Social Media Adoption and Usage
A study within the industrial sector in Sweden

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Date: 2018-05-28
Subject: Degree Project on the International Sales and Marketing Program
Level: Bachelor
Course code: 2FE22E
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all people that helped us to write this bachelor thesis.

A special thank you to the participating companies that has shared their own thoughts and experience with us. We want to thank the opponent group that has given imperative feedback during the whole process of writing this thesis. We would also like to thank our examiner and supervisor, Rana Mostaghel and Tomas Nilsson, who have given us constructive feedback and helped us improve the thesis.
Abstract
Social media is considered an important marketing tool for B2B companies that are operating in the current decade (Andersson and Wikström, 2017; Brink, 2017; Itani, Agnihotri and Dingus, 2017). As social media has become a well-researched topic over the last decade, it has become more popular for businesses and individuals to use (Andersson and Wikstrom, 2017; Lacka and Chong, 2016; Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, 2011). However there are limited research on how specific industries are adopting social media (Siamagka et al., 2015). Therefore, this thesis will contribute with research on why the industrial industrys adopt social media as well as how they are using it (Ibid).

Ten industrial businesses working in Sweden have been used for the empirical data collection. A qualitative approach have been used for this study in order to satisfy the purpose. All of the interviewees have experience within social media adoption or are working with social media on a daily basis. The interviews were conducted through phone and lasted approximately 20-50 minutes.

The conclusion of this study is that academic research within this field are somewhat in an agreement with the empirical data provided within this study. The main reasons to why industrial B2B businesses are adopting social media is because businesses can reach their target customers in an easy and fast way, also the pressure from stakeholders and customers have been an important factor to why some of the practitioners within this study have adopted social media. The barriers and benefits of using social media goes hand in hand. As one of the main benefits is the communication with customers and the main barrier is the negative comments that businesses can get. Although this study has indicated that the benefits outweigh the barriers when adopting and using social media. Findings from this study has shown that LinkedIn is the most useful social networking sites for businesses to use and this statement is also confirmed with the academic research done within this field.

**Keywords:** Social media, social media adoption, business to business, industrial industry, social media usage.
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1.0 Introduction

This first chapter will provide an overview of the research topic of social media with a background and problem discussion, followed by its purpose that the paper will aim to answer. Lastly, delimitations and the outline of thesis is presented.

1.1 Background

The previous two decades have received a growing level of attention by practitioners as well as by academics of internet technology usage for businesses to businesses (B2B) organizations (Shaltoni, 2017). Web 2.0 has allowed individuals to communicate, share and receive information in a more interactive way online (Clark and Mehmet, 2016; Siamagka, Christodoulides, Michaelidou and Valvi, 2015). Organizations as well as individuals are constantly adapting to the evolving social media platforms (Andersson and Wikström, 2017; Swani, Milne, Brown, Assaf and Donthu, 2017). As new platforms and applications come to exist it is crucial for businesses and individuals to keep up (Ibid).

There are a variety of social networking sites for businesses to use in order to connect with business partners or customers (Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, 2011). Some are more specified to fit within a business context whereas others are more suitable for communication with individuals (Ibid). Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are examples of social networks that are used for different purposes by B2B businesses (Ibid). Previous research has indicated that social media can create many benefits for businesses (Siamagka et al., 2015). For example, social media can bring a broader visibility and a higher brand attitude in comparison with traditional digital media (Ibid).

As there are benefits for using social media directed at business partners or customers there are also significant benefits with using social media platforms within the organization itself (Mäntymäki and Riemer, 2016). Employees can communicate with co-workers through group chats, instant messages or microblogs (Ibid). All of these platforms can enhance the relationship between co-workers as well as providing fast knowledge (Ibid). Not only are work related topics discussed, topics as events or sports can as well be discussed (Ibid).
As previously indicated, social media can bring many benefits to an organization but businesses can also face barriers when adopting or using social media (Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, 2011; Lacka and Chong, 2016). As indicated by Siamagka et al. (2015), one reason as to why businesses should not adopt social media is that if a business does not find social media to suit with their business then the implementation process should not be undertaken, as social media in this case would not generate the great benefits that could come with an efficient use.

1.2 Problem Discussion

Social media has grown immensely popular throughout the years among individuals, as businesses have started to see the benefits and the wide visibility that comes with using social media (Siamagka et al., 2015). As of today LinkedIn is seen as the most professional and useful social networking site for businesses (Siamagka et al., 2015). This is because LinkedIn is directed at the work environment and therefore seen as more serious than Facebook and Twitter by practitioners (Ibid). Furthermore, LinkedIn can help businesses to connect with the right people that will strengthen the business in terms of business partners, serious customers or potential new employees that might have the right competence that the business is looking for (Ibid).

However, Lacka and Chong (2016) argue that businesses have been slow at adopting social media. Research indicates that the reason behind this relates to marketers’ perception of social media and that it is a daunting task to use social media in an efficient way that reaps benefits (Ibid). Another reason is that B2B companies finds social media as an irrelevant marketing tool as it does not suit the nature of communication that is needed within B2B relationships (Ibid). The B2B businesses that are using social media have fewer followers and fewer interactions on their social media than B2C businesses (Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant, 2017). Moreover, the industrial businesses find that their target customers are the main reason to why they are not adopting social media since their customers are not interested in getting information from social media sites (Ibid). Therefore some managers working within the industrial
industries found social media to not suit with their operations (Ibid). They are therefore hesitant to allocate the necessary resources to reap the benefits of social media (Ibid).

Salo (2017), conducted a study on how B2B practitioners use social media. The study show that B2B practitioners target professionals rather than the general public (Ibid). Moreover, B2B businesses contribute to use relationship-oriented social media technologies in order to manage elements such as prospecting, objections and after-sale follow-ups (Ibid). Andersson and Wikström (2017) wrote that a relationship-oriented method is a required step for a business to use because it gives a deeper understanding of how to maintain business relationships with its stakeholders. Thus, existing and potential employees, shareholders, customers and investors (Ibid).

Social media has become a well-researched topic over the last years as the various social networking sites have risen in popularity both among individuals and businesses (Andersson and Wikström, 2017; Lacka and Chong, 2016; Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, 2011). However, the focus point has been put on the business to consumer market (Ibid). Therefore, Lacka and Chong (2016) argue that more research on how and why B2B businesses adopt social media is needed. In addition, some researchers have conducted studies within the industrial industry. But as suggested by Siamagka et al. (2015), more research within this context is needed in order to get a broader perspective as well as to get the same amount of research that the B2C sector has.

In response to the problem that has been defined by previous researchers, this study aspires to contribute to existing knowledge on why industrial businesses are adopting social media. As well to see the benefits and barriers that comes with using social media and to examine which social networking site that is most useful for industrial businesses.

A statement made by one of the interviewees for this study indicates that the research conducted is not only valid for academics but also for practitioners that are/have adopted social media. As companies still struggle with finding the best approach to use social media in their day-to-day operations. The interview points out that his company clearly want to use social media as a communication and marketing tool but that the company’s efforts can improve since social media, in the words of the CEO, are the
future even for companies in the industrial sector: “In the future we need to be visible on the social media sites because people do not look at magazines anymore they are constantly looking at social media platforms” (Filip, 2018-03-26).

1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to understand and explore why industrial businesses choose to adopt social media for marketing purposes.

1.4 Delimitations
The study includes a case study as a research design because the research delimitates itself to study business professionals in a single context. In this research, managers within the industrial sector that have been part of the process of adopting social media have been interviewed. The industrial sector was chosen because of the existing research gap on how a specific B2B industry is adopting social media, authors such as Siamagka et al. (2015) and Lacka and Chong (2016) has expressed that more material within this sector needs to be provided.

The industrial sector is a sector that includes many subfields. Examples of industrial fields are industrial machinery, tools, construction, manufacturing housing and metal fabrication (Investopedia, nd). In this study, seven of the participating businesses are within the construction field and the other three businesses are within the construction scaffolding field.

The chosen geographical area for this study is Sweden. Swedish B2B businesses that are not within the industrial industry are not included. This was decided in order to make the study more narrow.

The chosen literature examine social media, social networking sites, social media adoption, media technology business usage and B2B. Previous studies regarding the topic of social media in a B2B context have been studied from various perspectives, but there are not many studies focusing on companies within the industrial sector in Sweden.

To gain knowledge of how to use social media in a B2B setting and for what purpose, a qualitative methodology was selected. The qualitative approach of this study is relevant
since the research focus point is exploratory. Moreover, the purpose is to collect in-depth, rich and thick findings rather than generalizable data. Qualitative data captured through in-depth individual interviewing is seen as important and suitable for this research because it allows the authors to discover organisational processes and managerial perceptions that would have been too complex to explore for quantitative questionnaires.

1.5 Outline of thesis
The structure of the thesis is as follows. The first section will introduce the research topic by giving an overview of what is already known about the topic as well as to give the reader an understanding of the problem. This is done in order to understand the purpose of this Bachelor’s thesis and why the research questions have come to exist. The delimitations is also included in the first chapter to give the reader a better understanding of the areas that have been focused on. The second chapter takes the reader through the existing theory within the researched topic and discusses the main contributions that are important for this thesis. The research questions are presented in chapter three. Chapter four is presenting the methodology that has been chosen for this thesis, for example, the research approach and the data gathering process are examined. As this thesis is based on a qualitative study, chapter five presents the empirical framework. After that, the thesis continues with analysing the data that has been collected. Lastly, the thesis concludes with a detailed discussion of the whole study and a suggestion for further research.
2. Literature review

This chapter will focus on presenting existing knowledge about why B2B businesses are adopting social media as well as to provide research on what impacts social media can have on a business. The literature review will cover different definitions and provide key concepts that will be used in the report.

For this study 23 peer reviewed journals have been used that has provided relevant research within the topic of social media. Since social media is not a very new research topic, this study has chosen to use articles that are from 2011-2018 in order to get the newest ideas and theories about the topic.

The journal that has provided the most relevant research for this study is Industrial Marketing Management where 11 out of 23 articles have been used. Articles published in the Industrial Marketing Management journal aim to provide research for marketing practitioners and academics within the business-to-business and industrial sector (Management, 2018). As this study was delimited to look into social media adoption within the industrial B2B sector, this journal provided the study with relevant research within the topic. This study also used three articles from the journal of Business and Industrial Marketing, articles published within this journal focuses on new ideas about marketing for B2B companies, how companies are marketing their services and products to another organization (Emeraldgrouppublishing.com, 2018).

Other journals that have provided useful research for this study has been:

Business Horizons (1)
Computers in Human Behavior (2)
International Journal of Information Management (1)
Journal of Technology Studies (1)
The Marketing Management Journal (1)
Journal of Business Research (1)
Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing (1)
International Journal of Business Communication (1)
2.1 Social media past to present

As of today the business to consumer (B2C) businesses have adopted social media in a faster way than B2B businesses (Shaltoni, 2017). However, in 2020 it is estimated that the market size on the internet will be 6.7 trillion for the B2B sector, which is double the size of the B2C sector (Ibid).

In the past, consumers have only used internet for buying products or services (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011). But as the internet has evolved, so has the consumer behavior on the web (Ibid). Nowadays, the norm includes discussing relevant topics through Twitter posts and customers sharing review of products to the world through YouTube videos (Ibid). All of the social media platforms can have a great impact on a business (Ibid). However, many companies and managers may decide to ignore social media because of their lack of knowledge of how to use social media (Ibid). It is imperative to have the right knowledge and commitment when using social media (Gillin and Schwartzman, 2011).

The power of the marketing and PR department has been overtaken by consumers (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011). In the past, businesses were in control of the information that was spread about their business and their products (Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant, 2017). Press releases and marketing managers were spreading the message that businesses wanted to share with the world (Ibid). Today, consumers are discussing, commenting and sharing thoughts on a worldwide platform, making the businesses the observers without any control (Ibid). Negative as well as positive comments on businesses products are bound to happen and it is up to the business to accept it and gain benefits or to fight it and risk the whole future of the business (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011). The time-consuming activity of investigating what is said about the business or what trends are on the rise is a tough and crucial task for businesses in order to stay up to date and communicate with the customers (Ibid).

Throughout the years, however, the increased use of technology has led to a shift in how information is shared (Agnihotri et al., 2016). Younger generations have started to fill
both sides of the sales relationship, which includes buyers and sellers (Ibid). This transformation has meant that social media nowadays plays a much more prominent role as the impact of these networks and the expectations of using them are greater than before (Ibid). Moreover, Brink (2017) claims that: “There is no doubt it will become the communication channel of the future, and given that we are becoming more internationally oriented, there will come more enquiries that way [social media], simply because the younger generation works intensively with it today”.

2.2 Definition
The concept of social media is broad (Guesalaga, 2016; Salo, 2017). Among academics, there is not a collective or specific definition that is used by all; various definitions are used when explaining the concept of social media (Ibid). Although, a pattern of the various definitions described by academics is noticeable (Andersson and Wikström, 2017). Andersson and Wikström (2017) and Guesalaga (2016) define social media as a tool that helps individuals share thoughts and connect with others. Moreover, Andersson and Wikström (2017) describe the concept of social media as representing a tool/service that supports individuals to render conversations among other individuals. According to Flanigan and Obermier (2016), social media platforms are where individuals with similar interests, or common contacts can connect and share information. Social media was primarily developed for individuals, as business saw the popularity and the benefits social media can bring they started to adapt (Flanigan and Obermier, 2016).

Itani, Agnihotri and Dingus (2017) and Rodriguez et al. (2012) see social media as information sharing. In addition, research explains social media as internet-based sites that support organizations and individuals to get their ideas and thoughts published (Itani, Agnihotri and Dingus, 2017). Social media can be used as a networking tool in a professional and personal way when using for example LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook (Ibid). Rodriguez (2012), describes social media as an instrument that individuals can employ to share ideas and communicate their own thoughts online.

Guesalaga (2016) defines social media as a platform for internet established applications, on these social platforms individuals can share information and interact with one another. Further, Guesalaga (2016) extends the meaning of social media from a selling perspective as a technological result where businesses can establish
relationships and communicate with business partners as well as to build a network of customers.

Lastly, Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides (2011) define social media as a relationship between individuals, a group of people or organizations in terms of exchanging information online. The authors define social media, from a business-to-business angle, as two or more connected business partners exchanging information (Ibid).

2.3 Industrial perspective of social media
Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) conducted a study about two different business industries’ ability to adopt social media. They compared the IT industry with the industrial industry (Ibid). Presented by Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) there are several similarities as well as many differences between the two industries. The goals of using social media for the industrial businesses where first of all brand awareness than traffic building and lead generation (Ibid). The IT businesses also found that brand awareness was the most crucial goal (Ibid). They indicated that recruiting was the second most important goal for them with relationship building coming third (Ibid). The industrial industry is seen as more old-fashioned in its mindset where it usually lacks the right knowledge of how to use social media in the right way and therefore its presence on social media is not as big as the IT business (Ibid).

As argued by Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) industrial businesses are more worried about the risks that social media can bring. They find their employees to be the most worrying factor (Ibid). This is because businesses are afraid that employees will post inappropriate messages that might hurt the brand (Ibid). Other risks businesses fear are the threat of not being committed to adopting social media to a 100 percent, businesses are afraid that they will not answer questions and react fast enough (Ibid). Losing control over all the comments that are spread about them is also considered a fear (Ibid).

As argued by Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011), decision makers within the industrial sector still to this day do not find social media to be beneficial for the organization. The main argument for this is that the industrial sector does not find social media to be suitable for their industry (Ibid). Gillin and Schwartzman (2011)
found that some specialized businesses are better off without social media. For these companies face-to-face meetings are a better way of communicating (Ibid). These kinds of companies might operating in a specialized industry where all the customers and prospects have already been established (Ibid). In this case, social media would only be time-consuming without generating benefits (Ibid).

According to Flanigan and Obermier (2016) there are many industrial businesses that are successful that are not using social media or are using it in a small scale. For the industrial industry, the consumer base is not as large as the B2C industry (Ibid).

2.4 Benefits of social media
Discussed by Weber (2009), social networking sites can create value all through the product lifecycle when the product is being in the initial stage of development. Blogs can be used to discuss the product and get important feedback from potential customers (Ibid). When the product is introduced to the market, YouTube can be used to demonstrate the product and Twitter, Facebook and Instagram can create attention for the product (Ibid). Throughout the selling process, various social media platforms can be used to communicate with customers about the product, as well as to create a word of mouth buzz (Ibid).

Siamagka et al. (2015) discuss the primary factors as to why a business chooses to adopt social media. One of the main factors has been the popularity of social media for individuals (Ibid). It is vital for a business to show their presence on these sites in order to reach individuals that are using it (Ibid). Moreover, the innovativeness of an organization is a crucial factor when an organization is adopting social media (Siamagka et al., 2015; Kunz, Schmitt and Meyer, 2011). If the business is not willing nor ready to adopt new technical devices, then the process of adopting social media will be rethought (Ibid). Another vital factor as to why an organization is adopting social media is the apprehended usefulness of it (Ibid).

According to Michaelidou, Siamagka and Cristodoulindes (2011), there is proof that social media usage for B2B organizations strengthens the businesses’ brand images. Further, social media can support businesses to learn from feedback in terms of comments of social media applications given from business partners and customers (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang, 2016). By examine information on Facebook, businesses
are capable to improve their insight in the trends that are within the equal areas and to recognize market gaps (Ibid). This is done in terms of creating value for customers and to improve products (Ibid).

According to Gillin and Schwartzman (2011), it is important for B2B businesses to build strong relationships with their customers. Products within the B2B sector is of a higher value and a higher price therefore it is imperative for the customer to be able to trust the seller (Ibid). Social media can connect the customers with the people that are behind a product (Ibid). A high transaction that can have a direct impact on the business’ future, it can therefore be soothing to communicate with the engineers that made the product (Ibid). Social media makes it easier for customers to reach the source directly (Ibid).

2.5 Barriers of social media

Andersson and Wikström (2017) discuss reasons and problems as to why organizations may not adapt to social media. Andersson and Wikström (2017) argues that common mistakes organizations make when adapting to social media is that organizations think it is free and that it will be an easy process of implementing. It is vital for a business to understand the resources that must be allocated when adapting to social media in terms to use it in the most efficient way (Ibid). According to Andersson and Wikström (2017), training and time allocated by staff are main factors of the resources that must be utilized when a business is adapting to social media. Wang, Pauleen and Zhang (2016), on the other hand, argue that another reason to why a business may not adopt social media is the factor of having confidential/vital information hacked or leaked. A study presented by Wang, Pauleen and Zhang (2016) indicate that if there would be a solution for businesses to promote security in terms of its business partners and customers, more than half of the businesses studied would increase their attendance on social media. Another reason as to why businesses might not adopt social media is that a business discovers that social media does not go along with its area of operation, therefore, it should not launch an adoption attempt to become present on these sites (Siamagka et al., 2015)

Järvinen et al. (2012) argue that B2B marketers might hit barriers in terms of the utilization of digital technologies. This can later on prevent companies from using and adopting these technologies (Ibid). Jussila et al. (2014) confirm this view by describing
utilization of social media as difficult in B2B marketing. Moreover, it is reasoned that marketers’ awareness of usability of social media plays a significant role when making an adoption decision in a B2B context (Lacka and Chong, 2016). Andersson and Wikström (2017) argue that B2B businesses have reduced knowledge of social media which in return stop businesses from adopting social media as a tactical instrument to gain cooperative benefits. Järvinen et al. (2012), on the other hand, claim that industrial companies in general are not in the front lines of adopting new channels and instruments for marketing communications. Swani and Brown (2013) argue that B2B marketers normally consider face-to-face interactions during a purchasing process in order to make both parties actively involved. According to Swani and Brown (2013), this approach cannot be fulfilled online, which further stops an adoption of social media usage.

As indicated by Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) hesitation may arise when a company is planning to adopt social media. The transparency of the company is one important factor, the more open the business can be the more trust the customers will gain for the business (Ibid). The unfavourable feedback that will come from customers can be tough to deal with (Ibid). However, the combination of positive and negative feedback will give the business a hint of what the customers are happy or unhappy with (Ibid). This leads to the business being able to change products to suit customers in a more favourable way (Ibid). The way businesses act in the conversations with the customers might make or break the business (Ibid). If the business respects and takes into account the customers thoughts and ideas the business will build long-lasting relationships even after the transaction has been made (Ibid).

Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) discuss the analytical and systematic abilities to see the return of investments with having a presence on social media. This is only at 11 percent within a B2B organization (Ibid). The lack of knowledge and resources make many businesses think twice about adopting social media (Ibid). Many businesses are afraid of investing in social media as they do not have the right experience or the knowledge it takes to use social media in the most efficient way that will give benefits to the businesses (Ibid). Social media can come with many benefits for B2B businesses but only eight percent of the B2B businesses are actually getting to see these benefits since many B2B businesses are working without a social media strategy (Ibid).
2.6 Social networks within an organization
Mäntymäki and Riemer (2016) are demonstrating the usage and benefits of using social networks within a business. One main factor that has shown to improve an organization by 20-25 percent in using social networks is knowledge within the company (Ibid). Hence, a faster integration of new employees due to the shared information and the efficiency of reaching co-workers (Ibid). Further, Jones, Suoranta and Rowley (2013) discuss that social networks are relevant and important to a business growth and success. The social networks that are used within an organization can be group chats, instant messages or microblogs (Mäntymäki and Riemer, 2016). These platforms can support employees to get knowledge in a more accurate and efficient way (Ibid).
Moreover, not only work-related information is discussed on these platforms, such as events or sports might be discussed as well (Ibid). Mäntymäki and Riemer (2016) claim that these kinds of topics can enhance relationships between employees.
However, businesses also experience difficulties when using social media (Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, 2011). A crucial aspect a business needs to consider is to have enough knowledge of social media to be able to adopt and use it in the right manner (Ibid). However, staff may not have the knowledge or technical skills that are required to when using social media (Ibid). Therefore, these aspects make it difficult for businesses to adopt to social media in an efficient manner that will bring advantages to the organization (Ibid). In addition, Andersson and Wikström (2017) discuss that limited knowledge by staff can be another reason to why a business does not adopt social media. A study made by Keinänen and Kuivalainen (2015) examine how Finnish businesses within the industrial sector adopt social media found that only nine percent of the industrial businesses being interviewed said that they had the right knowledge about social media and 15 percent of these businesses had thought of developing a specific strategy for their use of social media.

2.7 The top six social networking sites
Employees, customers, competitors, business partners and industrial experts are among the follower base on B2B businesses’ social media pages (Zsolt and Miklos, 2014). According to Zsolt and Miklos (2014) most of the followers are so-called spectators, which are those who are watching and reading posts and videos. Furthermore, another category of followers on social media are called the critics (Ibid). They are the ones who are commenting on posts as well as reviewing products (Ibid). There are also a group
called creators and these individuals give feedback that can improve the social media platforms (Ibid).

Facebook is mostly used by businesses to connect with individuals that they already have an established relationship with (Zsolt and Miklos, 2014). Facebook is not limited to only connect with other individuals (Ibid). Businesses have created specific pages that helps the customers stay up to date with the selected business and to be able to connect and communicate with the business (Ibid). Many individuals also click on the sponsored ads that appear on Facebook (Ibid). According to Shaltoni (2017), the majority of the businesses he interviewed had Facebook pages or accounts but only 31 percent were using Facebook as a serious marketing tool to enhance their business. The businesses that are using Facebook seriously tend to update their pages daily with pictures, posts or with videos (Ibid). Facebook is also used to answer questions and to have discussions with customers (Ibid).

LinkedIn is mostly used for business purposes (Zsolt and Miklos, 2014). Users on LinkedIn are mostly trying to connect to colleagues or to join groups that are discussing topics within the working environment, LinkedIn is also used to recruit people (Ibid). Furthermore, LinkedIn can be used to get to know their customers in a better way, businesses want to use LinkedIn to discuss and listen to customers complaints and feedback (Ibid). According to Siamagka et al. (2015), LinkedIn is the best social media platform because of the site's availability to communicate and reach in the most time-efficient way. Also, shareholders and top managers favour LinkedIn since it can be used for work-related purposes and seriousness of the site when comparing it to all social media platforms (Ibid). Lacka and Chong (2016) confirm this statement as their study on B2B organizations demonstrate that 41 percent of B2B marketers consider LinkedIn as the essential social media site.

Twitter is mostly used for reading influential individuals’ tweets and then re-tweeting them in order to suit the brand image (Zsolt and Miklos, 2014). Twitter is also used by businesses to tweet their own thoughts and give an update to their followers about upcoming projects (Ibid). Moreover, businesses want to interact with customers and stakeholders (Ibid). Hashtags are used on Twitter, this helps to connect people that are using the same hashtags (Gillian and Schwartzman, 2011).
Instagram is mostly used for posting pictures of projects and products (Zsolt and Miklos, 2014). Businesses are also utilizing the tagging system that Instagram provides where the businesses can tag other co-workers, places or objects, which can help them to gain a bigger audience (Ibid). Businesses can try to get customers to take pictures of their products and tag it under the same hashtag that the businesses are using (Ibid). In that way potential customers and business partners can see others using their products (Ibid).

YouTube used by businesses usually contain videos demonstrating new products or projects but the videos can also have specifically skilled staff talking about the products in order to give the customers all the knowledge that is needed directly from the source (Gillian and Schwartzman, 2011). YouTube is a cheap marketing tool that can promote the businesses (Ibid). Customers can test or review products on YouTube and share them (Ibid). YouTube is also used to get feedback from the customers as they can comment or ask questions underneath the videos (Ibid).

Blogs are both easy to set up, to use and can be used within the organization itself but also to share updates with the customers, business partners or the suppliers (Gillian and Schwartzman, 2011). Businesses use blogs to discuss topics that are important for the business. Since blogs do not have a maximum limit of characteristics like Twitter, blog posts can go into depth on a topic (Ibid). Blogs can be used to create discussions between the business and the customers, the most important part with blogs is that they intend to educate people (Ibid). The search engine on the blogs are also to advantage as customers can search for specific topics and find them relatively easy (Ibid). The negative side of blogs is that it is the business that is the moderator and is deciding what will be discussed, the customers can comment on the post but not much more (Ibid).

2.8 Summary of literature review

The internet has evolved throughout the past two decades (Andersson and Wikström, 2017, Swani, Milne, Brown, Assaf and Donthu, 2017). It has gone from consumers being provided information by the businesses to consumers providing and sharing information, commenting on posts and discussing topics with other individuals (Ibid). Back then, businesses could control information that they wanted to share while the
consumers were just bystanders (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011).

The industrial sector has been slower at adopting social media as well as they are not using their social networking sites as frequently as other industries are (Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant, 2017). There are a variety of factors to why the industrial industry has been slower at adopting social media (Ibid). Such as this specific industry is seen as old-fashioned, that the industrial businesses lack the right knowledge, they are more worried about the risks that can come with using social media also some decision makers finds social media to not suit there operation (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011; Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant 2017). Also indicated by Flanigan and Obermier (2016) and Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) some specialized businesses would not benefit from using social media as a marketing tool as their customers are not using social networking sites to gather information. Moreover, other barriers that can come with adopting and using social media is the worry of confidential information being leaked or hacked (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang, 2016). Negative comments are also a factor that concerns the businesses (Ibid).

Although there are benefits to adopting and using social media (Weber, 2009). For example, businesses can reach a broader audience, various social networking sites can create value throughout the whole product lifecycle, the business can use YouTube to show the benefits of the product and show the customers how to use the product (Ibid). As argued by Michaelidou, Siamagka and Cristodoulindes (2011) businesses can learn a lot from using social media. As their customers are commenting and giving feedback on products the businesses can take the comments to heart and learn what is appreciated by the customers and what is not (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang 2016; Gillin and Schwartzman, 2011).

The follower base that B2B businesses have are used for different purposes when it comes to a business social networking sites (Zsolt and Miklos, 2014). Facebook and Twitter are mostly used to connect with the customers and to review feedback( Ibid). While LinkedIn is seen as a more serious channel as it focuses on work-related topics, their businesses are recruiting individuals as well as connecting with other employees (Ibid).
3. Research model

3.1 Research discussion

Many factors play a crucial role when a business are thinking of adopting social media. Siamagka et al. (2015) discuss that if a business is not willing to adopt new technical devices it might be a hard task for them to implement social media. The industrial industry tend to be more worried about the risks than advantages that social media can bring (Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant, 2017). Such as losing control over comments and not being able to respond in a appropriate way that will strengthen their brand (Ibid). As argued by Andersson and Wikström (2017), time and training are the main sources that a business needs to have in mind when adopting social media. Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) discuss that knowledge and experience is important to have within a business when adopting social media. As social media has grown into an important channel for companies in a B2C setting, research has started to understand that this topic is of significance for B2B companies (Siamagka, Christodoulides, Michaelidou and Valvi, 2015). These various social networking sites have shown to be useful for companies in a B2B context when attracting new customers to the businesses (Ibid).

3.2 Research questions

RQ1: Why has social media been adopted for marketing purposes in the industrial sector in Sweden?

RQ2: What work related benefits can social media bring to the industrial sector?

RQ3: What work related barriers can social media bring to the industrial sector?

RQ4: Which social networking site is most useful for businesses within the industrial sector?

3.2 Operationalization
In this section the study goes through concepts that have been used to establish the questions that were asked to the participants (see Appendices 1.0 for the questionnaire).
The concepts used for this study has basis in the 4 research questions as they provide the aim. Table 1.0 defines four concepts: adoption, benefits, barriers and social networking sites, as well as insight into which interview questions that has been based on the concept.

As this studies aim is to look into why industrial businesses are adopting social media for marketing purposes, the concept “adoption” is highly important. Therefore most interview questions have been formulated in order to collect as much information as possible. As defined by Jussila, Karkkainen and Aramo-Immonen, (2014) adoption is when a company experiments, tests and practices a new technology internally then decides if it should be implemented. To measure adoption question 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 has been used in order to establish a basis on why and when participating business themselves adopted social media. These questions also examine how their adoption process have come about. For example, if they run into any difficulties and have any suggestion on how to make the adoption process as smooth as possible.

The second concept is benefits and its defined as advantages and opportunities that can bring value to a business (Shaltoni, 2017; Mäntymäki and Riemer, 2016). The third concept is barriers. This concept is defined as factors/ implications that could stop a business from moving forward (Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, 2011). The second and third concept have been the basis for interview question number 12. This is because it investigate what participating businesses have noticed as their benefits and barriers when adopting and using social media.

The last investigated concept is social networking sites and this concept is defined as: portals where people can share information and connect through the internet (Flanigan and Obermier, 2016). Example of social networking sites are LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram (Ibid). To be able to measure this concept the interview questions nine and ten were developed as these two lets the participants discuss what their definition of the concepts are, which sites they are using and which one they find most useful for a business to utilize.
### Table 1.0: Operationalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Literature source</th>
<th>Survey questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ: 1</td>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>A company experimenting, testing and practicing a new technology internally then deciding if it should be implemented.</td>
<td>Jussila, Karkkainen &amp; Aramo-Immonen, (2014)</td>
<td>2,3,4,5,6,7,8,11,13,14,15,16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ: 2</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Advantages and opportunities that can bring value to a business.</td>
<td>Shaltoni, (2017) and Mäntymäki and Riemer, (2016)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ: 3</td>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Factors/implications that could stop a business from moving forward.</td>
<td>Michaelidou, Siamagka and Christodoulides, (2011)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ: 4</td>
<td>Social networking sites</td>
<td>Portals where people can share information and connect through the internet. Example of social networking sites</td>
<td>Flanigan &amp; Obermier, (2016).</td>
<td>9 and 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

**Note:** Question number one and 17 are general questions. Hence, they are not incorporated within table 1.0 (see Appendices 1.0 for the questionnaire).

### 4. Methodology

*Following chapter will present how the research was conducted. The first section introduces the selected research design followed by sample selection, data analysis followed by quality criteria in terms of reliability and validity considerations.*

#### 4.1 Research purpose

The aim of this thesis is to understand and explore why B2B businesses adopt social media and perceive the impact social media has on businesses within the industrial sector in Sweden. To gain knowledge of how to use social media and for what purpose in a B2B setting, a qualitative methodology was chosen. A qualitative methodology is seen as most convenient because this research’s focus point is exploratory. Further, the idea is to collect in-depth and relevant findings instead of generalizable data (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Qualitative data apprehended through in-depth individual interviewing is seen as convenient and important for this research due to that it permits the authors to detect managerial perceptions and organizational processes that would have been too complex to examine by using quantitative questionnaires. In addition, the in-depth interviews conducted in this study subjects the authors to personal anecdotes, problems and success stories from the interviewees. Since the aim of this report is to acquire information about how and why B2B companies have implemented social media and what advantages and disadvantages these companies have found, the qualitative approach provides the authors with more in-depth information about the topic than numbers could achieve. It is a common practice within a qualitative approach to study words rather than numbers (Bryman and Bell, 2015).
Prior studies concerning the topic of social media in a B2B setting have been studied from several perspectives, but there are not many studies aiming at organizations within the industrial sector in Sweden.

4.2 Research Design
The study has chosen a case study as a research design due to that the research did limit itself to study one type of business professionals in a single context with (1) CEO, (3) marketing managers, (3) communication managers, (1) marketing coordinator, (1) sales developer manager and (1) digital media marketing manager. All interviewees are working in Swedish International B2B organizations (referred as Company A, Company B, Company C, Company D, Company E, Company F and Company G). By selecting a case study as a research design, the thesis was aiming at one single case in intense and detail of receiving a clear understanding and in-depth knowledge of our selected method.

4.3 Sampling Process
The sampling process of this report has selected a purposive sampling which is a nonprobability sampling (Bryman and Bell, 2015, p.442). A purposive sampling is employed when researchers do not intend to select a random sample frame. A strategic sampling was used in order to collect suitable and relevant data that relates to the purpose of this study. Ten managers with various titles that are working with social media on a daily basis or were part of the adoption have been interviewed. It was crucial for the study that the interviewees were able to choose if they wanted to answer the questions in English or Swedish as the answers of the question where the focus point. As all the participants were of Swedish mother tongue, they preferred to answer the questions in Swedish, their answers were then translated into English. As some words or sentences can not be identically translated into English it might impact the results negatively, but the main points from the participants answers are brought forward.

Another criteria was the work titles of the participants, it was crucial for this study that the interviewees work tasks were related to social media or that the interviewee’s were part of when the business implemented social media. The authors aimed at interviewing managers with various titles in order to get a wide spread of answers and perspectives related to social media.
4.3.1 Sample Size
As argued by Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 407) there is an issue with the sampling size when using qualitative research. This study's aim was to have at least 15 participating businesses in order to collect a large enough sampling size that would accomplish theoretical impregnation, which means that no further information could be gathered. Only 10 interviews were conducted as some of the businesses that were emailed did not answer or did not have the time to contribute, the interviews that were conducted lasted between 20-50 minutes and the authors had the chance to ask follow up question in order to collect as substantial and informational data as possible, because of this the authors believe that the sampling size is not an issue.

4.3.2 Sample Selection
For the sampling selection the authors started with browsing the internet for businesses within the industrial industry that are working in Sweden, after a list of 15 businesses were collected the authors emailed the businesses. In Email the authors gave small summary of the projects, explained that their help would be of value for our research as well as of being valuable for the practitioners within the industrial industry. The email also made it clear that their names and companies where going to be replaced in order to be anonymous, this was done because this study is only interested in the practitioners experience, however their actual work title will be indicated because it is of relevance to the study.

From the 15 businesses that were emailed, only 10 businesses showed interest and were able to participate, however the practitioners were only available for phone or skype interviews with an exception of one participant that had time for a face to face interview.

The chosen population for this study is practitioners with experience within social media adoption or that have experience working daily with social media within the industrial industry in Sweden. Furthermore the interviews are working within two different fields within the industrial sector; the scaffolding field or within the construction field.

Table 2.0 presents the interviewees real names and companies are not written because of ethical reasons. The authors have assigned other names to the participants and company A, company B, company C and so forth will be used instead of the real name of the
businesses. Table 2.0 - Interview list displays the work title, the company, the date the interview took place and the length of the interview.

Table 2.0 - Interview list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Work Title</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Day of Interview</th>
<th>Length of Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gustav</td>
<td>Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Company A</td>
<td>19 April</td>
<td>20 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik</td>
<td>Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Company B</td>
<td>5 April</td>
<td>23 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filip</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Company C</td>
<td>26 Mars</td>
<td>50 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva</td>
<td>Communications Manager</td>
<td>Company D</td>
<td>12 April</td>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecka</td>
<td>Communications Manager</td>
<td>Company E</td>
<td>19 April</td>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Marketing Coordinator</td>
<td>Company F</td>
<td>11 April</td>
<td>20 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Sales Developer Manager</td>
<td>Company G</td>
<td>23 Mars</td>
<td>20 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Digital Communications Manager</td>
<td>Company H</td>
<td>2 Maj</td>
<td>18 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sven</td>
<td>Digital Media Market Manager</td>
<td>Company I</td>
<td>18 April</td>
<td>18 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anders</td>
<td>Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Company J</td>
<td>13 April</td>
<td>25 Minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Research Method
The authors of the study created an interview guide with specific questions that were asked to the participants, the guide was created in order to collect information that is relevant to each research question as well as the guide helps to get the same essential information from all the participants (See Appendix A, Interview Guide).

As previously written, in qualitative research how and why questions were asked to the participants in order to understand the personal reasons to why the participants have chosen to adopt social media, as well as to examine the work benefits and barriers that social media brings to the industrial industry. The studies aim was to do face-to-face interviews with the businesses however as most of the participants were not able to do physical interviews because of a busy schedule or being out of the country, phone interviews were conducted instead.

4.5 Quality Criterias
To ensure that the study had an accurate trustworthiness and quality, the author's intended to follow supervisory concepts discussed by Bryman and Bell (2015). This study review the concept of reliability and validity whilst these two concepts alter into four distinctive principles that expose upon our qualitative approach. Thus, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. In order to examine each category, it demonstrates for the reader that this study has been managed in a professional and suitable manner. External auditors such as examiners and opponents have been part of this study in order to assure the quality of the research.

4.5.1 Credibility
Bryman and Bell (2015) describe credibility as the substance in the findings of a research project. In this report, the authors will have the findings ensured by the respondents to guarantee that the research project will have a credible outcome. The respondents in this study are those who have been interviewed. This chosen approach is called respondent validation (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Moreover, this approach guarantees that the transcription is used in a correct manner due to what the interviewees have said. When all interviews are done, they will be transcribed and all respondents are given our result to be able to provide feedback and approval to use their information in our research. We believe that the credibility of this research will be high since this approach was used.
4.5.2 Transferability
Transferability is seen as if the findings from a research project can be applied to other situations or settings as well (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The emphasis when accomplishing a qualitative research is to obtain depth within a demanded area and when the findings of the study are oftentimes linked to that certain area. The main goal of this research was to obtain an in-depth perception of the adoption, usage and implementation of social media in a B2B context. However, it can be difficult to distinguish the result because of the scope of interviews. Although, in this thesis, the findings are used as a basis for ethnographic research in terms to explore if there is a link between practice and theory. Therefore, the aim of this research is to provide nuances instead of generalizable explanations.

4.5.3 Dependability
Dependability is defined by Bryman and Bell (2015) as if the research findings of a study would be equal if the project was performed at another time. Bryman and Bell (2015) claim that dependability can be improved if all steps are controlled by auditors who can propose improvements and eliminate mistakes in the research project.

4.5.4 Confirmability
Confirmability is defined by Bryman and Bell (2015) as values that can influence the research in terms that cannot be neutral. Bryman and Bell (2015) argue that it is nearly impossible to be fully objective as a researcher. For that reason, external auditors may be helpful to advocate who can confirm that the research is not unilateral.

4.6 Analysis of social networking sites
Data from the participating businesses social networking sites was gathered in order to double check which social networking sites the interviewees have adopted and are using. The authors collected data by going into various social networking sites that the interviewees said their company use. The social networking sites looked at were Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Youtube. The company name was typed into the search field on every social media platform. This was done in order to count how many posts per month each company does. In the end, a mean value was calculated by the authors which gave a result on how active all participant businesses are on social media in general.
A table was created in order to get a clear overview. See Table 4 in 5.5 analysis of social networking sites. Although, it is important to have in mind that not all companies have adopted or use every social media platform, which in return make it difficult to get an exact measurement of our mean value. In this case, the mean value is a tool to make the authors able to compare and measure how active these businesses are compared to each other.

4.7 Ethical considerations
Moral and ethical issues are relevant to mention when it comes to studying a social context. In this setting, a B2B context reveals upon human actions. Bryman and Bell (2015) argue that researchers need to reflect upon how the interviewees of a study should be treated. In this case, the interviewees are anonymous in terms of name and the company they are working for. This ethical consideration was implemented in order to support an open and honest discussion throughout the interviews.

The authors sent emails to B2B companies that was of interest to conduct an interview with, which made it completely open for the participant to choose if they wanted to participate or not in this research.

5. Empirical Findings

The following section of empirical findings present ten semi-structured interviews. First, an overview of the interviews will be presented followed by the topics: adoption of social media, advantages and disadvantages, usage of social media and most useful social networks.

The interviewees that were chosen for this study have different positions within their business but all of them are working with social media or have been part of the implementation process of adopting social media. The participants are all working within the industrial sector but in different fields: the construction and the scaffolding field. As indicated in 4.3.2 sample selection, the real names of the interviewees and the companies they work at have been replaced with company A, B, C and so forth, the positions of the participants have not been changed as the experience of the participants
are of importance to this study. This is of value as the aim of this study is to see why businesses within the industrial industry are adopting social media. The participants have been working with social media around 1-10 years, so different knowledge within the field will be presented throughout this section. Another similarity between the participants is that all of them have been working within the industrial industry for many years, the average experience is 10 years. The interviews took place between march and may 2018.

5.1 Adoption of Social Media

**Company A**

Gustav is the marketing manager at company A and has only worked there for six months. Company A started using social media for two years ago as they got a recommendation from a PR firm. Company A has three people working with their social media channels. They have a goal to upload two posts a month as they have noticed that this amount is best suited with their followers.

Gustav (2018) says that social media has helped company A to distinguish themselves and reach their target group. Moreover, has company A been able to get a wider customer range because of social media.

Gustav says that social media for a B2B businesses is a helpful tool to be able to reach customers and new business partners. Social media within the B2B sector is also used to seem more personal. Gustav says that social media is one of the trends that everyone needs to keep up with otherwise the business might not work in the future.

Company A has links on their webpage to all of their social networks which makes it easy for customers to find them.

**Company B**

Erik started working at company B in 2005 and has since then worked as a marketing manager in Europe, Middle East and Africa. Erik argues that social media builds on communication where private customers share various posts spontaneously. According to Erik, advertisements were mainly used for some years ago within company B’s social
networks. These gave a great response but nowadays, the focus is on giving tips and ideas to B2B customers taken from reality.

Company B started to use social media in 2009. “The main reason was to reach out to our prospective customers since we do not know where else to find them. We could not reach these potential clients in their private places” (Erik, 2018-04-05).

“Our goal with social media was to reach out to more people. We want to be seen in a plethora of channels. Such as brochures, but mainly by sponsoring. Nowadays the decision-maker are larger groups and in our projects we see several decision makers that have various personalities. All contribute with their own thoughts and ideas (Erik, 2018-04-05).

Today, company B has launched a major and global campaign with a Formula One driver, where the company engage their audience with various competitions through Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. Although, every country has its own campaign, as said earlier. Another campaign the company has implemented is called “Made By Experts”. This campaign highlights the personnel and is an easier way for the company’s customers to contact them. As Erik says: “It shows our customers that we are striving for simplicity” (Erik, 04-05-2018).

Company C

Filip has worked as a CEO at company C for one year and in the industrial industry for 17 years. The CEO says that he does not know that much about social media. Therefore, company C has a marketing manager that handles social media.

Company C started to use social media two years ago. The reason behind the adoption was that more and more companies started to use and implement social media and since company C did not want to fall behind, they adopted it as well. Moreover, Filip says that his company needs to be visible on social media platforms in the future in order to create awareness. One of the reasons for this is the fact that magazines are not as popular as they used to be. However, Filip says that company C has yet to fully implement social media because the construction sector is not that focused on these platforms. Instead, business customers rather meet people face-to-face to see projects
with their own eyes. Although company C are in the process of adopting various social media sites in order to be visible to their customers.

**Company D**

Eva has worked for company D for seven years as a communication manager. Company D is very new to using social media. They started in February because of pressure from the CEO who wanted the company to keep up with the surroundings. Eva is the only person at the company who is handling their social media platforms and she tries to publish at least three posts/pictures per week.

Eva says that “the industrial industry is not so modern and the majority of customers are responding better to face-to-face meetings” (Eva, 2018-04-12) but she has noticed that they are getting more visibility and more “likes” now than in the beginning and this has led to a broader customer base. Other from that, Eva does not see any noticeable benefits of using social media but as they are so new to using social media it might be because of that. Company D will continue using social media as it is cheap and not a very time consuming marketing tool.

**Company E**

Rebecka is a communications manager at company E and has worked within the industry for almost 10 years. “By utilizing the different channels, you can strengthen the brand as well as the employer brand. You can also find new employees, make our employees feel united but also know what's happening in the company. In addition, we can give customers and employees more opportunity to interact with us” (Rebecka, 2018-04-19). Rebecka connects social media to social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter.

Company E started to use social media around five or six years ago. “Today it is necessary for a company to participate in various social media channels” (Rebecka, 2018-04-19). Social media has been incorporated into digital marketing activities for company E in terms of press releases. For example, if company E is publishing a press release, they also use these channels to reach out to a wider audience.

Although, Rebecka says that social media has not fully been adopted by company E. Rebecka says that: “It's just me who takes care of our social networking sites and the
construction industry is quite conservative so it takes time before everyone is on track (Rebecka, 2018-04-19).

**Company F**

Linda is one of five marketing coordinators at company F. Since company F is divided into five regions in Sweden there was a need to have a specific person in every region in order to provide knowledge and information that are specific to the regions. Linda started working for company F in 2009.

Company F started to use social media in 2012. The first social networks site they started using were Facebook and YouTube. As time has progressed they have also started to use Instagram, LinkedIn and blogs. The reason as to why company F adopted social media was because they did not want to lag behind their competitors. As well as they wanted to be able to reach their customers in a faster and easier way and to provide basic information.

Linda says that it is imperative for businesses to have the right knowledge and experience within social media in order to be able to use it. Company F has a set plan with their aims of what they want to accomplish with their social media presence. The plan guides them on how active they should be and what material that needs to be posted.

**Company G**

Carl has worked for company G for five years as a business developer and been within the industrial industry for 10 years. Carl believes that social media is established on social network sites used daily such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Carl argues that social media has grown significantly during the years that he has been active in the industrial industry. They have gradually become more and more important. Carl believes that B2B businesses use social media in order to get more information out to their customers. In addition, a more specific target group can be reached through social media.

Company G started to use social media around 2–3 years ago. The main reason for company G’s adoption of social media was to reach out to customers, potential suppliers and business partners. Moreover, Carl says that: “We found it to be important to keep up with the world around us and to stay up to date to show our customers that
we also can be present on these sites. We have noticed that we get more attention” (Carl, 2018-03-23).

Carl believes that all parts of social media were difficult to implement at Company G, since the company did not have a specific person working with company G’s implementation. Carl says that a structure on how to use social media is needed for company G in order to get further attention. In addition, Carl says that it is vital to have the right knowledge and strategy when adopting social media. It is also essential to post the right pictures to create interest and awareness from customers.

Company H

Peter is the digital communications manager for company H and has been working on and off at company H since 2015. Peter thinks that social media is a very vague concept as it contains many different aspects. Five people are working with social media at company H. Since Peter is relatively new to the company he is not certain when they started use social media, but it was before he started working there.

Peter thinks that social media mainly is used by B2B businesses as it is a relatively easy marketing tool that helps businesses to reach their direct target base, which has helped company H to be more specific in their social media posts. Company H’s goal with using social media is to strengthen their brand image as well as to use social media to be visible and increase their sales performance.

Company I

Sven is the digital marketing manager at company I and has worked there for almost three years. He relates social media to brand building and the challenge of always being updated.

Sven believes that B2B companies use social media mainly in terms of brand building in order to strengthen the company’s own brand. The company's main social networking sites are Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Sven says that company I's ultimate goal with adopting social media is to get their followers and clients to engage with the content. The company is frequently monitoring
likes, shares and comments. This is a form of brand building that creates trustworthiness.

**Company J**

Anders is the marketing manager at company J and has worked there for a year and a half and within the industrial industry for six and a half years. Anders says that company J focus on social media in terms of marketing activities since social media is a significant channel to use because it is cost-efficient and measurable.

The reason for company J’s adoption of social media was to reach out to their target group. Anders says that: “Many of our customers use social media because it is a relevant channel and does not cost money” (Anders, 2018-04-13). Moreover, social media is an inexpensive way to reach out with information and it is measurable for the user to see which effect a post can have. Moreover, company J adopted social media in order to go out with information. The idea was to build better customer relations and to create interactions through social media. Nowadays, company J has a one-way communication, but the company wants to create customer engagement in terms of two-way communication. Anders believes that offering relevant information for the target group is important when using social media. “If you are too sales-oriented it can punish the company. Instead, the company should go out with information that has a value for the reader/customer” (Anders, 2018-04-13).

Company J has had difficulties when implementing Facebook since it requires resources. However, when company J implemented LinkedIn and Instagram the company hired experts that had the right knowledge which gave them a great start.

Anders says that social networks are related to social network platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. Moreover, company J use social media to inform their customers of product information rather than a tool for direct sales. Therefore, company J is not that relationship oriented on social media platforms. Anders highlights that: “One main purpose why we use social media is to get traffic to our website. There is always an overall goal of creating sales” (Anders, 2018-04-13).
5.2 Benefits and barriers

Company A

According to Gustav there are some benefits and some barriers to using social media but the benefits outweighs the barriers. The benefits that company A has seen is that the social networking sites that they are using are relatively easy to use so there is no specific knowledge that someone needs to have. Also social media is cheap to use and it generates attention from a bigger audience than what magazines would bring. Gustav says that the barriers is that some might not know what they should post and therefore they might post a picture that does not go with the brand. Gustav thinks that if a business wants to post too much on their social networking sites it would be too much for people so that they might no longer be interested in following the specific business.

Company B

“The benefits with using social media is that our company easily can reach out to customers/people at all times. The barriers is that it is costly. An emergency communication plan must be implemented if something happens which put strict requirements on our company. Therefore, the personnel must work towards a strict strategy” (Erik, 2018-04-05).

Company C

The CEO of company C sees benefits with social media. “We get our brand image out to our customers and get more feedback from our customers and attract more customers. But, I do not really see any barriers other then if a person posts negative comments and it is spread to others” (Filip, 2018-03-26).

Company D

The communications manager thinks that the main benefits to using social media are that it is cheap, easy to use and the businesses can reach a lot of people. Furthermore, social media can help to enhance the brand image of the company. Company D also
uses social media to praise customers and employees, which generates a better working environment and happier customers. Since company D is new to using social media, Eva has not seen any clear barriers. The only thing she pinpoints is that one needs to be careful when posting pictures as it can be a hard task to find the right thing to post and it is imperative to check with everyone in the picture if it is okay for them to be apart of it.

**Company E**

The benefits with social media is that company E can raise awareness of the company among their employees and prospects, customers, potential customers as well as strengthen their brand.

Rebecka believes that Facebook was the most difficult social media platform to implement. Rebecka says it is important for a company to consider allocating enough resources to manage posts and comments but also ensure getting material for publication on a regular basis when implementing social media for a business.

**Company F**

According to Linda there are many benefits for businesses when using social media. The main benefits of social media are that a businesses can reach a large amount of people in just minutes. Not all, but many social media platforms are easy to use and navigate and it is a cheap marketing tool. “The main barriers are that social media is open, almost everyone can comment whatever they want. It is a good thing to get feedback from customers but when the comments turn into something that is not related to products or the businesses, they are not relevant.”

**Company G**

Carl says that the benefits with using social media are the availability to reach a lot of people and to post things quickly. It also gives possibilities to post more personal messages and information to their customers or potential customers rather than using magazines. The barriers, on the other hand, are that the posts on company G’s various social networks can be used for the wrong purpose or that wrong things will be posted.
Company H

The main benefits to using social media, indicated by Peter, is that company H can target their customer base in a more direct, easy and fast way. When “old media” was used, such as magazine ads, companies could not direct their resources where it would benefit the company the most. The barriers to social media is that a business can share too much information. For example if as a business posts something on social media maybe the wrong background is incorporated within the frame or the post might be perceived differently than it is intended to do. Comments that are unnecessary can have a impact on the brand. According to Peter, it is crucial to be prepared for everything and give fast and informational answers.

Company I

Sven says that the benefits of using social media are, among other things, that companies can reach a wide range of people and perspective clients without the additional cost of, for example, marketing material. Companies also have the ability to reach people on a specific platform that people have made a conscious choice of using.

However, as more and more companies are adapting to social media, it becomes increasingly difficult to create content that is interesting to people and that is being shared and spread on the platform or platforms used.

Company J

The benefits of social media are the quick way to get information out, cost-effectiveness and that it is measurable. The barriers, on the other hand, are that it takes time to build social media. The user has to be aware of that it is a process that takes time and that it is a long-term work. In addition, it takes time to build up a relevant and stable follower-base. But Anders believes that it is better to work towards the customers the company wants to have, and to have an overall strategy related to the company’s goals and achievements in terms of profitability. The company’s website and social media work together and should be integrated with marketing activities.
5.3 Usage of Social Media

**Company A**

Company A has only been using social media for two years so they are relatively new, but one thing that Gustav said was important to have in mind when adopting social media is to have good plan and post an appropriate amount of updates in order to generate attention and conversation about the business. Company A’s goal with using social media is to spread news and give updates in a fast manner.

**Company B**

The company works with social media on a daily basis and uses social media in order to reach out to their customers and people of all ages. The company has two full-time employees that work with the company’s social media and networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. These two people cover the whole market such as France, Greece, Great Britain, Scandinavian countries, et cetera. Due to cultural differences, the use of social media platforms vary from country to country depending on what social media or networking site is the most popular or suitable for company B in any given country. For example, only Twitter is used in France. In Greece and Great Britain, Facebook is the sole social media site used.

As previously written, emergency communication is crucial when using social media and social networks. However, companies want to avoid it as much as possible since it can give them a bad reputation with their customers. Sometimes a negative post can be posted on a social media site by a customer or person about the company. However, company B has three people that work with these major or minor situations on social media. Erik says it is vital to answer these posts in order to be active and to not delete it. It is crucial that people see that company B answers the posts and that they react. Although, the discussion with the person that posts something negative is done outside social media networks.

A crucial tool for company B to successfully use social media is their content bank, where they save every post published. By doing this, it makes it easier for all countries they operate in to access and repost the post in their own language without putting extra efforts to it.
Company B operates in 19 countries and some barriers related to this is the cultural and language differences. For example, some social media advertisements function in Europe, but not in the Middle-East or Africa. But, for example, in the Scandinavian countries company B is marketed in the same way, where one person translate the text to the specific language in that country and repost the post.

“The usefulness of social media can not be stressed more, it’s an important tool for the marketing department that helps business to stay relevant with the younger generation. Social media is not going away anytime soon so it's substantial for business working with the industrial sector to keep up and get more knowledge about social media” (Erik, 2018-04-05).

Company C
Today, company C uses social media to post pictures on current project. The company is using social media around four times a month. However, only Instagram and their websites are used. When they use social media they focus on how to improve their skills of these platforms in order to become more active on these sites. Moreover, social media is used in order to get feedback from customers so the company can improve their work.

“To be able to reach such a vast amount of the population with just one picture or a text is amazing. Social media marketing is much cheaper than marketing through newspapers” (Filip, 2018-03-26).

“The knowledge is the most import to consider when adopting social media. In the constructions sector the knowledge within social media is not very good so we really need people that understand it” (Filip, 2018-03-26).

Company D
Company D is using Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn in their everyday business. A trend that Eva has noticed is that Facebook is not as popular as it used to be. Instead, more people are using Instagram.
As previously indicated, Eva is the only one in the company who is in charge of their social media channels, her co-workers take the pictures and sends it to her so that she can post them and write something about the picture. Eva said that company D is trying to implement a plan on what their goals are with using social media. This is done in order to be able to use it in the best way possible.

**Company E**

Today, company E uses social media differently depending on what the company is looking for. The company chooses what channels that they consider to be the best for each project or update. Company E is using social networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram every week.

Rebecka believes that B2B businesses can use social media by utilizing the different channels. Company E can strengthen their brand as well as the employer brand, find new employees, make their employees feel connected, but also to gain knowledge of what is happening in the company. Furthermore, social media creates a better opportunity for company E to let their customers and employees interact with the company.

As previously said, company E has not yet fully implemented social media. Rebecka believes that the company should focus on having one person that has the main responsibility of social media, while at the same time having a number of ambassadors in the organization that operate and help to get a continuous flow on their social media platforms. It is also important that the company has the management understand why and how social media works, and the importance of being there in order to make the company's presence on social media the most efficient and effective.

**Company F**

Company F uses social media on a daily basis. However, the company is using social media platforms for different purposes. LinkedIn is the work platform used for press releases and recruiting purposes. Facebook and Instagram are used for commercial
purposes such as posting pictures of employees and projects in order to provide a more personal picture of the business. Company F also uses YouTube where they upload videos on employees and customers talking about the company and projects. They also utilize its YouTube channel for posting safety videos where they go through how to use the company’s products safely.

Linda indicates that the most difficult factor when using social media is to know what material is appropriate to post. Linda says that “you need to think about everything before posting a picture, is the picture strengthening the brand, you need to analyze the picture to see that there is no hidden message or another brand that is within the picture” (Linda 04-11-2018). The tagging in pictures on Instagram is also an important aspect that needs to be considered since the company cannot hashtag every single object that is within the image.

The goal with using social media for company F is to be visible and to strengthen the brand image and also to be able to have a faster and more direct communication channel with customers.

Company G

Company G works with social media two to three times a week by using Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube. For example, on YouTube company G posts videos on their projects in order to show their customers, suppliers or potential new customers what the company works on.

Carl says that a B2B business can use social media within their marketing and sales department to reach customers, to create personal relationships and to communicate with their customers. As previously note, magazines and newspapers are not as efficient as social media. Company G’s goal with social media is to reach a large audience in order to create awareness of the company.

Company H

Company H is mostly using Facebook and LinkedIn and is trying to post something on their platforms at least once a week. Peter indicated that it is very important for a business to have a plan of what they want to achieve with their social media platforms.
One of the factors that is important is to have a strategy on how to handle the comments and feedback that the company gets on a daily basis.

The reason to why company H started using social media was because they wanted to have better opportunities to be able to reach customers and business partners. Company H also wanted reap the benefits that social media offers such as an increase in sales as social media helps the company to be more visible.

**Company I**

Company I started to use social media in 2014. Today, there are two people working with the company’s social media platforms. The company's main strategy when it comes to their presence on social media is to update the various platforms anywhere between a few times a week to a few times a month. Company I is publishing a wide array of content on their social media channels. Updates about the company is mixed with employee interviews. Text, video and pictures are all mediums used by the company.

The main reason as to why company I started to use social media was to be present on platforms that the company's customers are using.

Sven says that: “In order to be successful on social media, a company should follow a predetermined plan and think through the content that is being created and published. It's important to network within the own company to be able to plan and find the right angle on every single update” (Sven, 2018-04-18).

It's also of importance to have an allocated budget for sponsored posts and other marketing opportunities on social media as these strategies can help the company get a better reach of their social media content.

Sven believes that B2B companies will create more video content in the coming years. “B2C companies have already been quick to adapt this method. Furthermore, content will be produced to suit a specific target group” (Sven, 2018-04-18). He believes that companies will be more focused on specific groups rather than producing content for the masses.
Company J

Company J uses social media two to three times a week, they started to use social media in order to reach their target group. Anders says: “Many of our customers use social media since it is a relevant channel and does not cost money. I believe that social media platforms are significant because it is a cheap way to reach out with information to our customers and it is measurable. Today, it is much harder to advertise in a magazine because you cannot see how many people have read the article. However, on social media platforms is it possible” (Anders, 2018-04-13).

Moreover, company J uses social media mainly for brand awareness and brand building where the company focuses on sustainability and core values for digital marketing purposes. But the company also wants to inform their customers about what is going on in the company. For example, it can be to publish information in advance of a new product launch to inspire customers. In addition, company J has worked with the national cooking team in order to inspire and attract professional customers.

However, the Swedish part of Company J started to use social media approximately three years ago. Anders is quite sure that all personnel, within the Swedish part of company J, is using social media on a daily basis by sharing internal information with each other.

Anders believes that the reason companies use social media is that they are an easy platform to use in order to reach out to customers. Moreover, social media has been a widely-accepted way of reaching out to customers for marketing purposes. It is also cost-efficient.

Anders says that company J will use social media in the same way as they have done so far in the future. On the other hand, Anders believes that company J will exist on more social media platforms such as Facebook and perhaps more things can be digitized in the future.
5.4 Most useful Social Networks

Company A

Company A is mostly using LinkedIn in their everyday business as this site helps them to target people within the same field and people with the right knowledge. Hence, company A is using LinkedIn for recruiting new employees. Company A is also using Facebook and YouTube in order to provide information and communicate with their customers. Their YouTube channel is used to show videos on projects or having a manager that talks about how their part within the organization works. Different networks are used for different things that generates benefits for company A. But as indicated by Gustav, LinkedIn is most suited for business inquiries therefore this is the best social network for company A.

Company B

Erik (2018) claims that LinkedIn is classified as the major social network site since it is there company B builds their networks and the staff can connect and develop relationships with the company’s B2B customers. Erik believes that social media increase brand value and awareness for B2B companies. This can be a good way of using social media for a company that wants to convey itself as an attractive workplace with high standards.

Company C

As company C has not yet implemented social media to the fullest extent, they are currently only using Instagram. However, the company is in the process of creating a LinkedIn account as the CEO Filip thinks that LinkedIn is the most suitable social media network for a B2B business because the site focuses on businesses. Company C is happy with their Instagram as it has helped them to get more visibility and are able to get comments and feedback on their posts.

Company D
According to Eva, LinkedIn is the best suited social media network for businesses. Company D uses their LinkedIn to post content about coming projects and to recruit, as Facebook and Instagram are mostly used to reach the individuals behind the businesses or their customers. Eva gave an example of what they posted on Facebook a while ago that they would not post on LinkedIn. This was a picture of a chicken and that the business wishes their customers a happy easter.

Company E

Rebecka says that LinkedIn and Instagram are the most suitable social media networks for B2B marketing activities. LinkedIn was the first social network that the company got as they saw that it would benefit their organization in the best way. Company E is also using a new form where they post press releases and content about upcoming news for the media to take part of.

Company F

Linda at company F says that all of the social networks are useful in their different ways when looking at it from a business perspective. LinkedIn would be the most useful as it is more directed at the work environment and is more professional. Company F uses Instagram and Facebook to target their customers, give updates of upcoming projects and to answer questions, which gives them a better connection and relationship with their customers.

Company G

Carl says that LinkedIn is the most suitable social network for company G in terms of marketing activities. Company G uses LinkedIn to both find new contacts and to reach out to their customers. Carl says that the Nordic division has had difficulties to use the right strategy and to utilize social media, in comparison to the Great Britain division since the company does not have the right knowledge to use social media in an efficient way. Therefore, company G uses social media two to three times a week.

Company H
According to Peter, Facebook is company H’s most valuable social media platform as that is the platform which most individuals are actively using. “It is important to follow the people and see which platforms that we can use to reach as many individuals as possible, and that for us is Facebook” (Peter, 2018-05-02). Company H is using Facebook for recruiting purposes as well as to render conversation amongst customers and to promote their products and coming projects. Company H is also active on LinkedIn where they are posting work ads and information about their daily organization. Peter also mentioned that company H is using Twitter but not to the wide extent that they are using Facebook and LinkedIn.

Company I

Sven says that Facebook is the most suitable social network for company I, since it gives the best result when sharing content. LinkedIn, on the other hand, is significant for company I in terms of recruitment.

Company J

Company J has chosen to narrow themselves down to mainly use LinkedIn and Instagram in terms of social media usage. Anders believes that LinkedIn is a significant B2B platform and Instagram is a well-established inspiration platform. Although, Facebook and blogs are not used by company J on the Swedish market. This is because the company does not have enough resources and especially Facebook needs surveillance due to questions or criticism from customers. In addition, company J sometimes uses YouTube as they have their own channel. Sometimes, when company J uses social media, they connect any news to a special day such as the cinnamon bun day.

Table 3.0: Summary results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main reasons of adopting social media:</th>
<th>-Reach target customers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Pressure from stakeholders and customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Marketing purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major challenges adopting social media:</td>
<td>-To know how much and what resources that needs to be utilized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major benefits:
- Fast and easy communication with customers
- Easy to use

Major barriers:
- Hard to update with right content
- Negative comments

Most useful social networks:
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Facebook

5.5 Analysis of social networking sites
The authors of the thesis decided to analyze the participating businesses social networking sites in order to make sure the interviewees tell correct and trustworthy information. The authors looked at every company’s social network such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube in order to decide if the company uses or has adopted social media platforms. Although, advantages and disadvantages of social media is not included in the secondary data since it is the interviewees own thoughts and ideas.

Table 4.0: Analysis of social networking sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Companies</th>
<th>Has the company adopted social media?</th>
<th>What social networking site are they using?</th>
<th>How many posts a month on their social networking sites?</th>
<th>Mean Value</th>
<th>Followers:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Company A | Yes                                  | Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. | Facebook: 7 posts  
Instagram: 14 posts  
LinkedIn: 2 posts | 35 | Facebook: 4315  
LinkedIn: 437  
Twitter: 911  
Twitter: 724 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Platforms</th>
<th>Twitter:</th>
<th>YouTube:</th>
<th>LinkedIn:</th>
<th>Instagram:</th>
<th>Facebook:</th>
<th>LinkedIn:</th>
<th>Instagram:</th>
<th>Google +:</th>
<th>Facebook:</th>
<th>LinkedIn:</th>
<th>Instagram:</th>
<th>Google +:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.</td>
<td>12 posts</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3986</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>3 posts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>464</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Google +</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Social Media Channels</td>
<td>LinkedIn Posts</td>
<td>Facebook Posts</td>
<td>Instagram Posts</td>
<td>Twitter Posts</td>
<td>YouTube Posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.</td>
<td>LinkedIn: 8 posts</td>
<td>Facebook: 44 posts LinkedIn: 37 posts Twitter: 73 posts Youtube: 5 posts</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>Facebook: 2005 LinkedIn: 1662 Twitter: 617 YouTube: -</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram.</td>
<td>Facebook: 8 posts Instagram: 2 posts LinkedIn: 5 posts Twitter: 1 post Youtube: -</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Facebook: 4417 Instagram: 1161 LinkedIn: 5716 Twitter: 938 YouTube: 121</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.</td>
<td>Facebook: 12 posts Instagram: 7 posts LinkedIn: 10 posts Youtube: 2 posts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Facebook: 6287 Instagram: 2167 LinkedIn: 11515 YouTube: -</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.</td>
<td>Facebook: 10 posts Instagram: 9 posts</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Facebook: 48858 Instagram: 1043</td>
<td></td>
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Note:
Company C is only using Instagram but is at the moment implementing LinkedIn within their company. Therefore, the answer “to some extent” is written under the heading “has the company adopted social media?”.

6. Analysis

This chapter will present an analysis based on the literature review that has been undertaken in this study, as well as the empirical findings that specifically have been collected from managers working within the industrial sector in Sweden with social media. The analysis will be divided into the four research questions. This division is done in order to compare similarities and differences of practitioners and academics in a clear and coherent way while analysing what results have emerged through the study.

Research Question 1:
Why has social media been adopted for marketing purposes in the industrial sector in Sweden?

All interviewees have more or less adopted social media. Mainly, all interviewees use it for the same purpose and has the same expectations of it. Therefore, it can be questioned how effective social media really is, since every company have the same mindset and strategy to maintain and attract new customers. Since these companies do not go outside the box, it do not make them unique or special. There are indicated that some companies felt forced to adopt and use social media, because they felt pressure from competitors. Therefore, it can be questioned again how effective social media are for these companies. Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) discuss that some businesses are afraid of implementing social media. This is because they believe their
company do not have the right amount of skills to use social media in the most efficient way (Ibid). On the other hand, Jones, Suoranta and Rowley (2013) argue that social networking sites are significant for business success and growth.

“The industrial industry is not so modern and the majority of customers are responding better to face-to-face meetings” (Eva, 2018-04-12).

Eva and some interviewees claim that their customers rather have face-to-face meetings than through social networking sites. This statement goes along to what Swani and Brown (2013) indicate. This is because their customers want to see their projects in real life and not through a social networking site. This could be because the older-generation is used to work like this, and does not want any changes. Although, in a couple of years this may change when the younger generation is in charge of the industrial businesses in Sweden. Then, the viewpoint of having customer meetings through social networking sites will be more popular than having face-to-face meetings. This may be the case, since the younger generation has grown up with technology their hole lifetime. Additionally, there is no sign of social media slowing down. To some extent, all businesses are going to have to adopt social media in order to be visible.

It is clearly indicated that none of the businesses want to take any risks. This statement goes along with Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) discuss. All businesses follow the trend of adopting social media, but does that mean that it is the right way to go? Can it be that these businesses do not share everything on their social networking sites since they want to have a competitive advantage against their competitors. Although, researchers have another aspect of this problem. Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) believe that the more open a business is, the more trust a company will gain from their customers.

Research question 2:
What work related benefits can social media bring to the industrial sector?

The interviewees see that there are many benefits when using social media, but there are disagreements among the interviewees. Filip argues that receiving feedback from customers is a major advantage of using social media. “We get our brand image out to
our customers and get more feedback from our customers and attract more customers” (Filip, 2018-03-26). Wang, Pauleen and Zhang (2016) discuss what a business can learn from feedback in terms of comments given by business customers and partners on social media platforms. Although, there is a disagreement if feedback is an advantage or not since some of the interviewees see feedback as negative. This can be because the interviewees may not have the required time or effort to answer it. Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) indicate that it can also depend on that feedback can be tough to deal with, especially if it is negative.

Some companies believe social media is easy to use. This statement goes along with what Siamagka et al. (2015) argue. The researchers indicate that if a business is willing to adopt technical devices the process will be easier of implementing (Siamagka et al., 2015). Another reason can be that the interviewees use social media in their private life, which make the implementation process faster since they already know how to use a specific social networking site.

Some companies see the possibility and usefulness of social media as the opportunity to quickly post content. This can relate to that some interviewees have a full schedule which results in that they cannot put too much time on a post or on their social networking sites. But by posting content quickly can be dangerous. For example, the brand image may not be expressed in the same way a post published on LinkedIn. Although, Siamagka et al. (2015) write that one decisive factor for companies to adopt social media is the perceived usefulness of the tool.

“The usefulness of social media cannot be stressed more, it's an important tool for the marketing department that helps business to stay relevant with the younger generation. Social media is not going away anytime soon so it's substantial for business working with the industrial sector to keep up and get more knowledge about social media” (Erik, 2018-04-05).

Erik tells us companies try to stay pertinent with usage the younger generation have on social media. This may push companies to indirect hire younger people in order to secure the future for new and existing challenges on social media. Researchers agree on
that social media will be the future communication channel since the younger generation use it intensively (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Brink, 2017).

Research Question 3:
*What work related barriers can social media bring to the industrial sector?*

Andersson and Wikström (2017) claim that common mistakes businesses do when implementing social media is that they believe it is an easy process of implementing and that it is free. Although, company J highlights this problem. Company J argue that an implementation of social media takes time in terms of building up a follower base. Moreover, company E considers having resources as an important aspect when implementing social media. This ties into what Andersson and Wikström (2017) say. Although, many companies claim that they have not noticed any barriers with social media. This could be because they lack of knowledge on social media usage.

Moreover, some companies believe it is vital to strive for a strategy or plan. Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant (2017) argue that many businesses should strive to work according to a plan when using social media which can in return have a positive effect on businesses. Moreover, Andersson and Wikström (2017) argue that companies must determine what resources are needed and have to be utilized when adopting and using social media. This may also facilitate personnel’s workload and a full schedule.

Some businesses have difficulties in terms of what content and how often this should be posted on social media. For example, company A identified the amount of posts published to be a challenge. It is imperative not to publish too much content as a company then runs the risk of having its followers lose interest because the customers’ news feeds might become cluttered. Research claims that ways to prevent this is to train staff and account for time when working with social media (Andersson and Wikström, 2017).

Research Question 4:
*Which social networking site is most useful for businesses within the industrial sector?*
All businesses indicate that their social networking sites can be useful in one way or another. Weber (2009) discuss that all social networking sites can be used in various ways. For example, to enhance the brand, recruit people or help to sell a product (Ibid).

Eight out of ten participating businesses found LinkedIn as their most useful social networking site. Although, it should be noted that one of the ten businesses are not using LinkedIn. The remaining two businesses find Facebook to be the most useful social networking site. Seven businesses said that LinkedIn was their most useful social networking site. But only four of them have more followers on LinkedIn then they have on Facebook for example. This make us conclude that there is no correlation between the amount of followers businesses have and which social networking site they find most useful.

Research indicate that LinkedIn is seen as the most useful social networking site for businesses (Siamagka et al., 2015). This is because LinkedIn is more focused on work environment (Ibid). Moreover, shareholders and managers favour LinkedIn, since it is more serious than other social networking sites (Ibid). Zsolt and Miklos (2014) indicate that the industrial sector follower base mostly consist of shareholders, business partners and customers. This make LinkedIn as the most useful social networking site since businesses can target fellow employees, business partners or write posts that are to their shareholders (Ibid).

Although as the individuals working within the businesses might have there own profiles on social networking sites, a dilemma that might occur for this individuals is what to post. As their followers can be a wide mix of customers, business partners, co-workers and private friends it can be difficult for these individuals. This may be the case, since it can be an extension of the business they are working at. Not every post or text may not be fully appropriate to post on their social networking sites.

6. Conclusion

In the previous chapters the thesis has gone over the results and the analysis of the findings, in this chapter the study will conclude with a reflection of the purpose and the research questions.
The objective of this study has been to look into why industrial B2B businesses within Sweden have adopted social media in order to strengthen previous research and gain new insight to why a specific industry adopted social media. The benefits and barriers that comes with adopting social media were also examined. This was done in order to see what main benefits and barriers social media bring as well as to see if the benefits outweigh the barriers. The study also looked into which social networking sites that was mostly used and which social networking sites that is most helpful for the participating businesses. This was examined to help practitioners get knowledge into which social networking sites that was most useful for the B2B sector.

The study focused on the industrial sector as previous research has pointed out that this specific sector has been slower to adopting social media. This is because their customers reluctant view of social media, as well as that some decision makers find social media to not provide benefits to the business (Veldeman, Van Praet and Mechant, 2017; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011). This study has shown various reasons to why B2B businesses should adopt social media as well as substantial benefits for B2B businesses to adopt and use social media are presented.

As this study has collected empirical data from 10 industrial businesses that have adopted social media, this study has reached its aim of answering the four research questions that the was set out to do. Discovered throughout the study was three main reasons to why participating businesses have adopted social media, the findings include: pressure from stakeholders and customers, to reach target customers and because of marketing purposes, this answers the study’s first research question. The benefits and the barriers of adopting and using social media are somewhat similar as the results of the main benefit is the fast and easy communication with followers and one of the main barriers is the negative comments that a businesses can get from its followers. All of the interviewees gave a wide range of benefits that can come when using social media. As for the barriers, there were some barriers expressed from a couple of participants. Although not all of them could come up with factors that would be seen as a barrier. The barriers expressed are important as they can have a huge impact on a business. The conclusion from this study would be that the benefits outweigh the barriers. This is
because there are more benefits expressed by the practitioners than barriers. Researchers have also indicated the importance of using social media in today's environment. Most businesses will see more benefits than barriers when adopting and using social media. Although it should be noted that there are dependent variables that could cause a business to see more barriers than benefits. Variables such as a specific industry that a business is in or if a business have the right knowledge may impact a business when adopting social media.

As of the answers collected from the practitioners and from the literature review, question number four has a clear answer as 80 percent of the participants have answered LinkedIn as the most useful social networking site. As well as academics have confirmed that LinkedIn is the most suitable platform for B2B businesses to use.

7. Discussion

The following chapter will present the thesis’ theoretical and practical contribution in the academic field of marketing. Limitations and suggestions for future research will also be presented.

7.1 Theoretical contribution

The thesis has contributed to the theoretical field by looking into the industrial industry in Sweden. This ties into the goal with this study, which is to provide new perceptiveness in the academic field such as additional knowledge that can be a basis for future research. As authors such as Siamagka et al. (2015) have called for more research about social media adoption within specific industry, this study’s research questions have given insight into the aim as well as provided additional information about why industrial businesses are adopting social media. Also the study shines light on specific barriers and benefits of adopting and using social media according to the practitioners and the study has also identified which social media networks the participants found to be most useful within their field.

As previous studies have indicated that that the industrial industry is seen as more old fashioned, this study provides new knowledge that are in line with that statements as well as this study presents contradictory statements made by the interviewed practitioners.
As the study has progresses future research ideas have come to exist, see more in 7.4 suggestion future research.

7.2 Practical contribution
The authors hope that the thesis can come to use for practitioners working within the industrial sector or business field in Sweden. For businesses’ general efficiency and profitability, marketers, management and businesses have an opportunity to alter or improve their usage of social media for marketing purposes after reading this thesis. Furthermore, practitioners can gain an advantage since they have the possibility of identifying various aspects that later on may improve themselves or their businesses by being more efficient and profitable.

Furthermore, the interviewees explained their own thoughts of using social media and what challenges versus benefits social media give their business. This led to RQ2 and RQ3.

7.3 Limitations
The aim of this study has been reached although there have been some limitations that could not be avoided. The time of this study has been a major limitation since the authors had to abide by a strict deadline. The sampling size for this study was 10 practitioners from the industrial sector. However, the aim was to have at least have 15 practitioners in order to get a broader perspective from the industry. The length of the interviews has been quite short. If the authors would have had more time for this study, more follow-up interviews could have been conducted, which could have provided more in-depth data.

The collection of data has been through telephone and Skype interviews with one exception of one participant. This form of data collecting can be seen as a limitation since the authors would have preferred to conduct all of the interviews face-to-face in order to see the participants body language and to establish a better connection with the interviewees.

As argued in the beginning of this study, there is plenty of research on social media although there is not an abundance of research of social media adoption in a specific
industry. Another limitation of this study is therefore the lack of research within the studied field. This can have a negative impact on this study as more research could have strengthen the theoretical information used for this report.

7.4 Suggestions for future research
This research has provided practitioners and academics with useful information in the field of social media within the swedish industrial industry. The authors found new and relevant information about the topic of social media and social media adoption. Although, more research is needed within the field since this study did limit itself to only look at Sweden’s industrial sector. The authors recommend future research of social media within another sector or country.

This study used a qualitative method to gather data. However, as noted in 7.3 limitations, the sampling size was rather small. It would therefore be interesting to conduct a study with a larger sampling size to see if similar results will be found achieved.

Another interesting aspect would be to use a quantitative methodology to gather empirical data. Lacka and Chong (2016) and Siamagka et al (2015) have previously used this method when researching social media adoption, but as noted by Siamagka et al (2015) there has been a research gap within the Swedish industrial sector. While this study has contributed towards closing this gap, it has been done by using a qualitative method rather than taking a quantitative approach.

As this study did not look into the age of the participants a suggestion for further studies would be to look into if the age of the participants would have an impact. As the younger generation that has been using technology for the most part of their life are going to be the majority of staff that business have, it would be interesting to investigate this further.
References


9. Investopedia, (ND)


**Personal communication:**

1. Gustav, 04-19-2018, Company A
2. Erik, 04-05-2018, Company B
3. Filip, 03-26-2018, Company C
4. Eva, 04-12-2018, Company D
5. Rebecka, 04-19-2018, Company E
7. Carl, 03-23-2018, Company g
8. Peter, 05-02-2018, Company H
10. Anders, 04-13-2018, Company J

**Appendices:**

1.1 Appendices 1.0 Questionnaire English

**Social media and social networks:**

1. What is the first thing you think of when I say social media?
2. Why do you think B2B companies use social media?
3. When did your company start using social media?
4. How many people are using social media in your company?
5. What were the reasons for using social media?
6. How would you describe that you are using social media today?
7. What is your goal of using social media?
8. How have you chosen to use social media in the form of digital marketing? What / which are the best?

9. When I say social networking, what's the first thing you think of then?

10. What social networks are using your company?

**Adoption:**

11. Has your company chosen to start using social media? Why / Why not?

12. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using social media?

13. Is there any part of social media you think might be difficult to implement for your business?

14. What is important to keep in mind when adopting social media?

15. What actions are most important for a company to be able to use social media successfully and effectively?

**Usage:**

16. In what way do you think B2B companies will use social media for marketing purposes in the coming years?

**Other:**

17. Is there anything you want to add as I've missed?

1.2 Appendices 2.0 Questionnaire Swedish:

1. Vad är det första du tänker på när jag säger sociala medier?

2. Varför tror du att B2B företag använder sociala medier?

3. När började ditt företag använda sociala medier?

4. Hur många använder sig av sociala medier på ert företag?

5. Vilka anledningar var det som fick er att börja använda sociala medier?

6. Hur skulle du beskriva att ni använder er av sociala medier idag?

7. Vad är ert mål med att använda sociala medier?

8. Hur har ni valt att använda sociala medier i form av digital marknadsföring? Vad/ vilka är bäst?

9. När jag säger sociala nätverk, vad är det första du tänker på då?

10. Vilka sociala nätverk använder ert företag?
Adoption:
11. Har ditt företag valt att börja använda sociala medier? Varför/ Varför inte?
12. Vad är fördelarna respektive nackdelarna med att börja använda sociala medier?
13. Finns det någon del av sociala medier du tror kan vara svår att genomföra för ditt företag?
14. Vad är viktigt att ha i åtanke när man adopterar sociala medier?
15. Vilka åtgärder är viktigast för att ett företag framgångsrikt och effektivt ska kunna använda sig av sociala medier?

Användande:
16. På vilket/ vilka sätt tror du att B2B-företag kommer att använda sig av sociala medier i marknadsföringssyfte under de kommande åren?

Övrigt:
17. Finns det något du vill tillägga som jag har missat?