media?

AO – yes it just means we have to have a broad spectrum of customers.

DO – Is there anything you want to add with regard to your use of multimedia/social media?

AO - I can’t see us using social media more from a marketing point of view but from a publicity point of view and public awareness.

DO – thank you very much for agreeing to do this interview it’s been very interesting to hear about what happens.

9.3.3 Interview with Nerys Lloyd, Business owner, Out of Town Beauty

Daniel Owen (DO) – Just to reconfirm that you are happy to proceed as per the consent form previously signed and are happy for the conversation to be recorded.

Nerys Lloyd (NL) – Yes I am happy with the interview to continue and be recorded.

DO – Just to get some back ground information, can you give me your name and the name of your Business?

NL – Nerys Lloyd “Out of town beauty”.

DO – Are you happy for us to speak about Out of Town Beauty first and the holiday accommodation later?

NL – Yes that’s fine

DO - So what does Out of Town Beauty do?

NL – We offer Beauty and spa treatments and am also a retail outlet for Beauty products.

DO – How many people actually work here?
NL - 3 including myself as the owner plus I do rent out room to a physiotherapist, but she is not employed by the business.

DO – As you know, what I am doing is researching the use of Multimedia for Marketing in small/medium enterprises. Are you aware of what multimedia is?

NL – Have an idea that it’s all sorts of different ways in which you promote and advertise your business, whether it’s facebook, website or posters.

DO – Yes that’s right it’s not just the use of electronic media but also posters, leaflets and so on.

DO – So what form of media do you use?

NL – posters loyalty cards, consultation forms, advice sheets – after care, social media

DO - What forms of social media?

NL – Mainly Facebook but we also have a website

DO – Would you say that locally “word of mouth” is one of the main forms of how businesses get their business?

NL – Yes definitely.

DO – One of the more prominent uses of multimedia is Social Media. Do you use it much?

NL – Yes a lot. We use Facebook every day for contacting clients, every other day to post information about the business but also we put messages on like happy Easter, special offers, product of the week etc but particularly used to book appointments through it.

DO - Who deals with social media?

NL – I have a lady called Lizzie who is only employed one day per week but she her role is to market our business through however she thinks. I received a five day consultancy grant from Business Wales and I chose to use it to have someone to look at how I could market the business. They suggested that I should take someone on to concentrate specifically on this. Hence why took Lizzie on. I do use Facebook to to take appointments etc

DO - Is that her only job then
NL – yes but she only works 1 day per week.

Do – Would it be your long term goal to have someone full time on marketing the business?

NL - Not just for this business alone but possibly to cover all the businesses including the holiday let. But the business would have to grow quite a lot for that to happen.

DO - Has the person that deals with you social media received any training on it or does it tend to be just from their personal use?

NL – She had training from the person that sorts out the business website and other systems. Part of the training was emphasising not to put up something publicising the business everyday but may be a message like “what a lovely journey to work I had this morning” showing a picture of lambs playing in the field or a great sun rise, rather than always trying to sell the business.

DO – Would you say that having this post has increased your business?

NL – yes definitely we took Lizzie on in September and I would say this has definitely been our busiest winter since I opened the salon 8 years ago.

DO - How much of that would you say is down to social media.

NL - Much of the new business we’ve gained would be either through social media or by word of mouth. We are finding that most existing clients use social media. Particularly facebook when contacting us, we recently had a lady over the age of 70 using it showing that young and old are seeing how easy it is.

DO – you mentioned marketing how else do you promote your business?

NL – we are trying to put an advert in the local paper, which is something we used to do as they do say that once someone has seen a logo 3 times they will remember it. I also do massages for Charlie Brooks from Eastenders and she has offered us the chance to use her in our advertisements. So that would be good. We also want to update the website even though we tend to only use it for information. We are also considering a leaflet drop

DO - would that just be for information or would it include a special offer?

NL - yes we would include a voucher.
DO - when you go to certain events, do you use any sort of multimedia?

NL – Yes at wedding fairs I give out business card and price lists

Lizzie has asked brides that I’ve done make up for if they would mind sending us a photo and caption about how good the service was so we can use it as publicity.

DO – when at the event what do you do?

NL – Just talk to customers mainly, don’t do demonstrations but may think about doing one.

DO – do you see yourselves using social media more?

NL – Yes definitely I think it will become the way of contacting customers

DO – Is there anything you want to add with regard to your use of multimedia/social media?

NL – I would like some sort of appointment system to link into facebook rather than using the paper system we currently use.

DO – thank you very much for agreeing to do this interview it’s been very interesting to hear about what happens.

9.3.4  Interview with Nerys Lloyd, Bedw Barn Luxury Accommodation

DO – what do you do differently with the Luxury accommodation?

NL – Currently don’t do much but am starting to do a lot more due us being able to take direct sales for our properties where as in the past we have been restricted in doing so by our agent but now they have agreed that they will lower their commission rate in order for us to have the opportunity to make our own bookings. The amount of views on the facebook page is starting to pick up. At the moment all bookings are done through the agent direct to a web based system. We are looking at possibly buying a system on which we can take bookings and that will also generate letters emails etc.

DO - How would you promote this business?

NL – the current agreement with the agent is for 2 years which will allow us time to promote it directly has set up period of 2 years. And will take the chance of possibly losing some bookings to build up our client base and publicity. We do however have a total of 5 properties with 2 different agents
DO – would you get most of the enquiries coming through Facebook?

NL - Contact through the website in the past week has been about 4, but through Facebook we’ve had 10.

DO – do you think that is because it’s easier on Facebook?

NL – yes but you do get some people that do through it too, whereas through the website they do tend to be genuine enquiries

DO - Do you have any correspondence through social media with regard to feedback?

NL – We do encourage guests to put reviews on if they’ve had a good experience because you can guarantee if someone has had a poor one they will put it up anyway and there isn’t anything you can do about it except encourage good reviews to counteract the not so good – not that we have many of those.