Enhancing Current Feedback Processes through Social Media Monitoring

An exploratory study of Social Media and Social Media monitoring practices within an MNC looking to combine new practices with traditional customer-centric processes.

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Fredrik Bergstrand & Emily A. Finlaw
“Today, everything is about **Social Media**”

- Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein

“*Just as the eyes are the windows to the soul, business intelligence is a window to the dynamics of a business*”

- Cindi Howson

“[Social Media monitoring] *is not a car - but it is a vehicle for acquiring and sharing knowledge*”

- definition from Lexalytics, sited from Mike Marshall

“Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of **learning.**”

- Bill Gates

“**Knowledge is not good if you don’t apply it**”

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Acknowledgements

It is our pleasure to thank all those who made contributions to this thesis over the past few months and throughout this learning journey.

We would first like to thank Volvo Construction Equipment Region International for making this thesis possible. Thank you to Lars-Gunnar Larsson and Hanna Bragberg for creating a cutting-edge topic which has manifested into the inspiration for this thesis. Additionally, we would like to give a special thanks to Hanna Bragberg for acting as our company representative throughout this thesis. Without her extensive correspondence and inside intelligence, this thesis would not have been possible.

We would also like to thank all those who made our empirical studies credible. This thesis would not have been complete without the cooperation from Social Media monitoring services, Volvo Construction Equipment Region International employees and industry experts.

We would like to extend our deepest and sincere thanks to our supervisor, Professor Hans Jansson. It has been an honor to work with him and learn from his insight throughout this challenging assignment. His encouragement and constructive criticism have made this thesis what it currently is today.

Finally, we would like to show our gratitude to our friends and families for their endless support during this experience.

_______________

Fredrik Bergstrand

Emily A. Finlaw
Abstract

This thesis provides an understanding of Social Media monitoring as a business intelligence system and how a multinational corporation can use these processes to complement existing traditional feedback processes. The purpose of this thesis is to provide the reader with a literature review of Social Media and Social Media monitoring, and an exploratory study of Social Media monitoring practices within a multinational corporation looking to integrate these systems.

The chosen research strategy is a case study with single-case embedded analysis. The case company used for this practice is Volvo Construction Equipment Region International with headquarters in Eskilstuna, Sweden. In order to receive a more in-depth understanding from our respondents, the qualitative method was selected.

The theoretical framework chapter discusses five major research areas including Customer Relationship Management, Social Media and Social Media monitoring, Intelligence, knowledge management and organizational learning.

The empirical evidence chapter has been divided into two sections: internal findings and external findings. The internal findings focus on Volvo Construction Equipment Region International and the company’s current feedback process. The external findings focus on the comparison between Social Media monitoring companies.

The analysis links together the internal and external findings from the empirical section and also draws references to the theoretical framework.

The conclusion of this thesis states how a multinational corporation can add value to current feedback processes through the use of Social Media monitoring. This is reached through addressing the purpose of this thesis and answering the main research question and the sub research questions. Social Media monitoring can add value to current feedback processes through reducing time, fostering customer relationships, increasing flexibility, and receiving feedback from non-customers. Social Media monitoring when used effectively, can act as a complement to traditional customer feedback collection methods.

Recommendations are made specifically for Volvo Construction Equipment Region International and are based upon an entry strategy with Social Media monitoring. Since this thesis was written within a limited time period, further research areas are presented at the end of the work.

Keywords: Social Media, Social Media monitoring, Customer Relationship Management, Intelligence, Knowledge Management, Data, Information, Knowledge, Organizational Learning
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACSM</td>
<td>Area Customer Support Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASM</td>
<td>Area Sales Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2B</td>
<td>Business to Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2C</td>
<td>Business to Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BI</td>
<td>Business Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFF</td>
<td>Care for Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>Customer Relationship Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSS</td>
<td>Customer Satisfaction Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KM</td>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNC</td>
<td>Multinational Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region International</td>
<td>Volvo Construction Equipment Region International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Relationship Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Real Simple Syndication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNS</td>
<td>Social Network Sites / Social Networking Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOD</td>
<td>Target of Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volvo CE</td>
<td>Volvo Construction Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vo.I.S.</td>
<td>Volume, Influence, Sentiment</td>
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Chapter one will introduce the need for a more customer-centric focus through Social Media monitoring within an MNC. It will identify the case company – Volvo Construction Equipment Region International, state the research questions this thesis aims to answer and give an outline for the remainder of the paper.
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Customer demand for specialized attention is becoming increasingly important as industries become more competitive. Standardized or mass-produced marketing techniques are decreasing, and consumers are looking for tailor-made solutions that fit their individual needs. Multinational corporations (MNCs) are also realizing that the cost of acquiring a new customer is more expensive than retaining their existing customers (Almqvist et al., 2002). According to Mercer marketplace survey as cited in Sudhir (2004, p. 44), “establishing and maintaining customer relationships will be the single greatest source of competitive advantage in the 21st century.”

A customer-centric focus helps MNCs to stay competitive (Sudhir, 2004). One example is through feedback procedures which allow a MNC to provide tailor-made solutions to their customers by hearing their first-hand concerns and comments. Some traditional forms of feedback include surveys via phone, email, or an outside service provider. Although feedback processes are not a new trend, the growth of multichannel feedback is up and coming among MNCs. One channel communication, or content publishing on company websites for example, allowed companies to publish what they wanted the customers to know about their company. However, with the introduction of Web 2.0 in 2004, companies could no longer control what was published about them online. Instead, all Internet users had the ability to publish feedback or other information on the Internet in the form of blogs or wikis. (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010)

1.2 Problem Discussion

Multichannel solutions, such as Social Media, are now creating even more ways for the company to hear from customers and make changes in less time than traditional feedback processes. Social Media is defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.” Additionally, the authors agree that Social Media is ever-changing and new sites appear online every day.

In order to better understand Social Media monitoring, it is first important to understand the different platforms of Social Media. Understanding the origins of information collected from Social Media monitoring helps the company to better understand the context of the feedback
and thus helps to understand the feedback itself. Fischer and Reuber (2010) identify the types of Social Media as social networking, social bookmarking, video-sharing, picture-sharing, professional networking, user forums, blog and micro blogging. This paper will focus on the sub-platforms of Social Media including blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Wikipedia.

Interestingly enough, there are strong linkages between the Social Media platforms. It is possible to share a link to YouTube through blogs or social networking sites (SNS) (Paolillo, 2008). Therefore, many of the Social Media platforms are interconnected causing a faster distribution of information between users.

According to Forester Research, as cited in Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), 75 percent of Internet users participated in Social Media in 2008, up from 56 percent in 2007. This included joining SNS, reading or writing blogs and writing reviews on shopping sites. In this way, buyers are influenced by the opinions of other customers as stated by Chu et al. (2010, p. 661):

*Corporations would like to know what the latest trends are in society today, governments need to know how policies are being received amongst the general population, and private citizens often are simply interested in knowing what their peers are thinking about.*

Due to the complex nature of Social Media, it is impossible for companies to keep track of all feedback from customers posted on the Internet. Independent Social Media monitoring companies offer tools to scan the Internet and gather data and information about what is said on the web. These companies operate in a number of different ways generating different forms of data or information, specializing in different areas and charging a wide range of prices.

The process of Social Media monitoring is argued to have more and more significance for a MNC. Traditionally, business to consumer (B2C) companies have used Social Media monitoring tools to learn about customer demands. However, more and more business to business (B2B) companies are also seeking the assistance of these tools to ‘get inside the heads’ of their customers and improve their products and services.
Social Media monitoring tools can be defined as the independent companies which provide Social Media monitoring services. Murray Newlands (2011), an industry expert states “they [Social Media monitoring tools] empower you to monitor and listen and then proactively engage with your consumers at the right points and at the right times.”

The importance of scanning the Internet and collecting feedback from various sites is only the first step in generating value from Social Media monitoring. The form of feedback collected, whether raw data or information, and how the MNC integrates the feedback back into the company is also vital to generating value from the process. Corner et al. (1997), explain that knowledge only becomes knowledge when data or information is interpreted by the receiver. The MNCs use of the information generated from Social Media monitoring is equally as important as the content itself. In Dixon’s (1999) four steps to organizational learning, she describes the way for a company to participate in collective learning and convert information into working knowledge for the organization. These steps begin with the generation of widespread information, or Social Media monitoring, and end with measuring the results.

It is also important for the MNC to know the purpose of their Social Media monitoring efforts (Fresh Networks Social Media Influences Report, 2010). For example, some companies use Social Media monitoring tools for brand management, others for public relations, and others for marketing (Newlands, 2011). Depending on the desired end result, different Social Media monitoring tools can be used. As stated by Newlands (2011), both monitoring the information and listening to the information are important for the MNC. Listening involves turning the information into collective knowledge within the MNC and applying it to useful ends.

1.3 The Case Company
Volvo Group is a world leader in commercial transport solutions including construction equipment, trucks, buses, drive systems for marine and industrial applications, and aircraft engine components. Volvo Group has over 100,000 employees with production facilities in 25 countries and sales activities in more than 180 countries. The core values of ‘quality, safety, and environmental care’ are emphasized in all parts of Volvo Group. (Volvo CE website)

Volvo Construction Equipment (Volvo CE) was established in 1832 and is a part of Volvo Group. The company has more than 17,000 employees and manufactures equipment for
construction and related industries in more than 125 markets. The company’s product line includes articulated haulers, wheel loaders, wheeled and crawler excavators, graders, pavers, asphalt cutters and rollers and compact machines that are comprised of wheel loaders, excavators, backhoe loaders and skid steer loaders. In 2009, the company accounted for 16 percent of Volvo Group’s total net sales. (Volvo CE website)

This thesis will focus on one of the four regional units of Volvo CE, Volvo Construction Equipment Region International (Region International). Region International, shown in the dark areas in Figure 1, is headquartered in Eskilstuna, Sweden and is responsible for markets in Africa, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Middle East, Oceania, and Latin America. Many of Region International’s customers are independent dealers and have been purchasing from the company for years. Although the company occasionally sells directly to the end user, most customers are dealers. Region International’s dealers range from large multinational companies to small, family-run businesses. The company fosters ‘The Volvo Way’, a culture of trust, respect and co-operation between the company and their customers, by creating a continual dialogue with customers. Region International relies on feedback processes from customers to ensure the company is delivering quality products and services. (Volvo Corporate brochure, 2008)

Region International currently has well defined processes for structured feedback from dealers and customers, as well as in relation to competitors. The primary structured feedback derives from regular surveys from an outside market research company and includes the following:
• Brand Tracking Surveys, \textit{conducted yearly}
• Competitive Satisfaction Surveys, \textit{conducted yearly}
• Customer Satisfaction Surveys (CSS), \textit{conducted quarterly}
• Dealer Satisfaction Surveys, \textit{conducted yearly}

1.4 Research Background
Although Region International is satisfied with the surveys, the company would like to explore new customer feedback possibilities with less turnaround time. Less time between the customer giving feedback and the company receiving the feedback will allow the company to efficiently drive more timely improvements. This can improve short-term feedback and long-term relations between the MNC and the customer.

Currently, Region International is not actively using Social Media monitoring to capture additional and more spontaneous feedback from customers. The organization is searching for additional business intelligence (BI) or market research tactics with focus on Social Media monitoring.

1.5 Research Problem
The ease of online publishing has led to an explosion of customer reviews and opinions on the Internet (Lo and Potdar, 2009). Therefore, MNCs are in need of a monitoring function to hear, listen and measure feedback on the Internet.

Since customers are now using Social Media to convey their attitudes and feelings toward products, they expect a smaller response time (Ostrowski, 2010). The need for timely customer feedback is becoming important for MNCs to remain competitive in the industry.
1.6 Research Questions

Based on the discussions above, the following research questions have been developed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Research Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How can a MNC add value to current feedback processes through the use of Social Media monitoring?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sub-research Question 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How can a MNC use Social Media monitoring to gain constructive customer feedback?</td>
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<th>Sub-research Question 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How can a MNC compare Social Media monitoring companies?</td>
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<th>Sub-research Question 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How can a MNC use Social Media monitoring effectively?</td>
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</table>

1.7 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a MNC with an overview of Social Media and Social Media monitoring (literature review) based from feedback processes between the organization and the customer. More specifically, the paper will

- explore how to best utilize feedback from Social Media monitoring BI systems,
- identify and explain current feedback processes concerning B2B relations with emphasis on the end-user, and
- combine existing feedback processes with feedback generated from Social Media monitoring and analyze the benefits from implementing BI based on Social Media monitoring.
1.8 Delimitations

- *Focus on customer-related feedback*
  All feedback derived from dealers and competitors will be excluded. Customer feedback will include the current CSS process and Social Media monitoring from customers. Customers are defined as end-users.

- *Exclude all Social Media marketing techniques*
  Region International is seeking a way to view and measure the current feedback on the Internet from customers. Therefore, this thesis will not address any Social Media marketing alternatives for the company.

- *Focus on MNC looking to enter into Social Media monitoring*
  This paper does not discuss MNCs who are currently using Social Media monitoring.
# 1.9 Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 - INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>2 - METHODOLOGY</th>
<th>3 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Chapter one will introduce the need for a more customer-centric focus through Social Media monitoring within an MNC. It will identify the case company – Volvo CE Region International, state the research questions this thesis aims to answer and give an outline for the remainder of the paper.</td>
<td>• Chapter two will identify and describe the chosen research methods for this paper. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with information so he/she can interpret the plausibility and generalization of the results in the thesis.</td>
<td>• Chapter three will identify and describe the theory needed to support this thesis.</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>4 - EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE</th>
<th>5 - ANALYSIS</th>
<th>6 - CONCLUSIONS</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>• Chapter four will present all empirical findings relevant to this study. Findings include internal evidence from Region International as well as external evidence conducted through Social Media monitoring companies and industry experts.</td>
<td>• Chapter five will develop an analysis between the theoretical framework and empirical findings. Further, it will incorporate the case company with the empirical findings and describe the place of Social Media monitoring within Region International.</td>
<td>• Chapter six will re-explore the purpose of this thesis and answer the initial research questions. Conclusions will be identified based on preceding chapters.</td>
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<th>7 - RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>8 - FURTHER RESEARCH AREAS</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Chapter seven will identify and explain recommendations to Regional International based on a thorough analysis of the theoretical framework and empirical findings. This chapter will also link company recommendations to conclusions.</td>
<td>• Chapter Eight will identify points of further research for Region International that corresponds to Social Media monitoring.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter two will identify and describe the chosen research methods for this paper. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with information so he/she can interpret the plausibility and generalization of the results in the thesis.
2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Strategy

In Yin (2009), five different research strategies are represented. They are experiment, survey, archival analysis, history, and case study as shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Form of research question</th>
<th>Requires control of behavior events?</th>
<th>Focuses on contemporary events?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>How, Why</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Who, What, Where, How many, How much</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival analysis</td>
<td>Who, What, Where, How many, How much</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>How, Why</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>How, Why</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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Table 1 - Different Research Strategies
(Source: Yin, 2009)

We will focus on a case study as the research strategy in this thesis. We believe asking questions such as ‘how’ and ‘why’, will help us to reach a deeper understanding within our subject. This would not have been possible through using experiment as our research strategy, for example. Yin (2009) argues that if you cannot distinguish the phenomena from its context and you investigate a contemporary phenomenon, the case study is the appropriate method to use. Dubois and Gadde (2002) further strengthen our choice by describing how theories can be developed through in-depth analysis of the empirical material and context when using case study as the research strategy. This is also supported by Gomm et al. (2002) who argue that more data can be collected per case when the researchers choose to investigate a smaller number of cases. This subject is best investigated by case study. If the subject would be studied through another method, the research questions and the purpose of the study would be changed.
Yin (2009) further divided the case study into four different parts as seen in the Figure 2.

![Figure 2 - Four Different Parts of Case Study (Source: Yin, 2009)]

Single-case approach means that you are only studying one case company and multiple-case means that you are studying more than one case company. The holistic approach means that you are only studying one unit within the company and the embedded means that you are studying more than one unit within the company (Yin, 2009). Our intention is to study Volvo CE as a single-case. We will also focus on Region International as our primary target within Volvo CE. The other three regional units including Europe, North America and Asia will not be the primary focus of this paper. Our topic is Social Media and Social Media monitoring, and therefore due to the nature of the Internet, it is hard to draw a straight line between the brands within Volvo CE. The reason is that Internet users may confuse the different Volvo brands or they may not explicitly spell out Volvo Construction Equipment Region International. Therefore, our research strategy is the single-case embedded approach.

2.2 Scientific Approach
Theory and empirical evidence can be related in three different ways including deduction, induction and abduction. In deductive research, there are starting points such as existing theories or concepts. In inductive research, the researcher starts with ‘real-world data’. Inductive research generates mostly new theory when deductive research is testing the existing theory. The difference between research methods is normally the starting point, after which, the research tends to switch between the two into abduction (Gummesson, 2000). Dubois and Gadde (2002) argue that theories, empiric material and the case analysis evolve simultaneously. The authors emphasize the usefulness of this method for developing new theories. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008) agree and add that abduction should be the selected method of use when doing a case study. According to Dubois and Gadde (2002, p.5), an ongoing movement between the empirical and the model world is called systematic
combining. They describe systematic combining as “a nonlinear, path-dependent process of combining efforts with the ultimate objective of matching theory and reality.” We will be using the abduction approach throughout our research. However, our starting point is considered more deductive than inductive since we began our study with collecting existing theories for the theoretical framework. We will also work according to systematic combining, as described in Dubois and Gadde (2002) as moving simultaneously between the theoretical and the empirical work.

Kumar (2005) explains that a research study can be classified as descriptive, correlation, explanatory or exploratory. We will use the exploratory research study because there is little known about the area we are going to explore. The subjects ‘Social Media’ and ‘Social Media monitoring’ are both new and ever-changing, and Region International is not currently participating in any Social Media efforts. Since both subjects are ever-changing and we have had continuous discussions with Region International about the topic area, our research questions and hypothesis were not finalized when we began collecting data. As stated by Yin (2003), this is common in the exploratory method used in case studies.

2.3 Research Method

Bryman and Bell (2005) argue that there are two different research methods, the qualitative and the quantitative. The authors’ view is that the participant is in control in qualitative research because it allows the participant to distinguish what is important and what is not. This also affects the final results. Creswell (2009) simply divides the research methods by noting that qualitative is using words and quantitative is using numbers. In our thesis, we will use the qualitative method because it will allow us to gain a deeper knowledge within the subject, something that is not possible with a quantitative research.

Merriam (2009) also mentions that the primary instrument for qualitative research is the researcher, to collect and analyze data. Patton (2001) argues how the qualitative material can be divided into three groups: in-depth analysis, direct observations and written documents. Since our focus is not an experiment of any kind, direct observations will not be used in our case.

If we instead would have chosen the quantitative research method as our primary research method, we would have collected a large amount of data but not received any detailed
information. Therefore, we do not think we would be able to draw the conclusions we expect by applying a quantitative perspective. Our choice to conduct open-ended question interviews has allowed us to collect a deeper understanding from our respondents that would not have been possible by doing surveys with limited answers.

2.4 Data Collection

Interviews, questionnaires, panels, observations, documents and databases are, according to Fisher (2010), the most common forms of collecting data. Remenyi (2002) refers to interviews as a primary source, because the researcher asks the originator of evidence. The author defines the other type of data as secondary data, for example data that is received through publications. Bryman and Bell (2005), state that a major advantage of collecting secondary data is because it is faster to collect then primary data.

In our research, we will collect our own data through interviews. The majority of the information about Volvo Group, Volvo CE and Region International as well as the CSS process, was gathered through internal documents provided by Region International. Our theoretical framework was mainly collected from literature, websites and articles. Due to the nature of Social Media monitoring, there was little theory available about the subject. Therefore, we have cited Social Media expert, Murray Newlands. Newlands has a Social Media monitoring book available online where we collected information for this thesis. Newlands is working as a consultant for Social Media, he runs an international Social Media marketing firm and is a popular speaker about Social Media. He also runs a successful blog about the subject.

Data collected from Social Media monitoring companies were mainly collected from each company’s website. If information was not available on their website, we called each company or e-mailed them directly. Our choice to call or e-mail the companies was dependent on the contact information available on their website.

Apart from the material provided from Region International and our interviews, we collected empirical evidence through watching experts speak at the Social 2011 through an online video, a Social Media conference in Boston, USA. Both Paul Greenberg and Mitch Joel were Key Note Speakers at the conference on April 7th – 8th, 2011. Paul Greenberg is a bestselling CRM author, President of 56 Group (a customer strategy consulting firm), Executive Vice-
President of a CRM association and a well-known blogger about CRM and Social Media. Mitch Joel has been called the “Rock Star of Digital Marketing” by Marketing Magazine. He has written a New York Times Best Seller, is considered one of the most influential people within Blog Marketing, and is one of the top 100 online marketers in the world.

We collected a large portion of our research through secondary sources. Some risks with secondary data are worth mentioning. Since we did not collect the data from the originator of evidence, it is possible that the data was collected for another purpose than our own. Additionally, it is possible we have interpreted the data in a different way than originally intended. When collecting secondary data it is also important to be critical of the sources and from where the information is collected. We tried to collect the majority of our research from well-known authors in books and articles. In the cases where we collected information from a website, we attempted to double check or at least critically review the information.

Yin (2009) has a slightly different way of describing data collection then Fisher (2010). He argues that case studies have six sources of evidence including: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artifact. Even if all of them may be useful, documentation is the most relevant in our case. Documentation can be anything from articles, to letters, to news clips. The strengths of collecting data from documentation are that they are stable, unobtrusive and exact. This means that it is possible to review the documents again and they contain the exact names and references. Some possible weaknesses are difficulty locating the research material or that the research material is biased to another study. Yin (2009) further describes three important principals when collecting data to a case study: to use multiple sources of evidence, to create a case study database and to maintain a chain of evidence. In our thesis, there were multiple documents and more than one interview used for data collection.

2.5 Sample Selection
There are two different basic kinds of sampling, probability that is a random sampling and non-probability that is not random. The most common for qualitative research is the non-probability sampling, where sampling sources are not selected randomly (Merriam, 2009). In this thesis, we did not use a random sampling method because each respondent was selected based on their knowledge about the subject or the case company. In qualitative studies, Trost (2005) argues that researchers do not find it interesting to have a representative selection.
2.5.1 Interviews

An interview can be open, pre-coded or semi-structured. In the open interview, the respondent is in control. In a pre-coded interview, the researcher is in control, and in semi-structured interviews, it is a combination of the two (Fisher, 2010). Our interviews were semi-structured since we used a template of questions but also allowed our respondents to speak freely about the subject matter. If the respondents deviated from our research area, we led them back without pushing them in a certain direction, which Creswell (2009) argues that an interviewer should do in a qualitative research.

Yin (2009) argues how important it is for the interviewer to be unbiased in the way questions are asked. Our questions were fairly open, we attempted to avoid any yes/no questions and we also did not ask questions where we wanted a specific answer from our respondents. Also, we sent our respondents the questions through email before the interview. We believe by sending the questions before the interview, the respondents were more prepared and could give more thoughtful answers to each question. This is compared to routine answers that may have been the case if the respondents did not have time to think through the questions beforehand.

Trost (2005) argues that the number of interviews should be limited to eight, otherwise the material will be hard to control. Travers (2001) claims that the numbers of interviews you conduct are mostly dependent on the time available. The number of in-depth interviews we conducted was four. Since this area is new and has not yet been explored by Region International, it was not necessary to interview employees in the company about Social Media monitoring. Instead, the focus of the interviews with Region International was on how the company can utilize the feedback they collect from Social Media monitoring and integrate it into their organization. We interviewed three people from different departments within Region International. The interviews with Region International were conducted at the Region International headquarters in Eskilstuna, Sweden.

Hanna Bragberg is working as Process Leader Core Value Support. She has been working within Region International for four years with tasks including Total Quality Management, project coordination, and the CSS surveys.
Camilla Gustafson has been working within Region International for three and a half years within the area of marketing. When she started she was alone in the marketing department but it has now grown to four people. She works as the external communication manager and with brand management at dealer facilities.

Gökhan Kenar started at Volvo CE in Turkey in 2005. He moved to Eskilstuna in 2008 to become the Regional Business Manager for Turkey. Since 2010, he has worked as the Area Sales Manager (ASM) for Turkey.

Most of the experts within Social Media monitoring are working for Social Media monitoring companies and therefore, would be subjective in the need of a Social Media monitoring tool. However, we conducted an interview with Susanna Wall who is currently working for the B2B company Runelandhs Försäljnings AB as Business Unit Director - Web. Since she is not currently working for a Social Media monitoring service, her answers about Social Media and Social Media monitoring were objective. Wall, with an education from Hyper Island, worked with the Swedish Social Media site Lunarstorm for four years. This included the peak of the site when it was the most popular site in Sweden. During these years she saw the explosion of Social Media and Social Media monitoring. She also realized how companies started to integrate with Social Media. The interview with Wall was conducted in person at Runelandhs Försäljnings office in Kalmar, Sweden.

In our research, it would be possible to interview more people who are considered to be experts to gain a greater perspective on the problem. However, as stated earlier, these problems are new and it is difficult to find representatives who are objective.

2.6 Quality of Research Designs

Yin (2009) describes how four tests have been commonly used for measuring the quality of case studies; these tests include: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. In our paper, we believe it is important to ensure high quality research. Therefore, we will strive to reach high internal and external validity, and reliability through our research. Additionally, Creswell (2009) states that validity and reliability in qualitative research is not as important as in quantitative research. Since Fisher (2010, p. 272) describes construct validity as something that “refers particularly to research that uses questionnaires or
inventories to assess whether a person or an organization exhibits a particular characteristics,” it will not be taken into consideration in our measurements.

2.6.1 Internal Validity

According to Merriam (2009, p.213) “internal validity deals with the question of how research match reality.” Yin (2009) states how explanatory studies are more dependent on internal validity then other studies. He argues that internal validity tries to explain how and why event X led to event Y. Although we are not conducting explanatory research, we are trying to reach high internal validity. We believe reading through our work several times, connecting different sections within the thesis and discussing in small opposition groups has helped us to achieve high internal validity. However, internal validity is often subjective to the reader of the paper.

Gomm (2002) states internal validity for a case study can be low if other researchers are questioning if the field notes support evidence in the way they interpret the situation. He further adds that these results may differ and a researcher should not expect the same results as those from previous studies. Merriam (2009) and Patton (2001) analyze triangulation as a way to increase internal validity. They refer to Denzin’s four types of triangulation from 1978 as the best description of how to increase internal validity. The first type is to use multiple methods of collecting data. In our research we collected data from documentations including websites, articles and books. We also collected much of our data from interviews and cross-reference the information from the company when possible. In the next type, multiple sources of data, we attempt to strengthen our arguments by finding theories that are supported from more than one researcher. The third aspect is to have multiple investigators. We are two researchers writing this thesis together and will critically review one another’s research to ensure we have understood the problem correctly. The final aspect includes multiple theories which are less common for qualitative research.

2.6.2 External Validity

Yin (2009) explains that external validity depends on the findings of a study and if they can be generalized. Fisher (2010) agrees with Yin (2009) and further explains that interpretations made by the researcher will work equally for other populations or contexts. Yin (2009) continues by explaining how single-case mostly offers poor basis for generalization.
We cannot make any generalizations about the results of our findings based on the discussion above. First, the subject in study is ever-changing and therefore, additional research on a similar topic can reach completely different results. The purpose of a qualitative case study is not to make generalizations, which would have been the case if the quantitative research would have been the method of choice.

However, Yin (2009) draws differences between the generalizations for surveys and for case studies. He argues that surveys are making statistical generalizations when case studies are making analytical generalizations. In the case of an analytical generalization, it is the researcher who is trying to generalize a specific set of results to a more general theory. In our research, we believe we have been able to draw some generalizations about the findings in our study.

2.6.3 Reliability
Yin (2009) argues that reliability is high if the same results occur when you repeat the study. Merriam (1998) agrees and explains reliability is often based on a single reality and therefore, would yield the same result if repeated.

In order to make our study as reliable as possible, we have attempted to find as many different references as possible that will strengthen our arguments. Patton (2001) argues how each qualitative study is unique and the analysis of it is therefore also unique. The reliability in our thesis is based upon today’s fact and reality. Therefore, it would be possible that a similar research will reach different conclusions if it is made at a different time. Since our study covers a relatively new phenomenon like Social Media, it is possible that major changes will happen within one or more of these areas. We have recorded our interviews and listened to them multiple times to ensure we understand and interpret each respondent’s text correctly.

Patton (2001) argues how the researcher needs to have a neutral view on the subject to be reliable. In our case, we did not have an opinion in a certain area before our studies; we did not favor any Social Media or Social Media monitoring companies.
2.7 Selection of Social Media

The way Social Media is divided and also defined depends mainly on the researchers. Social networks, blogs and micro blogs are frequently named as the most common forms. We decided to include video sharing sites and Wikis into the definition of Social Media. According to some researchers, all of these sites can also be considered as SNS, but we decided to divide them for the ease of use and to represent their different functions.

We decided to focus on the following sub platforms of Social Media:

- Blogs
- Facebook (SNS)
- Twitter (micro blog)
- YouTube (video-sharing, content community)
- Wikipedia (Wiki, collaborative project)

Our selections are based on the idea to pick the largest sites in each platform or type of Social Media. The site should also be representative of the world and therefore, be widely spread. Appendix A shows popular sites as Orkut, Qzone and Odnoklassiki. These sites are not taken into consideration because of their limited popularity. Orkut (Brazil and India), Qzone (China) and Odnoklassiki (Russia) are very popular in one or more countries but are not widely spread.

Authors also suggest that social bookmarking, picture sharing, professional networking, user forums, and podcasts should be included. We did not focus on social bookmarking (Digg), picture-sharing (Flickr) or professional networking (LinkedIn). The reason is that Facebook provides all these functions even if they only are seen as a SNS. Also, Facebook is bigger than all of them together. We also decided to exclude social worlds because of the limited research time.

2.8 Selection of Social Media Monitoring Companies

After initial research in various sources about Social Media, we have identified five different companies for our study. These were companies who responded to our inquiry and appear to be among the most popular or front runners in the industry. We initially identified six
companies but did not hear back from Synthesio in time to include it in our study. Each of these firms offers different Social Media monitoring alternatives. Thus, the purpose of this thesis is not to conclude or summarize the best possible Social Media monitoring company, because there are new players who appear on the market all the time. Instead, the purpose is more to provide what is needed from a Social Media monitoring company.

There are five Social Media monitoring companies that we have identified, researched and compared against one another. Each of the five monitoring companies offers different services to meet customer needs. The services identified are meant to represent the variety of resources available to MNCs looking for Social Media monitoring solutions at different price points. Therefore, we do not promote or discourage any of the Social Media monitoring services in this thesis. Rather, we hope to identify the needs of Region International, give them the tools to make an informed decision, and locate the best fit for their company. Different companies may find other resources valuable.

The five companies studied in this thesis are:

- Google Alerts
- Trackur
- Radian6
- Alterian
- Visible Technologies

2.9 Knowledge Process

As stated throughout the thesis, Social Media and Social Media monitoring are newly developed topics. These subjects are constantly changing and therefore, it was difficult to structure the whole process in the beginning of the thesis.

The theory collected in the beginning months made it possible for us to piece together and modify the thesis as we read more and understood more about the subject matter. As stated earlier in this chapter, we modified the research questions according to the abductive approach. When conducting the interviews we received answers and different angles on the
subject which helped us to narrow it down further. These parts helped us to narrow down the focus and finalize the thesis.

Our plan from January was to complete the thesis in the beginning of May. A preliminary thesis draft was handed in on the 9th of May, leaving two weeks for edits and final touches. The final version will be completed and handed in on the 23rd of May. The opposition of the thesis will take place the 27th of May and the final presentation for Region International will take place in Eskilstuna on the 30th of May. Since our interviews were conducted in the middle of April, it was possible to keep our time schedule.

2.10 Method Criticism
Conducting a qualitative case study has made us aware that we cannot make any generalizations about our findings as you can with quantitative. However, we received a deeper knowledge within the subject that would not have been possible when using a quantitative study. Furthermore, by doing a qualitative study we interpreted our respondent’s answers instead of comparing numbers, which is common in a quantitative study.

Researching a new area such as Social Media and Social Media monitoring also creates the possibility that new players are constantly entering the market. Therefore, our choice of Social Media sites and Social Media monitoring companies may be outdated or obsolete in the future.
Chapter three will identify and describe the theory needed to support this thesis.
3.0 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Customer Relationship Management

Relationship Marketing (RM) or Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is not a new phenomenon. Instead, Storbacka et al. (2005) argue that it was used in practice already before the industrial revolution when craftsmen controlled the whole production process. They lived in small villages where they knew all of their customers and could personalize and customize their products. This was an early version of CRM that was in use until mass-production started in the end of the 1800’s. Christopher et al. (1991) realize it was first in the 1990’s when RM increased awareness for companies on a greater scale. The authors argue that the process is striving from an exchange or transaction perspective towards a relationship perspective. The move from transaction to relations is supported by both Grönroos (2002) and Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995). Grönroos (2002) argues that the perspectives are creating value in different ways. The transaction focuses on changing goods or services against money when the relation is more to create a value for both the customer and supplier through collaboration between them. Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) created a model as shown in Figure 3, where the view has changed from a value distribution and outcome-focused perspective, towards a value creation process instead.

![Figure 3 - Paradigm Shift in Marketing Orientation](Source: Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995)
Hultman and Shaw (2003) further explain how the relationship perspective is not interested in the creation of a single or individual exchange. Instead, the focus is on the series of sequential transactions. The authors argue that RM is concerned with how to acquire, maintain and enhance relationships with customers.

According to Murphy et al. (2007) the move from a transactional into a relationship perspective has put more emphasis on trust, which is now seen as one of the most important elements for a long-term relationship. Auruškevičiene et al. (2007) and Sudhir (2004) strengthen this argument by explaining that long-term relationship-oriented marketing models are replacing the short-term oriented transactional perspective because they seem to be more profitable.

Unless you build relationships of trust with your customers, listen, learn, and respond to their changing needs, and empower your people to correct mistakes when they occur (not days or weeks after they have been measured), you will not establish an environment for long-lasting customer relationships. (Pollard, 1996, in Murphy et al., 2007, p. 2)

RM, according to Gummesson (2008), is marketing that emphasizes relations, networks and interactions. CRM is using the strategies and values from RM practically. The author further argues that the change from RM to CRM is already done in the real world but the term RM is still used in the literature. Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000) have noticed that RM and CRM are used interchangeably as terms in the literature. Gordon (1998), states that RM is a process where the company creates value with the customers and not just for them. Faed et al. (2010) argue that CRM is a business strategy for creating and maintaining long and profitable relationships. Pani and Vanugopal (2008, p.167) further define CRM as “a business strategy to select and manage the most valuable customer.” The authors further describe it is as a customer-centric philosophy/culture which support sales, marketing and service processes. Kim et al (2003, p.1) argue that “CRM is a broad term for managing business interactions with customers.” Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000) agree and mention that it is a comprehensive strategy to create superior value for the company during the process of acquiring, retaining and partnering with selective customers. The value creation is a process that builds partnering relationships with the most important and proactive customers. Storbacka et al.
(2005) argue that the goal with CRM is to create relationships with their customers and not only to make as much profit as possible. Kim et al. (2003) finalize the discussion when they explain that a move for an organization from a products-centric to a customer-centric philosophy is the essence of CRM.

Adopting a CRM system can be done for many different reasons, the most common is to improve customer retention and satisfaction. Most of the CRM implementations benefit the company more than their customers. The company also wants to find out how the customers interact with the company (Bolton, 2004). Almqvist (2002) states that the goal of CRM should be to acquire, retain, and develop the most valuable customers, not to increase loyalty by all customers. Companies enter into relational exchanges because they believe it will increase customer trust and that the benefits of the relations will exceed the costs. From the company’s point of view, stronger relational exchanges give them greater competitive advantage (Hunt et al. 2006).

Authors (Almqvist et al, 2002, Reinartz and Kumar, 2002, Chaffey et al, 2009) explain how companies realized the high cost of acquiring new customers and are therefore more willing to put extensive effort into keeping existing customers. The relations with loyal customers can be worth everything when the economy is slow and acquiring new customers is more difficult. Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000) agree and support it by mentioning that several studies have come to the same results, that acquiring new customers is more expensive than retaining existing customers. Chaffey et al. (2009) argue how many dot-com companies failed due to the expenditures of acquiring new customers instead of trying to keep existing ones. They further explain how the importance of long-term relationships has not changed due to the explosion of Internet. The authors suggest the introduction of the Internet has become electronic CRM. According to Sudhir (2004), sustainable competitive advantage can occur when companies realize that the customer-centric view is needed to stay competitive.

### 3.1.1 Advantages of CRM

Kim et al. (2003) have summarized from other authors some benefits of using CRM as increasing customer retention and loyalty, raising customer profitability, creating value for the customer, customizing products and services, and creating lower-process, higher quality products and services. To effectively use CRM, Almqvist (2002) divides them into four principles as seen in Table 2.
Four Principles for Effectively Using CRM

- Developing a customer value growth strategy to drive CRM
- Capturing and using the customer information that really matters
- Making value metrics the drumbeat for CRM initiatives
- Creating a dynamic learning organization to accelerate value growth

Table 2 - Four Principles for Effectively Using CRM
(Source: Almqvist, 2002)

The steps discussed in Table 2 include a customer-centric strategy and do not focus on technology. The second principle is for the company to solely focus on key customers and the information they need. Companies must also be able to measure and track what the CRM system is giving them in productivity and sales. Finally, an organization must be able to build customer knowledge systematically by test and learn processes.

3.1.2 Disadvantages of CRM

According to Sudhir (2004) the range of failing to reach the objectives for CRM projects falls between 60-80 percent. Almqvist (2002) analyzes many firms’ failures because they expect the technology to do the job for them. Bolton (2004) and Frow and Payne (2005) note that many failures occur when companies do not have a clear CRM strategy and they see CRM as an IT project. Sudhir (2004) has summarized the most common reasons for an unsatisfactory implementation in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Common Reasons for Unsatisfactory Implementation of CRM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 View CRM as a technology initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Lack of customer centric vision</td>
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<td>3 Insufficient appreciation of customer lifetime value</td>
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<td>4 Inadequate support from top management</td>
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<td>5 Underestimating the importance of change management</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Failing to re-engineer business processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Underestimating the difficulties involved in data mining and data integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 - Most Common Reasons for Unsatisfactory Implementation of CRM
(Source: Sudhir, 2004)
Sudhir (2004) further explains that CRM is successful because of the people within the organization and not the technology itself. CRM is not likely to succeed if the employees lack customer service skills. Bolton (2004), mentions that many organizations are only focusing on the technological part of implementing CRM. Therefore, they exclude the people, process and organizational changes that need to occur in order to make it successful.

3.2 Social Media and Social Media Monitoring Tools

Many experts agree that Social Media marketing and Social Media monitoring go hand-in-hand. They stress that understanding the platforms where feedback is written also helps to understand the context of the feedback itself.

3.2.1 Social Media

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Social Media is based upon the technological foundations of Web 2.0 and is a group of Internet-based applications that allow the exchange and creation of user generated content. Comm (2009, p.2) describes that the best definition of Social Media is “content that has been created by its audience.” Ostrowski (2010) argues how blogs, online gaming, knowledge sharing sites, chat rooms, newsgroups and social networking should be included in Social Media. Mayfield (2008) argues that Social Media share most of the characteristics of participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. Participation and openness mean that anyone who wants to join can join and share their feedback or comments. Conversation, community and connectedness can be seen as a two-way conversation where people are linked to each other through sites, friends, groups, and in other social ways. The ease of communication between members is also something that characterizes Social Media, adds Mayfield (2008). According to Asur and Huberman (2010) Social Media can change the public discourse in society and set trends because of its speed, reach and ease of use. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) agree and mention that Social Media require new ways of thinking because it is not an easy task but the potential benefits are many.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe Social Media as a lower cost and higher level of efficiency alternative than more traditional tools. They also state it allows the MNC to reach out to customers in less time and engage in contact with them. These advantages make it relevant for small firms to use as well as large MNCs. Horng (2010) agrees and mentions that many start-up companies are using SNS because of its low entry barrier. According to
Löfberg (2009) Social Media differs from traditional media in the way that users are both producers and consumers, often at the same time. Riegner (2007) adds to the differences by mentioning that the Internet and Social Media allow people to interact in a way that was not possible with traditional media. Gilbert and Karahalios (2009) mention that the Social Media is called ‘social’ because of the relationships it creates among users.

Mayfield (2008) states that there are six different kinds of Social Media including social networks such as Facebook, blogs, wikis (which allows people to add content) such as Wikipedia, Podcasts such as ITunes, Forums, Content communities such as Flickr and YouTube, and micro blogging such as Twitter. Fischer and Reuber (2010) differentiate between types of Social Media in another way. They divide it into social networking (Facebook), social bookmarking (Digg), video-sharing (YouTube), picture-sharing (Flickr), professional networking (LinkedIn), user forums, blog and micro blogging (Twitter).

Kozinets (1999) realized the importance of time spent on the Internet. He writes that a person will sooner or later join an online group if he is spending more and more time online. He continues by emphasizing that if an individual connects to an online community, the possibility for him to stay within the community sphere is likely. According to Forrester Research in Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Social Media was used by 75 percent of the Internet users by the second quarter of 2008. The percent in 2007 was only 56 percent. The authors also realized that the growth is not only within teenagers, instead, the age range between 33-44 years old is increasing more and more. Strategy analysts in Business Wire (2011) calculated the number of Social Media users to one billion in 2012. Worth mention is how Internetworldstats (2011) analyzed the number of Internet users in June 2010 to almost two billion, which is slightly less than one third of the world’s total population.

3.2.2 Social Network Sites
Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe SNS as applications. They explain that users can create profiles and connect to each other through instant message and e-mails. Mayfield (2008) adds that friends can communicate with each other and build personal web pages. Boyd and Ellison (2008) explain that the terms social network site and social networking site are used interchangeably. They also have three criteria for a site to be a SNS, it should allow individuals to
• construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system,
• articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and
• view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Boyd and Ellison (2008) write that most SNS support existing social relationships rather than new ones, even if exceptions exist. The authors further describe that many companies have invested money and time into SNS by creating, purchasing and advertising in them. Chaffey et al. (2009) describe how the sites are more for interactions by consumers, a so-called customer to customer site.

Gladwell (2002) describes in Cooke and Buckley (2008) that there are three important groups of people within social networks. They are called connectors, mavens and the salesmen; all three of them have the possibility to rapidly spread messages. The ‘connectors’ have many social contacts and can therefore easily spread a message rapidly. The ‘mavens’ are trusted since they evaluate information they are receiving before they are sending it out. There can be many mavens, in different fields. The third one is the ‘salesmen’, who is through his character a persuader even if he lacks of expertise in the particular areas.

3.2.2.1 Facebook

Facebook started in the beginning of 2004 as a social network available for Harvard Students only; it opened up for other networks in September 2005. The site is different from other SNS in two ways, applications on the site are normally created outside the company and users cannot make their profile public to all Internet users (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). Mayfield (2008) analyzes Facebook’s decision to let people develop applications and put them on the site as a part of the success.

According to Facebook factsheet (2011), the site has more than 500 million active users. Active users are defined as those who return within 30 days. This makes it by far the most popular SNS (see Appendix B). The average numbers of friends by a user is 130, which allows for fast message spreading through the ‘friend tells-a-friend’ effect. The factsheet further states that more than 2.5 million websites are integrated with Facebook, a number that is increasing with more than ten thousand daily.
3.2.2.2 YouTube

YouTube was not the first online channel that offered video sharing for Internet users. Thus, no site succeeded to create a site with YouTube’s easy-to-use platform. The site’s creators navigated through the problem that previous sites had with no connection between videos. YouTube succeeded to relate videos to each other and made it also possible to watch episodes after one another (Cheng et al., 2007). Paolillo (2008) defines YouTube primarily as a SNS, and that the video content is just an added feature for the site.

Paolillo (2008) argues that 65,000 videos were uploaded and the amount of views was over 100 million per day when it in 2006 sold to Google. The author continues to say that there are currently not any measurements available but he also notes that the popularity of the site has only increased. According to YouTube’s own FAQ (2011, a) there are more than 24 hours of video material uploaded every minute and they have hundreds of millions of users throughout the entire world.

3.2.2.3 Blog

Wahlström (2007) explains how the expression ‘blog’ is an abbreviation of weblog. Weblog on the other hand is merging between web and log – a diary or a log book on the Internet. According to Smudde (2005), a blog is to post something continuously on your own website. It can be an Internet link or your own ideas or opinions. Although blogs existed previously, Nardi et al. (2004) state that blogging in 1997 became what it is today. Blogpulse (2011) is keeping continuous track of the numbers of blogs available and has calculated them to almost 160 million. Marken (2005) emphasizes the importance of long-term commitment if you are starting a blog. It is also of importance to update it frequently, at least once a week. Wahlström (2007) explains the most common language to blog on is Japanese (37 percent), just followed by English (36 percent).

Marken (2005) argues that a blog is a way for companies to talk directly to customers and to obtain direct feedback from customers; it is a two-way communication with your customer. He further states that CEOs have the chance to shape opinion, lead commentary, and set the agenda through blogs. White et al. (2010) emphasize the importance of knowing what is
written in blogs because many of the thoughts expressed are similar to those of the general public.

_Blogging is the best relationship-building device I’ve ever seen. It lets Microsoft have a human face other than Bill’s [Gates] and Steve’s [Balmer], but it also gives customers a way to find people who are working on a product. In the old world you didn’t know anyone important would read your feedback. [Now,] product managers use it to gauge how important a new feature will be. It’s a new way to get feedback. I’ve had a lot of people say it’s changed their view of Microsoft and how evil we are._ (Robert Scoble, Microsoft technical evangelist in Defelice, 2006, p. 35)

According to Smudde (2005), there are four basic forms of blogs: personal, topic or industry, publication based or corporate blogs. The personal blog can be created by anyone and the blogger can express their own ideas on it. The topic blog is similar to the personal blog but with more focus on a certain area. The publication based blogs are typically from editors, reporters or similar. These are often closely following something and want the audience to share knowledge. Smudde (2005) mentions the corporate blog is the latest form of blog. However, Wahlström (2007) chose to categorize the blogs into personal, commercial and political.

### 3.2.2.4 Twitter

Twitter, founded in 2006, is a media channel in the form of a micro blog. Every post (called a tweet) is a maximum of 140 characters (Fisher and Reuber, 2010). Users can receive one another’s tweets by following them, but a person you are following does not need to follow you back (Huberman et al., 2008). Vascellaro (2009) describes in Fischer and Reuber (2010) the power of Social Media by discussing the growth of Twitter from 1.6 million to 32.1 million in one year. Spencer et al. (2011) describes the number of Twitter accounts as reaching over 200 million in the beginning of 2011. At the same time, the value of the company is now 3.7 billion United States dollars (USD) – although numbers as high as 10 billion USD have been mentioned.

You can “retweet” a post, which is described by Fisher and Reuber (2010, p.3) as “posting another user's tweet, while giving credit to the originator. Twitter users have a profile page,
which describes them, and indicates their followers and whom they follow.” Huberman et al. (2008) describe the difference between direct and indirect updates. When a user aims the post to a specific person it is a direct update, and when the user aims it for anyone it is an indirect update. According to Miller (2009) many third party applications are created to support Twitter and make it easier to use on computers and smart phones. Some of the names are Tweetdeck, Tweetie and Twitterberry.

The value of Twitter can be explained through an example of Dell. They claimed in 2009 that they have earned more than three million USD in revenue directly through Twitter since 2007 (Miller, 2009). Researchers have also tried to claim how the mood on Twitter can reflect the stock market (Bollen et al., 2010).

3.2.2.5 Wikipedia

Wikipedia was created in January 2001 by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger as a non-profit organization. Wikipedia is today running thanks to support from private donations. The site is a “free, web-based, collaborative, multilingual encyclopedia” and it is available in 278 different versions (Wikipedia, 2011a).

According to Mayfield (2008, p.19),

*Wikis are websites that allow people to contribute or edit content on them. They are great for collaborative working, for instance creating a large document or project plan with a team in several offices. A wiki can be as private or as open as the people who create it want it to be.*

Chevalier et al. (2010) reported that one of the top ten most visited sites in the world is Wikipedia. The numbers of articles are growing constantly. The authors are using one of the most common definitions of Wikipedia “*the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit,*” (Chevalier et al., 2010, p.49). Belani (2009) explains that allowing anyone to edit Wikipedia may be one of the success factors of the site but it may also be a damaging aspect. Denning et al. (2005) reported already in 2005 that the openness of Wikipedia is facing some risks. The authors argue that the accuracy may be a problem if anyone can edit the site. The authors were also worried about the coverage of the site. For example, the motive behind the changes of an article or concern that the volunteers may only edit the articles they find interesting.
Wikipedia is almost always among the top five searches on Google. Also, if there is a specific product customers are seeking, or if they encountered some trouble with a product, it will be written on Wikipedia (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Table 4 gives an overview of the types of Social Media in this thesis. It includes the year in which each platform was founded, the number of users to-date, and the classification of each type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Users/accounts</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Over 500 million (active)</td>
<td>Social networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>190m accounts</td>
<td>Micro blog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>140 million videos</td>
<td>Video-sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>1997 (in current form)</td>
<td>158 million blogs</td>
<td>Blog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>More than 18 million articles (3,5 in English, total 279 languages)</td>
<td>Collaborative project/ Encyclopedia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 - Different Types of Social Media
(Source: Summarized)

3.2.3 Social Media Impact Business
The presented sites do not operate solely by themselves, instead the integration and linkages between them are making them even more powerful. SNS have also helped to change the power from companies to customers. Paolillo (2008) discusses the impact of YouTube by mentioning how people are sharing the videos through mail, blogs and other forums. Bernoff and Li (2008) make this clear when describing how a repairman from the cable company, Comcast, was called out to fix a student’s modem. The repairman had to call the home office and was waiting on the phone for an answer for so long that he fell asleep on the student’s
sofa. The student decided to record the scene and post it on YouTube. The popularity of the video was overwhelming with more than a million viewers in a short period of time. To date, (2011-03-09) the video has been viewed more than 1.6 million times with almost 1,500 comments. The video was posted in the summer of 2006. It has been shared on Facebook 1,212 times, on Twitter 86 times and Buzz 141 times (YouTube, 2011b). These statistics are only from what has been collected by the statistics from YouTube, but the clip has most likely been shared many more times. The story is also reported if you type in Comcast on Wikipedia (2011b) which shows that a mistake put on Internet will be there forever and brand damage will occur.

3.2.4 Business to Business in Social Media

The general view of Social Media is often about B2C companies and not about B2B companies. Thus, literature and surveys have nowadays recognized the need of Social Media even for B2B companies. Safko (2010, p.8) states “if you are a company that sells B2B, then social media has to be an integral part of your strategy.” He also describes how the general Internet sales are ten times higher for B2B companies than for B2C companies.

Stelzner (2010) has a survey (1,898 respondents) in his 2010 Social Media Marketing industry report. This survey has some valuable information collected about B2B and B2C in Social Media. The survey reported that B2B companies have been using Social Media for a longer period of time compared to B2C companies. Also reported was how B2B companies were able to close business transactions easier with the help of Social Media as compared to B2C companies. Furthermore, the survey reported how it is easier for B2B companies to build new relationships through Social Media. The survey’s figures show the advantages of Social Media as much greater for B2B companies as compared to B2C companies.

Another report from White Horse 2010, consisting of 104 widely spread marketers, shows how 86 percent of B2B companies are using Social Media compared to 82 percent of B2C companies. It is also important to mention how B2C companies tend to use Social Media on more of a daily basis (52 percent), then B2B companies (32 percent).
3.2.5 Linkages between Sites

As described above, sites are linked to each other. Mayfield (2008, p.35) states that this is possible through Real Simple Syndication (RSS) which he describes as “a method of subscribing to a site’s content and being alerted to new updates without visiting the site, either through the user’s web browser or an RSS aggregator.” He further explains that this innovation has helped Social Media and blogs to reach out even further on the Internet. The reach has stretched because of the ease of using the RSS and its ability to link blogs and communities together.

Mash-ups are another method that helps to link sites on the Internet. It is an application that links data from two or more sources together. This method is possible because of the openness of Social Media, where many pages encourage their users to create content. Comical reinterpretations of YouTube videos are one example of a Mash-up. (Mayfield, 2008)

RSS and Mash-ups have made it easier for Internet users to share videos, messages, opinions and quotes throughout different web sites. This also means some users will read news from sites they would normally not view because it is linked to their normal sites. The Star Model in Figure 4 shows the linkages between Social Media sites.
3.2.6 Social Media Monitoring Tools

Social Media monitoring is growing as more and more MNCs look for ways to stay up-to-date on consumer feedback. Although it is often scrutinized, many experts agree that Social Media monitoring – and listening, are the MNCs tools to receiving valuable information about their organization’s brand, customers, and overall public relations. (Newlands, 2011)

Social Media has been defined previously by Comm (2009, p.2) as “content that has been created by its audience.” The Encyclopedia Britannica (2011) defines monitoring as something “to watch, keep track of, or check usually for a special purpose.” National Encyclopedia (2011) defines it in a similar way and adds that it gives away warnings if it deviates from what is normal. To simply combine these definitions defines Social Media monitoring as watching and recording content that has been created by an audience and then reporting if the content deviates from the expected. Marshall (2008) writes a Social Media monitoring provider’s (Lexalytics) definition of Social Media monitoring, “it is not a car - but it is a vehicle for acquiring and sharing knowledge. I define SMM as the monitoring, via software, of Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Online Discussion Groups and Forums and any freely accessible data from Social Networking communities.”
According to Murray Newlands, an industry guru, Social Media monitoring tools allow MNCs to gather information regardless of language or geographic location and view the conversations taking place around them. He states “they [Social Media monitoring tools] empower you to monitor and listen- and then proactively engage with your consumers at the right points and at the right times” (Newlands, 2011).

Fresh Networks Social Media Influences Report 2010 acknowledges it is first important for companies to ask themselves three basic questions before beginning the Social Media marketing or monitoring process. First, the company must identify what it is they wish to achieve, whether it is taking a customer-centric focus, brand management focus or public relations focus. Once the company has identified what they wish to gain, it is then important to ‘listen’. It is important to be familiar with the Social Media platforms, as well as the common language of customers. This will allow the company to better understand where to find the data, and the context of the data. Finally, the company must choose the tools to monitor Social Media comments.

Social Media monitoring can take place at different levels regardless of budget or time. There are free online programs available, do-it-yourself methods and also specialized programs available for a fee (Newlands, 2011). Regardless of the monitoring tool, many sources agree it is the process of integrating the data or information that generates the most value for an MNC. Marken (2005) explains that CEOs of companies cannot handle the monitoring process by themselves. Instead, members of the companies are responsible to scan, summarize and hand over information so the right person at the company can answer eventual critique.

In FreshMinds (2010) comparison of Social Media monitoring tools, the research consulting company identifies the components of Social Media monitoring as sentiment, coverage, location, duplication and data latency.

3.2.6.1 Measuring Results from Social Media Monitoring
Feedback from customers is a vital part of business and feedback via Social Media outlets is becoming more and more important for companies. According to Gruen et al. (2006) word of mouth has traditionally been one of the most influential marketing practices for businesses. The authors go on to state that ‘e-word of mouth’, or customers talking to one another via
Social Media, is even more important for companies. Lo and Potdar (2009) explain that knowing online praise or criticism about a product can help with risk management or with making more educated marketing decisions in the future. However, it is also important to measure the feedback.

According to the collective research from different Social Media services, we have discovered that volume, influence and sentiment (Vo.I.S.) are three basic, yet important ways to measure Social Media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vo</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Volume)</td>
<td>(Influence)</td>
<td>(Sentiment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many people are talking about you?</td>
<td>Who are the people talking about you?</td>
<td>What are the people saying?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 - Vo.I.S. Model
(Source: Own)

Volume - How many people are talking about you? Visible Technologies defines volume of Social Media as the number of brand mentions across all types of Social Media. Alterian, another Social Media monitoring service, explains that monitoring the volume of Social Media combined with sentiment can help companies to decipher if a new product launch was successful based on the volume of feedback posted. Ostrowski (2010, p. 395) describes the potential volume of Social Media to be “viral” in nature. One example the author gives is the ability for a user to ‘tweet’ on Twitter followed by other users ‘retweeting’ on the same subject.

Influence - Who are the people talking about you? In order to understand influence in the context of Social Media and Social Media monitoring, it is first important to define the term. Fresh Networks Social Media Influencers 2010 report (p.2) defines influence as “the power to affect other people’s thoughts, perceptions or behaviours.” According to Alterian, consumers are now influencing the purchasing patterns of other consumers by the comments they leave on various types of Social Media. As stated by Wu (2008, p.1510), “customers are human resources to service organizations [in particular], making a significant oral contribution to the service experience.” Visible Technologies identifies influencers as those that have a certain number of followers, subscribers or other methods of built-up trust from consumers.
However, many industries have influencers unique to that particular industry and it is important to locate these when monitoring the Internet.

Influencers can be determined by how much they say online, or even the number of people in which they are in contact. As shown in Figure 5, there are three basic types of influencers. The ‘A-List’ influencers are those that have a large number of followers, a great impact on consumer decisions, yet a generalized opinion. The ‘Long Tail’ influencers are nearly the reverse of ‘A-List’ and are extremely knowledgeable in one area but do not have enough followers to make a large influence. However, the ‘Magic Middle’ is known for having great influence and great knowledge about a certain issue. (Fresh Networks, 2010)

![Figure 5 - Types of Influencers](image)

(Source: Fresh Networks Social Media Influencers 2010)

**Sentiment** - What are the people saying? Ostrowski (2010) identifies one of the driving factors toward understanding Social Media feedback as customer sentiment. Visible Technologies defines sentiment as the formal tone of customer’s feedback. Zuo and Wang (2010) define public sentiment as an expression of ideas, opinions and/or recommendations on the Internet regarding a specific topic and during a certain time period. Ostrowski (2010, p. 394) cites Lau, Lai, and Li and defines customer sentiment “as the consensus of feelings that consumers have about a product.” Similarly, many Social Media monitoring services identify customer sentiment as positive or negative, or as positive, negative or neutral. Ostrowski (2010, p.395) classifies customer sentiment in the following four categories:
- Bad – negative remarks about the company or product
- Neutral – strictly informational
- Good – positive remarks about the company or product (often written in informal language)
- Great – highly enthusiastic remarks or shown interest in being contacted

Sentiment in Social Media is causing some companies to react more quickly to customer feedback than traditional media. Zuo and Wang (2010) emphasize the importance of network media as a new source of information dissemination for public sentiments due to its open nature. Ostrowski (2010) gives an example of a car company cancelling an entire product line due to the negative customer sentiment. After Buick publicized a proposed model and received negative sentiment through Social Media, the company decided to discontinue the line before it was ever released (Ostrowski, 2010).

3.3 Intelligence

MNCs today scan the environment to locate information about events and trends occurring in their external environment (Choo, 1999). “Organizations scan the environment in order to understand external forces of change so that they may develop effective responses that secure or improve their position in the future” (Choo, 1999, p.21). Intelligence can come in many forms within an MNC including BI, competitor intelligence, competitive intelligence and customer intelligence. This paper will focus on BI and competitive intelligence with emphasis on listening to the customer’s voice to improve overall business functions. We identify the latter as ‘customer intelligence’.

3.3.1 Business Intelligence

“Just as the eyes are the windows to the soul, business intelligence is a window to the dynamics of a business” (Howson, 2008, p.1). BI is important for companies today. However, there are many definitions of the term. According to one source, “business intelligence may be defined as a set of mathematical models and analysis methodologies that exploit the available data to generate information and knowledge useful for complex decision-making processes” (Vercellis, 2009, p.3). Scheps (2008) takes a less mathematical approach and defines BI as using the data from yesterday to make more informed decisions about tomorrow. More specifically, he states, “BI is any activity, tool, or process used to obtain the
best information to support the process of making decisions” (Scheps, 2008, p.11). According to Sabherwal & Becerra-Fernandez (2011, p. 7), they define BI as:

We define real-time BI as the king of business intelligence that provides the required inputs to decision makers whenever needed, so that business processes are not slowed down in any perceptible fashion due to waiting for information or knowledge from the BI solution.

The purpose of BI within an MNC is vast. According to Vercellis (2009, p.7), “the main purpose of business intelligence systems is to provide knowledge workers with tools and methodologies that allow them to make effective and timely decisions.” Howson (2008, p. 2) states that BI helps the members of an MNC to “access, interact with, and analyze data” to use in facets of the MNC.

BI helps to achieve the following in an organization: “dissemination of real-time information, creations of new knowledge based on the past, responsive and anticipative decisions, and improved planning for the future – produce a variety of benefits in terms of organizational success” (Sabherwal & Becerra-Fernandez, 2011, p. 14). In order to produce profitable end results, BI must be accurate, valuable, timely and actionable (Scheps, 2008).

BI has become more and more popular due to the increase in technology causing an explosion of data available to companies and the increased complexity of decision making as companies become more and more global (Sabherwal & Becerra-Fernandez, 2011). Additionally, one source states, “BI solutions help organizations by enabling the dissemination of real-time information in user-friendly fashion” (Sabherwal & Becerra-Fernandez, 2011, p. 14).

BI and knowledge management differ because BI begins with data and information as inputs and knowledge management begins with information and knowledge as inputs. The results of BI can be used as inputs to knowledge management (Sabherwal & Becerra-Fernandez, 2011).

3.3.2 Competitive Intelligence
According to Choo (1999), competitive intelligence is defined as the analysis of anything in the external environment that helps a firm to remain competitive. Marin and Poulter (2003)
cite a global information provider Lexis-Nexis, who divides competitive intelligence into two parts, both tactical and strategic. The author states,

*The tactical form includes detailed information about products, prices and competitor assessments and is intended to support the needs of product managers and marketing and sales units. Strategic intelligence is analysis about competitors’ capabilities and is intended to support short-term and long-term decision-making of managers.* (Marin and Poulter, 2003, p.167)

### 3.3.3 Customer Intelligence

Customer intelligence is a form of competitive intelligence that helps to keep an MNC competitive in the market (Prescott and Miller, 2001). Therefore, customer intelligence is both a part of BI and competitive intelligence. It is a part of BI because it helps decision makers to make decisions. *“Mining consumer-generated text can provide business intelligence to organizations by extracting important knowledge trapped in the form of opinions, thoughts, and ideas expressed by their employees and customers on various aspects relevant to business”* (Dey et al., 2010, p. 239). It is a part of competitive intelligence because it allows the MNC to listen to the wants and needs of customers to become more competitive.

Given the variables, customer intelligence in this paper can be defined as a way to monitor, listen and measure the wants and needs of customers in order for an MNC to make strategic decisions to remain competitive. Customer intelligence is obtained through customer feedback both formal and informal. One informal way is through text mining. Text mining, or the extracting of information and knowledge from the thoughts and opinions of customers, is becoming an important way to learn about customers (Dey et al., 2010). Learning about customers gives the MNC the opportunity to extract uncensored feedback from customers and modify products or services to fit what it is they are seeking.

#### 3.3.3.1 Data Mining

According to research from Shaw et al. (2001) data mining is the extraction of patterns from large sets of data. More specifically, *“data mining uses a broad family of computational methods that include statistical analysis, decision trees, neural networks, rule induction and refinement, and graphic visualization”* (Shaw et al., 2001, p.128). The process searches large
quantities of data to uncover patterns, most used in BI systems (Shaw et al., 2001). However, Shaw et al. (2001) identify data mining as a limiting source of BI because it does not always extract information useful to the businesses purpose.

3.4 Knowledge Management

Knowledge management can, according to Barclay and Murray (2000), be defined as a business activity with two primary aspects. The first aspect is that the knowledge component of business activities should be treated as an explicit concern of business. This should be reflected in policy, practice and strategy at an organization's whole level. The second aspect is how organizations intellectual assets should be making a direct connection to explicit and tacit knowledge but also reflect in profitable business results. Additionally, “knowledge management is the means by which a company generates wealth from its knowledge, or in other words from its intellectual capital” (Bukowitz and Williams, 2001, p. 1).

According to Rubenstein et al. (2011, p. 2), “knowledge management involves the creation of value from an organization's intangible assets” Bukowitz and Williams (2001) strengthen this argument by mentioning that value creation should be the main objective of knowledge management.

Liew (2007) realizes how knowledge management’s fundamental concepts are knowledge, information and data. Davenport and Prusak (1998) define the difference between data, information and knowledge within an organization and argue the terms cannot be used interchangeably. Additionally, an organization’s success depends on their understanding of how to use knowledge (Davenport and Prusak (1998).

3.4.1 Data

The most basic form of feedback collected from Social Media monitoring are called data. According to Corner et al. (1997), data are the mere carriers of information and knowledge and act as a storage system for both. Davenport and Prusak (1998) identify data similarly, and describe it as the structured record that a transaction has taken place. Liew (2007) argues how data are symbols and signals. Symbols can be anything from numbers and diagrams and signals may be a sound or a smell. He further describes how the purpose of data is to record activities or situations (Liew, 2007).
3.4.2 Information

Davenport and Prusak (1998) describe information as a ‘message’. Therefore, it has a sender and a receiver and is also meant to change the way the receiver perceives something, or influence an opinion or behavior. The end receiver decides if it is data or information, or if there is some value in the meaning of the feedback (Davenport and Prusak, 1998). According to Corner et al. (1997), information is descriptive and identifies the past and the present. However, knowledge creates the ability to predict the future by using information as a reference. Nonaka and Konno (1998) describe information as tangible and found in various media or networks.

3.4.3 Knowledge

Nonaka and Konno (1998) describe knowledge as intangible, without boundary, non-stagnant, and only having relevance if used in a specific place or time. Similarly, Davenport and Prusak (1998) identify knowledge as something that incorporates the entire organization. They formally define knowledge as:

"Knowledge is a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and export insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. It originates and is applied in the minds of the knowers. In organizations, it often becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms." (Davenport and Prusak 1998, p.5)

Corner et al. (1997) explain that knowledge and information are continuously moving throughout organizations. However, knowledge can only be communicated in common situations or settings. Davenport and Prusak (1998), state that knowledge originates from information just as information originates from data. However, unlike information, the authors argue that only humans can convert information into knowledge.

Furthermore, knowledge is divided into two different segments including explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. The most commonly accepted knowledge among most MNC’s is explicit knowledge or knowledge that can be easily expressed or measured. More specifically, Nonaka and Konno (1998) express explicit knowledge as “expressed in words
and numbers and shared in the form of data, scientific formulae, specifications, manuals, and the like.” Explicit knowledge can be transferred between individuals in a systematic way (Nonaka and Konno, 1998).

In contrast to explicit knowledge, tacit knowledge is more difficult to transfer systematically and measure. Nonaka and Konno (1998, online article) define tacit knowledge:

_Tacit knowledge is highly personal and hard to formalize, making it difficult to communicate or share with others. Subjective insights, intuitions, and hunches fall into this category of knowledge. Tacit knowledge is deeply rooted in the individual’s actions and experience as well as in the ideals, values, or emotions he or she embraces._

The two dimensions of tacit knowledge as identified by Nonaka and Konno (1998) are the technical and cognitive dimensions. The former relates to all informal personal skills or a person’s ‘know-how’ ability. The latter refers to a person’s beliefs, ideals, values, schemata, and mental models. The cognitive dimension shapes how individuals view the world around themselves and it is very difficult for an outsider to articulate (Nonaka and Konno, 1998).

### 3.4.4 Transferring Data to Information to Knowledge

Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.4) identify that the change from data to information occurs when “its creator adds meaning.” Corner et al. (1997, p.71) state, “In a sense, a piece of data only becomes information or knowledge when it is interpreted by its receiver. In the same sense, information and knowledge held by a person can only be communicated to another person after they are encoded as data.” Therefore, data can be interpreted based on the time and place it is read. As identified by Davenport and Prusak (1998), data can be converted to information through the steps in Table 6.
The C’s for Converting Data into Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextualized</th>
<th>We know for what purpose the data was gathered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categorized</td>
<td>We know the units of analysis or key components of the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculated</td>
<td>The data may have been analyzed mathematically or statistically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected</td>
<td>Errors have been removed from the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condensed</td>
<td>The data may have been summarized in a more concise form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 - The C’s for Converting Data into Information
(Source: Davenport and Prusak, 1998)

However, Davenport and Prusak (1998) identify that technology alone cannot help MNCs to convert data into information. Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.4) are quoted saying “note that computers can help to add values and transform data into information, but they can rarely help with context, and humans must usually help with categorization, calculation, and condensing.”

In Table 7, the four C’s for converting information into knowledge can take place at any function in an organization.

The C’s for Converting Information into Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>How does information about this situation compare to other situations we have known?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consequences</td>
<td>What implications does the information have for decisions and actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>How does this bit of knowledge relate to others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>What do people think about this information?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 - The C’s for Converting Information into Knowledge
(Source: Davenport and Prusak, 1998)

According to Nonaka and Konno (1998, online article), “the use of knowledge requires the concentration of the knowledge resources at a certain space and time (organic concentration).” Furthermore, they describe this common setting for knowledge creation as ‘Ba’.
3.4.5 The meaning of ‘Ba’
The concept of ‘Ba’ was introduced by the Japanese philosopher Kitaro (Nonaka et al., 1998). In current research, the concept is looked upon as a foundation for knowledge creation. Nonaka and Konno (1998), describe ‘Ba’ as the common space used for knowledge creation. As a result, ‘Ba’ can be physical, virtual, mental, or any combination of the former, and it allows a foundation for individuals or organizations to learn (Nonaka and Konno, 1998).

Nonaka and Konno (1998, *online article*) stress the importance of knowledge residing in a certain situation:

*Knowledge is embedded in Ba (in these shared spaces), where it is then acquired through one’s own experience or reflections on the experiences of others. If knowledge is separated from Ba, it turns into information, which can then be communicated independently from ‘Ba’.*

3.4.6 Knowledge Creation and the SECI Model
New knowledge is created by an MNC generating a shared mental space or ‘Ba’ within an organization. Nonaka and Konno (1998), illustrate knowledge as a spiraling process integrating both tacit and explicit knowledge to create new knowledge. Figure 6 shows the spiral of knowledge creation starting with socialization and ending with the internalization. However, true knowledge creation continues to spiral around the figure.
Socialization – This phase represents the first phase of knowledge creation labeled the socialization phase, or ‘Originating Ba’. During this time, tacit knowledge or experiences are exchanged between individuals. Nonaka and Konno (1998) define ‘Originating Ba’ as “the world where individuals share feelings, emotions, experiences, and mental models.”

Externalization - The ‘interacting’ or ‘Dialoguing Ba’ takes place when tacit knowledge is converted into explicit knowledge through individuals discussing in a group setting. Conversation, dialogue or the exchanging of ideas to generate explicit ideas help to externalize knowledge (Nonaka and Konno, 1998).

Combination – The third segment of the SECI model can be described as ‘Cyber Ba’. In this phase, interaction takes place in a virtual world instead of individual physical spaces (Nonaka and Konno, 1998). Nonaka and Konno (1998) explain the space further, “Here, the combining of new explicit knowledge with existing information and knowledge generates and systematizes explicit knowledge throughout the organization.”

Additionally, ‘Cyber Ba’ mostly integrates the use of information technology in an organization. Nonaka et al. (1998) refer to data mining as an example of searching for specific data. Data mining allows a MNC to search for data and filter the preferred results.
Nonaka et al. (1998) also emphasize the importance of strong managerial leadership within the combination phase. They stress the importance of human leadership to read and interpret the results of virtual search engines. Additionally, the leaders have the ability to convert the tacit knowledge into actionable assignments within a MNC (Nonaka et al., 1998). They identify this as ‘reflections, triggers and actions’ that will be discussed further in the ART Model.

**Internationalization** – ‘Exercising Ba’ represents the internationalization phase. During this phase, the organization turns explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge. Important examples of internationalization include on-the-job training and active participation. Internationalization is when the changes are directly integrated into the organization. (Nonaka and Konno, 1998)

### 3.4.7 ART Model

The ART Model helps a MNC to use customer knowledge to an effective means. It illustrates a “multi-dynamic approach to knowledge management” (Nonaka et al. 1998). ‘ART’ signifies the action, reflection and triggers needed to ensure dynamic knowledge over time. The Model also helps to link the components of the SECI Model by helping individuals relate with the organization. According to Nonaka et al. (1998), the Model helps to combine individuals with larger groups in the organization. This relationship helps to bridge the gap between customer feedback and the MNC.

The complexity of the ART Model greatly depends on the need of the organization. Figure 7 shows the three different levels of the ART Model. The first level is sharing the customer’s explicit knowledge with the company. The second level is the company providing the support for customers to externalize their tacit knowledge. The third level, and the most relevant to this paper, is the MNC externalizing shared tacit knowledge from themselves and the customer.
As stated by Nonaka et al. (1998), level three requires a large amount of commitment from the MNC.

*It takes four steps to create knowledge in this system. First, companies need to share tacit knowledge with customers, for example through joint experiences in originating Ba. Second, the enabling conditions and occasions for the externalization, such as dialoging Ba need to be provided inside organizations. Third, companies then externalize the tacit knowledge for their customers. Thereby companies become skillful in articulating tacit knowledge. Companies generate hypotheses based on such tacit knowledge, and test them against the knowledge held by customers or suppliers. Finally, customers and companies engage in the combination mode of knowledge conversion and subsequently in internalization.* (Nonaka et al., 1998)

The third level is relevant to this thesis because it discusses the process of generating data collection during the Social Media monitoring process, and also the process for the MNC to make once they have received the data or information. The process allows the MNC to convert the data or information into knowledge and use to an effective end.

### 3.5 Organizational Learning

Organizational learning is important to every function of an MNC but especially when instating a new process. Dixon (1999) states that it is important for an organization to actively facilitate in collective learning. It is not enough for the individual members within an MNC to learn, the organization must learn collectively and continuously. Crossan and Berdrow (2003,
p. 1088) cite many authors when describing organizational learning as “an emergent, trial-and-error, even random.” Crossan and Berdrow (2003) also reference the work of James March in Cohen and Sproull (1996) and describe organizational learning as more rational and that of decision-making or choice. Additionally, “organizational learning is seen as a means to develop capabilities that are valued by customers, are difficult to imitate, and hence contribute to competitive advantage” (Crossan and Berdrow 2003, p.1089).

Dixon (1999) provides four steps for successful organizational learning. The author emphasises that the steps are not new, but are often split up by department, where they do not provide as productive end means. Dixon (1999) defines the four steps as:

1. **Generating widespread information** – The first phase includes the collection of outside data and the creation of new ideas relating to both process and product. It includes the external feedback from an MNC customer base and also all organizational functions, not solely customer service segments.

2. **Integrating new/local information into the organizational context** – The second phase encourages the MNC to view the new information from a holistic organizational perspective. According to Dixon (1999, p.99),

   In order to accomplish the organization’s task we [the MNC] must act in concert with each other [all functions within the MNC], and to do that we must share some understanding about what we are trying to accomplish and how we are going about it.

   In other words, the MNC must openly communicate between departments to gain a clear perspective of the organization and not only their organizational function.

3. **Interpreting information collectively** – The third phase includes the collective process of converting new information into knowledge within a MNC. The author emphasizes that it is not enough for leaders to distribute new information and expect employees to convert it into collective knowledge. The result would likely end in many different interpretations of the new information and not act as a collective organizational
knowledge. It is not eliminating the individual’s opinion throughout the organization, Dixon (1999, p.104) writes “by engaging in collective interpretation each person involved is influenced by the meanings other hold and in turn influences the meanings of others.”

4. **Acting based on the interpreted meaning** – The fourth phase allows the employees to use their collective meaning structures and newly developed knowledge to act accordingly and achieve the end result. Employee empowerment is not infallible but allows for maximum organizational learning.

If the four steps are disconnected the organizations collective meaning is lost. Figure 8, illustrates the relationship between individual or private meaning structures and collective meaning structures. The four steps take place in the accessible meaning structure of the individuals in an organization. (Dixon, 1999)

Figure 8 - The Organizational Learning Cycle
(Source: Dixon, 1999)
3.5.1 Organizational Learning in Practice

The four steps of the organizational learning process must be connected with practical techniques in the workplace. Figure 9 has divided the four steps into quadrants with practical solutions to linking the steps together.

![Diagram of Organizational Learning Process](image)

Figure 9 - Infrastructure to Support Organizational Learning
(Source: Dixon, 1999)

Dixon’s (1999) four quadrants are identified and described as:

1. **Configure systems to move information across organizational boundaries** – Q1 describes the process of distributing the new information into the organization. According to Dixon (1999, p. 128), this process can take form through “*multi-functional project teams, technology fairs, the co-location of project members, intranet inquires, knowledge databases, joint meetings of departments, and network meetings, both electronic and face-to-face.*” It is important that the MNC not only distributes new information, but also follows-up with employees to ensure it is
understood. Best practice databases or small project groups also help to implement the structure.

2. **Build infrastructure to support system-level dialogue** – Q2 represents the formal structure selected by the organization in order to collectively interpret the new information. Depending on the nature of the organization, some MNCs choose a series of formal meetings while others participate in ‘learning maps’. Learning maps are illustrations that document the learning process.

3. **Organize work to disseminate decision making for speed and flexibility** – Q3 is where the MNC creates a platform for action. This is when the MNC has collectively interpreted the new information and it has become knowledge available for action. In the critical elements, the author discusses incentives for employees to help solidify the process.

4. **Measure results to capture lessons learned** – Q4 expresses the importance of a formal system for measuring results. The author explains that a formal infrastructure helps employees to be accountable for their actions and take praise for positive outcomes.
3.6 Summary of Theoretical Framework

CRM describes how a shift has occurred from an exchange perspective towards a relationship perspective. This shift also emphasizes that changing goods and services is not enough for companies anymore. Instead, there is a need for collaboration and trust for a successful long-term relationship. The reason for companies to be active within CRM is because they have realized that it is less expensive to retain loyal customers then to acquire new ones.

Social Media has described how the power has been shifting from the companies to the customers. This has been possible through the interaction and two-way communication that Social Media allows. The popularity of Social Media can be explained through openness, ease of use, and the interaction with people who are ‘just like you’.

Social Media has been explained to better understand the concept. Additionally, this helps to understand how Social Media monitoring works. Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, blogs and YouTube has been described as examples of Social Media for an understanding of the power and influence of these sites.

Social Media monitoring tools have been described as tools to scan and monitor traditional media as well as Social Media outlets. Measuring the results from Social Media monitoring is divided and illustrated in the Vo.I.S. Model.

Data, information and knowledge are identified as important aspects of knowledge management. The process of converting data into information and then into knowledge has been described as well. Theories regarding knowledge creation describe the conversion of data into knowledge.

Finally, the theoretical chapter discussed how knowledge must be spread within the organization in order to create organizational learning.
Chapter four will present all empirical findings relevant to this study. Findings include internal evidence from Region International as well as external evidence conducted through Social Media monitoring companies and industry experts.
4.0 Empirical Study
The empirical study incorporates the current internal feedback practices of Region International with the external possibilities for potential feedback processes. The internal part concerns the current feedback practices of Region International. The external identifies the opportunities and risks of Social Media monitoring, and identifies five different Social Media monitoring services and compares them based on each company’s answer to field study questions.

4.1 Internal Findings
To understand Social Media and Social Media monitoring and how it affects an MNC in the initial phase, it is important to look at all brands within a company. In this case, it is vital to shortly explain Volvo Group and Volvo CE before discussing Region International, because of the confusion of names on the Internet. A Google search using the keyword ‘Volvo’ finds 292,000,000 hits, a search using ‘Volvo CE’ finds 1,530,000 hits, and a narrowed search using ‘Volvo CE Region International’ gives 968,000 hits. Variations of search words, such as using Volvo CE versus Volvo Construction Equipment, can produce different results. We interviewed Region International about brand confusion and received the following answer:

*The brand of Volvo CE is not that great in some markets. They think it is cars or buses if we talk to the public in any of our markets. First they think of a car, and then they think of a truck, and maybe then they will think of Volvo CE. And sometimes they will ask if we are Chinese now, but we are not. That is the car business. (Gustafson)*

4.1.1 Volvo Group
In a Volvo Group corporate presentation for 2009, the following was stated: “*Volvo Group is one of the world’s leading suppliers of transport solutions for commercial use.*” The statement can also be linked with their mission “*to be valued as the world’s leading supplier of commercial transport solutions.*” They also want to be number one in image and customer satisfaction, achieve above average sustainable profitability and number one or two in size or superior growth rate within their business (Region International presentation 2010).

Volvo Group consists of many different business areas including Volvo CE as seen in Figure 10. Trucks were the biggest business area in 2009 with 63 percent of Volvo Groups sales
followed by Volvo CE with 16 percent. No other business area exceeded 10 percent of Volvo Group’s total sales for the year. (Region International presentation 2010)

Figure 10 - Organization Chart for Volvo Group  
(Source: Region International presentation 2010)

**4.1.1.1 The Volvo Way**

Volvo’s three corporate values of quality, safety and environmental care are a long tradition within the company and permeate the organization, the products, and the way they are working (Region International presentation 2010). Gustafson explains how they are working with a communication platform and how these values are in focus “a few years from now, we want to change how we are perceived by the public.” Kenar further explains how important they are for Volvo CE, “These are not only the words within Volvo CE. We really believe in them and we really try to follow these corporate values, quality, safety and environmental care.”

The way Volvo is working with these core values has created ‘The Volvo Way’. It is seen as a culture of trust, respect and co-operation. It was adopted to react faster than competitors to change within their industry. (Volvo Corporate brochure 2008)

The Volvo Way also “expresses the culture, behaviors and values shared across the Volvo Group” (Region International presentation 2010). “The culture in Volvo is built on loyalty, integrity, teamwork and vitality” (Volvo Corporate brochure 2008). “The company shall work for profitable growth with ‘energy, passion and respect for individual’” (Region International presentation 2010).
4.1.2 Volvo CE
Volvo CE, the second largest business area within the Volvo Group in 2009, is divided into four regions which are: Region Asia, Region Europe, Region North America and Region International (Region International presentation 2010).

Since the founding of the company more than 175 years ago, Volvo CE has continued to build upon their key principle of customer satisfaction. Volvo CE strives for a ‘zero-fault’ quality. To make this possible, the machines go through rigorous testing procedures. These test procedures have proven to deliver quality machines to customers creating trust between the company and the customer. As stated in their brochure, “for us [Volvo CE], creating satisfied customers is the priority,” (Volvo CE Corporate brochure 2008).

The vision for Volvo CE is that they want to be “the model of Excellence and Care in the construction equipment industry.” They want to achieve this model by creating value for customers, employees, stakeholders, distributors, suppliers, and their overall community. They also want to reinforce their brands and stay committed to their core values. (Region International presentation 2010)

4.1.3 Region International
Region International, headquartered in Eskilstuna, Sweden, has 10 offices around the world in Moscow, Sydney, Dubai, Johannesburg, Havana, Curitiba, Santiago, Mexico City and Casablanca. Region International has 75 independent dealers and one owned by their company. Region International sells to more than 100 countries around the world. (Region International presentation 2010)

Region International is divided into sub regions which are Latin America, CIS, Middle East and Turkey, Africa and Oceania. Approximately 43 percent of their sales come from Latin America where Region International is present in 20 of 26 countries. More than one third of the company’s dealers are also located in the area. Africa represents 19 percent of the company’s total sales, and they are present in 37 of 53 countries. Additionally, Region International has 15 independent dealers and one owned by their company. CIS represents more than eight percent of company sales and they are present in 11 of 12 countries. Middle East and Turkey have representatives in 12 of 15 countries. The two regions have a collective share of 20.4 percent of the company’s sales. Oceania accounts for nine percent, and Region
International is present in four of 28 countries. Brazil led sales for Region International selling (30 percent) units, followed by South Africa (8 percent), and Russian Federation (7 percent). (Region International presentation 2010)

Customers are approached through independent dealers, company-owned distribution and via direct sales. The most common form is through independent dealers which are present in most of the company’s active markets. Direct sales are applied in countries where dealer partnerships are not yet established. Currently, the only company-owned distribution is located in Morocco. (Region International presentation 2010)

4.1.4 Customer Satisfaction Surveys
Volvo CE’s target is to become number one in customer satisfaction. In order to achieve this, Volvo CE’s mission is “to develop equipment and services that provide trouble-free operation and create value for our customers.” CSS help the company to hear the voice of their customers. Volvo CE also states “the survey is also a means for our customers to give us feedback on how to continue the process of constant improvement.” (Volvo CE Corporate brochure 2008)

CSS is a survey that has been conducted for Region International by outsourced market research companies for seven to eight years to see what the customers think about how Region International handled the business process. The market research companies are supposed to call all who have purchased a machine. Region International uses more than one market research company to cover their sub regions and also keep costs inexpensive. Bragberg explains, “It is so important that you have a market research company that knows the market. They have to know the country and know the language.”

CSS consists of two phone interview surveys, one for purchase experience and one for ownership experience. The purchase experience survey is done one to three months after a machine purchase and contains 23 questions. The ownership experience survey is done 12 – 18 months after delivery, when the warranty has expired. This survey contains of 26 questions.

If the customer answered something that needs to be treated directly by the company, it is classified as a hot key. A hot key means that a customer has given a very low score on one or
more questions or the customer has asked to be contacted. In these cases, the market research company sends a fax directly to the dealer and the customer is contacted within 48 hours of the time of the interview. If it is not a hot key, the information is stored in a database in Brussels.

4.1.4.1 Questions and Market Research companies

Most of the questions in the CSS process are structured and closed. The customers have the questions read for them and answer on a scale from one to six. The possible answers include:

- 1 – Disagree
- 2 - Partly disagree
- 3 - Partly agree
- 4 – Agree
- 5 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Not applicable

Sample questions include:

- The sales representative was very helpful in my choice of machine. (rate 1-6)
- Volvo cares about the people who use their products. (rate 1-6)

Bragberg states how easily Region International can compare results from different quarters based on the graphs they receive from the results of the CSS questions. Kenar further explains the advantages, “In the CSS process, you get them in a very structured format that you can analyze. So I think this is an important point for CSS.”

Additional questions at the end of the survey allow the interviewee to speak freely. They are asked the following:

- Who do you see as the main competitor to Volvo relative to this machine?
- Do you have any issues, comments or suggestions for improvement relating to the equipment or the service Volvo provides?
Bragberg believes the open-ended questions are valuable to Region International. She states, “Then we get to know what they really think.”

Although the questions differ between the purchase and the ownership experience surveys, it is sometimes difficult to decipher the answers. Bragberg explains how customers can mix the surveys, “Even if you have a question about ownership, they had it for a whole year, they can still answer stuff that has to do with purchasing and how they feel they have been treated by a sales person.”

During the purchase experience survey, customers are asked how the salesman handled the sales process. However, when the ownership experience survey is conducted, the buyer has already used the product for a year. Kenar states, “He [the customer] starts to understand the quality of the product, focus on consumption of the product, quality of service, and spare parts availability and these kinds of detail.” Kenar further explains that poor service can potentially sink the total quality of the sale, regardless of the product’s quality.

4.1.4.2 Consolidate the Results

After each quarter, results are consolidated by the market research company, and should be distributed one month after each quarter’s end. Two weeks after the results are distributed an analysis of the results is prepared by the Quality Department within Region International.

Bragberg states that the time when they receive the results differs from quarter to quarter and from sub region to sub region. It is further explained by the structure of the CSS process and how it is set-up globally. After the interviews are conducted by the market research companies, the results are put into an Excel file. These files are then sent to various offices including the Volvo CE headquarters in Brussels and the information technology office before they reach Region International. Due to the nature of their distribution, errors can easily happen. When errors are found in the files, the files take even more time for Region International to receive. As stated by Bragberg, “They should receive them quarterly, but often one market has sent them in too late, or something was wrong with the file, there are lots of problems so sometimes they get the reports in another month.”

Since the time to receive results varies, it is difficult to set a specific timeline for Region International and the dealer to discuss the results of the surveys. Bragberg further states that
each sub region can decide how and when they want to meet to discuss these results; “The important thing is that they actually go through the results and have actions and do something about the results” (Bragberg).

Kenar discusses the appreciation of the dealer when feedback is gathered, especially since the feedback is gathered from an external source. He further explains how valuable this information is and views it as how “your customers are rating you.” Kenar also explains the importance of sharing the results with the dealer, “They have the daily, face to face contact with our customers. So that is why we should see it as a whole, we are a team not the dealer and Volvo. We work together to make our business better.”

4.1.4.3 Care for Feedback

Two weeks after the results from the CSS are published to the sub region, the dealer is supposed to schedule a Care for Feedback (CFF) meeting. The meeting contains the dealer representative, the ASM and the Area Customer Support Manager (ACSM). The purpose of the meeting is to discuss, analyze and act on the results. As Kenar also states, “the aim of it is to improve.”

Actions suggested from the meeting are logged with two-way accessibility between Region International and the dealer. Follow-up meetings are held in addition to the first meeting to ensure continual open communication between the dealer, the ASM and the ACSM.

Kenar explains the aim of the CFF is to surface any issues where everyone can see them. Through a common platform also accessible to other sub regions, it is possible to solve similar problems the same way. Kenar gives the example of his own sub region,

\[\text{Ok this is the issue in Turkey and this is how they are solving it. If we faced a similar problem in Africa, maybe it could be a solution for us. Of course, the structure of the country is different, the geography is different, but still you have a solution that might help you.}\]

The CFF meeting was started in 2009 as a Target for Operational Development (TOD) within Region International. Turkey was selected as the pilot project and has proven successful during its first year of 2010. The Quality Leader Network at Region International is now
4.1.5 CSS Timeline of Events

Figure 11 - Timeline of Customer Satisfaction Survey
(Source: Own)

Figure 11 illustrates each step of the CSS process with the approximate time for each. The process begins with A. Customer Purchase and ends with G. Feedback is realized and actions are put in place to resolve issues. The total amount of time for the existing CSS process, without the inclusion of Social Media monitoring, is 24 weeks or nearly six months. This involves roughly seven steps as shown in Figure 11. As mentioned previously, this can also be extended if the files are corrupt or if the CFF meetings are not scheduled immediately after the results are analyzed.
4.1.6 Strengths and Weaknesses of CSS

Bragberg states that customer feedback is always a strength because the company is able to hear the voice of someone who actually bought a machine. Kenar agrees with Bragberg and explains how customers share their view about the products and services, “You are getting a direct comment from your customer and it is very valuable.” However, Bragberg also states that the current process is timely and could be improved:

I do not think it is strong. I think it is weak, I think it is slow and a bit outdated. In our cases, there are so many ways to do surveys with computers and Internet. But in our markets we still have to use the old fashion method of telephone or talking or going out to meet with the customer in the mine, because we work in those kinds of markets.

Since Region International is working with less developed countries, the company must adapt differently to each market. As the Bragberg further states, “in Nigeria there is not so much Internet use.” Thus, traditional processes such as the current CSS process are needed. However, Bragberg hopes to develop a way to improve the current process. For example, she argues it would be possible for the market research companies to log the results directly over the Internet. This would provide Region International with the results in a shorter amount of time.

4.2 External Findings

4.2.1 Social Media

Social Media keeps customers connected (Greenberg 2011, Joel 2011). Greenberg (2011) states “business doesn’t drive it, it drives business.” He also claims that because of Social Media, “Now the customer actually controls business.” Businesses can no longer write what they want people to know about them, customers are doing that through blogs, social networking and other Social Media methods.

When asked if she would recommend companies to enter Social Media, industry expert Susanna Wall said, “Well, companies are already out there. There are already people writing about them [on the Internet]. There is no way back.” Mitch Joel also believes that companies are already connected to Social Media. He states, “Your consumers are fundamentally
connected.” Joel (2011) states that consumers are connected through web and through mobile.

Greenberg (2011) discusses the ‘social customer’. He says the social customer trusts differently because they are more likely to trust their peers or ‘people like them’ on the Internet.

### 4.2.2 Social Media Monitoring

Social Media monitoring is important for companies to track what their customers are saying about them in Social Media. Wall defines Social Media monitoring: “For me it is to have an overview about what is actually said about the company in all contexts.”

Some experts even believe that Social Media and Social Media monitoring are the new wave of marketing for companies. Instead of mass Internet marketing, MNCs are shifting to more specialized marketing, in part to Social Media. Monitoring Social Media can potentially assist these companies to identify their customers, their customers’ needs, and where they should focus their marketing strategies. Joel (2011) states,

> It requires you to have a paradigm shift in how you see the market. You see, traditionally marketers see it as ‘how many’. If I [marketers] blast my product or message in front of enough people, a small percentage of them will become my customers.

However, Social Media marketing and monitoring are causing marketers to look at ‘who’ and identify the influence of the post (Joel, 2011).

Greenberg (2011) takes it one step further and says, “The problems they are wrestling with are just enhanced commitments for the customer that they have to achieve in order to keep those customers with them.” He explains that as customers are more and more connected, their channels for feedback are also more connected.

Now, more than ever it is important to engage with customers. “Customers purchase because they feel valued. It is an emotional decision” (Greenberg, 2011). Social Media monitoring – and listening are vital because these social channels give companies ways to measure
customer feedback and then engage with customers (Newlands, 2011). Through customer engagement, companies have an increased opportunity to keep customers or even influence them to advocate for the company through more Social Media (Greenberg, 2011).

Social Media is keeping customers connected all over the world, 24 hours a day. Therefore, there are both opportunities and risks associated with monitoring what customers are saying about the MNC.

**4.2.2.1 Social Media Monitoring Opportunities**

There are numerous opportunities available to the MNC through Social Media monitoring. For the first time, customers are connected to the Internet in multiple ways and can virtually write or record any feedback about a product or service (Joel, 2011). Therefore, Social Media monitoring provides the information needed by companies to monitor – and listen to the voice of their customers (Newlands, 2011). Some additional opportunities include brand or product management, company transparency and increased trust between the customer and the company, and improving products or services to make customers happy (Wall).

Experts Wall and Joel (2011) agree that increased transparency is in the best interest of the company. Wall claims that Social Media helps to provide transparency for companies. When customers know the truth about a company, whether positive or negative in feedback, they are more willing to purchase. Joel (2011) states, “A negative review converts more into a sale than a positive review.” His reasoning is that it makes the company more transparent and develops trust between the customer and the company. Additionally, Joel (2011) states that many negative comments are a result that the product was not a direct fit for one consumer but then emphasizes the product attributes that would benefit another customer.

Joel states any feedback, even some negative feedback can be positive for companies. He says, “Who’s better to talk about your product or service? You? Your brochure? Or a really satisfied customer?” Additionally, he provides statistics saying, “The average review out of 5 stars is 4.3.”

Another opportunity is the ability to address customer concerns and make their overall experience better. According to Wall, “There are big opportunities – that is that you actually have a chance to fix things that have went wrong – that is something you win on in the long
run. You make the customer happy.” Greenberg (2011) states an example of how Social Media monitoring can benefit many facets of the organization and not solely marketing or public relations, “from the sales side, they are using all that structured information out there and beginning to actually focus it on contacts and accounts.” This structured information can help to identify the customers, the customers’ needs and cater to them accordingly.

The Social Media monitoring companies researched have identified brand or product management as an important opportunity for the MNC entering into Social Media monitoring. Social Media monitoring can also measure the sentiment of a product launch to gage the success of the new products.

4.2.2.2 Social Media Monitoring Risks
However great the opportunities for entering into Social Media monitoring, there are some risks involved. Risks from the new practice include lack of a clear profitability measurement from participating in Social Media monitoring (Greenberg, 2011), receiving brand-negative feedback online and not knowing what to do about it, and not allocating enough resources to maintain the company’s Social Media or Social Media monitoring (Wall).

Measuring the profitability from Social Media monitoring is not as easy as it once was with traditional BI techniques. Some companies may argue that Social Media monitoring is not a profitable practice for their company. Greenberg (2011) says “your return on investment as a business is going to be different than someone else’s.” It is important to have a clear aim for Social Media monitoring, as well as the manpower to operate and maintain the service. Greenberg (2011) also states that “advocacy is not entirely measureable, it is not entirely tangible.” In other words, he does not believe that you can put value on a positive review from customers to the company through Social Media. If the MNC has a clear goal defined, it will be easier to measure the productivity of the results generated from the service. However, when talking about measuring the profitability of Social Media monitoring, Greenberg (2011) states “it is a process, you have to figure it out, and then you figure out how to measure.”

As a large, well-known brand, it is clear that Wall’s observation is correct and there are already comments about Region International on the Internet. Wall claims that many customers are more likely to write feedback online when they have criticism regarding the brand;
What are coming up, are normally things that are not good for the companies – if something went wrong people will write about it. They will not write 'you are so great,' mostly 'this was not that good'. However, a company can grow if they handle it the right way. Because everything will be transparent – everyone will see how their customer service works.

Negative feedback will happen for a company at one point or another. The risk involved is not the negative feedback itself, but how the company addresses the feedback. Wall states, “Biggest threat – that you cannot handle it. You do not realize what you are into. Also that you handle it the wrong way – everything is transparent.” Wall says that some companies enter into Social Media or Social Media monitoring before they completely understand the process. Negative feedback, as agreed by Wall and Joel (2011) has the potential to create increased trust between the customer and the company due to increased transparency.

Joel (2011) discusses the importance of developing personal relationships with customers through Social Media and Social Media monitoring practices. In the case that the MNC chooses to engage with customers, Joel (2011) states, “It is about how you respond – you have to have real interactions.” Also, failing to realize the industry influencers can be harmful. If responding, it is important to avoid generic interactions and know to whom you are responding.

The final risk identified is not allocating enough resources to Social Media or Social Media monitoring. Depending on the nature of the MNCs goal, it is most important to develop a strategy for the practice which includes the type of feedback the company is seeking, a process for receiving the feedback, the form in which you wish to receive the feedback, and what you wish to do with the feedback once it is within the company.

4.2.3 Identifying the Social Media Monitoring Companies and Tools

Different Social Media monitoring companies supply different services. Greenberg (2011) states Social Media monitoring is about how you capture, organize, and expose the data. Some Social Media monitoring companies sell ‘tools’ that are 100 percent computer-based and operated solely by the users, while other companies sell the tools and services that are technological-based with human analysis. The price associated with each monitoring tool is
often aligned with the level of personal service and human analysis of the data collected. Additionally, most services have various levels of Social Media packages depending on the needs of the customer.

Five Social Media monitoring companies have been compared against one another. A brief description with information from each company website is shown below:

1. **Google Alerts** is a free monitoring tool that claims to *Monitor the Web for interesting new content* (Google Alerts homepage). There are a limited number of options when using the service and it is strictly computer-based. The service allows users to enter the preferred search terms, the type of media they want to search, how often they wish to receive updates, and the volume of the results. All results are sent to the user via email.

2. **Trackur** is a subscription-based service with five possible packages. The company prides their services to be *The easiest and most affordable Social Media monitoring software for your business...with a money-back guarantee!* (Trackur homepage). The first package is free of charge but excludes monitoring Facebook. The other four packages have a monthly fee and come with a variety of different features. Trackur’s monitoring tools are 100 percent computer-based and users are responsible for operating services. However, the company provides customer service through an extensive ‘FAQ’ sheet on their website, or a list of frequently asked questions, and the opportunity to submit a help ticket with a timely response send directly to the users’ email. Live chat is also available for inquires.

3. **Radian6** is a Social Media monitoring service with packages tailored to each individual client. According to the Radian6 homepage, *“Radian6 gives you [the user] a complete platform to listen, measure and engage with your customers across the entire social web.”* The company offers two types of managed services including the ‘Insight Analyst Service’ and the ‘Social Media Traffic Coordinator Service’. The former includes a business analyst to assist a company when beginning media monitoring services and the latter is to assist an existing team within the company. Radian6 also offers two different platforms for users. Radian6 Dashboard is for monitoring and listening and Radian6 Engagement Console is for monitoring,
listening and engaging with customer feedback. In addition to customer support, Radian6 offers a long list of training courses to assist the user with set-up and service use. Live chat is also available for inquires.

4. **Alterian** is a BI company that offers various services to users. As stated on the company’s homepage, “Alterian empowers businesses with social intelligence to successfully engage with their target audience.” The company offers the SM2 Media Console service for BI and Social Media monitoring. The service allows users to capture, analyze and engage with customers through written feedback. The company offers various resources for customer service on their website alongside contact information for support. Live chat is also available for inquires.

5. **Visible Technologies** is a large Social Media monitoring company that prides itself on being “The ONLY Enterprise Ready Social Media Solution” (Visible Technologies homepage). The company caters to large, Global 2000 companies and offers monitoring and measuring solutions such as brand monitoring, competitive insights, influencer marketing, trend analysis, social servicing, social analytics, campaign performance, product design, lead generation and power of integration. Customer support is offered during the set-up process and other useful resources are provided for the user.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1. In simple terms, how do your Social Media monitoring services work?</strong></th>
<th>Google Alerts</th>
<th>Trackur</th>
<th>Radian6</th>
<th>Alterian</th>
<th>Visible Technologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enter search terms and wait for email updates</td>
<td>Enter keywords and refine with filter</td>
<td>Use program to collect data, analyze, and listen to feedback</td>
<td>Collect data, services filter results</td>
<td>Internet crawlers search the entire public Internet and post data for user on software platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2. Do you have a demo available?</strong></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3. How many keywords can I enter?</strong></th>
<th>Unlimited</th>
<th>Limited by plan</th>
<th>Unlimited</th>
<th>Unlimited</th>
<th>Unlimited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>4. How long is the standard set-up process for first-time users?</strong></th>
<th>60 seconds</th>
<th>60 seconds</th>
<th>Three to four hours</th>
<th>Two weeks</th>
<th>Three to four weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>5. How long is the training process to become an expert in the system?</strong></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>10 minutes</th>
<th>Very quickly with regular use</th>
<th>Two months</th>
<th>Two to three weeks of consistent use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>6. How far in the past does your service cover?</strong></th>
<th>As it happens</th>
<th>Covers the last two months</th>
<th>30 days, more available upon request</th>
<th>Extensive historical warehouse</th>
<th>Up to five years of data – one year standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>7. What media types are searched with your service?</strong></th>
<th>News, blogs, Realtime, video, discussion</th>
<th>News, blogs, video, images, and forums</th>
<th>Blogs, mainstream online news, video and photo sharing sites, micromedia, forums and discussion boards, Facebook public discussion forums</th>
<th>Blogs, Wiki, video and photo sharing, social networks, mainstream media, classified sites, review sites</th>
<th>Collects information from the entire public web</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 8 - Social Media Monitoring Tools – Comparison of Start-up Process
4.2.4 Comparing Social Media Monitoring Tools
Choosing a Social Media monitoring service can be a bit challenging for first-time users. As stated on the Radian6 website, “Comparing different monitoring solutions can be as difficult as comparing apples to oranges.” It may not be clear which company is the right choice without extensive research and careful thought. At first glance, it is not enough to simply compare prices because many of the monitoring companies offer different services or tools. Therefore, we have conducted a simple questionnaire for five media monitoring services with questions about their set-up process, their service coverage, service support, details of use, as well as the cost and time commitment. The questions were derived from a blog by Jennifer Z. on Lithium.com – a Social Media monitoring service.

4.2.4.1 Start-up Process
The start-up process for a first-time Social Media monitoring company varies from service to service. One way to learn more about a Social Media monitoring service is through an online demonstration. Wall also suggest meeting with the company, “I think the most important is to meet the company and to get an actual review and example of how they are handling other customers, preferably customers in their own industry.”

Table 8 illustrates a comparison of the five companies’ set-up process. All five companies have some form of a free online ‘demo’ whether a free trial or simple subscription. However, it is also important to look at the installment time associated with the monitoring service and compare it with the person or persons who will be using the service within the MNC. Some services such as Google Alerts and Trackur are set-up easily within minutes, while others such as Alterian and Visible Technologies take two or more weeks. Becoming an expert can take up to two months of regular use with Alterian, while Trackur claims it only takes 10 minutes.

Another way to choose which service fits a company best is through the media types covered and how far in the past the service tracks. Visible Technologies and Alterian are forward-searching but also keep a data warehouse of information from the past year. Trackur and Radian6 cover less historical data and only include feedback from the past two months. The two companies are also forward-searching. Based on the research collected, all five companies collect feedback from all the major Social Media sights and mainstream news.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Google Alerts</th>
<th>Trackur</th>
<th>Radian6</th>
<th>Alterian</th>
<th>Visible Technologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Can I customize and add sources if they are not included in your service?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No, all media types are already covered</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Entire public Internet and some private sites are covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Can I see the source and location of the customer feedback?</td>
<td>As it appears online</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do I have access to the spam filtered from my search?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes – to an extent</td>
<td>Yes – to an extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How do you measure customer sentiment? (i.e. positive, negative, neutral)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Positive, negative, neutral</td>
<td>Positive, negative, neutral</td>
<td>Positive or negative based on brand reference, content tone and emotion.</td>
<td>Positive, negative, mixed and neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How do you measure the influence of the post?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>‘TrackurRank’ tool to measure</td>
<td>Measure the influence of the person posting</td>
<td>Measure the influence of the person posting</td>
<td>Measure the influence of the person posting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Are your monitoring services strictly computer-based or do you have analysts?</td>
<td>100% Computer-based</td>
<td>100% Computer-based</td>
<td>100% Computer-based</td>
<td>100% Computer-based</td>
<td>100% Computer-based with analyst help upon request</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 - Social Media Monitoring Tools – Comparison of Service Coverage
4.2.4.2 Social Media Monitoring Service Coverage

Social Media monitoring services offer monitoring tools to search the Internet and scan for each user’s desired information or data. Table 9 displays the comparison of the coverage offered by each of the five Social Media monitoring services. The role of the service within the MNC helps to decipher the type of results extracted from the monitoring tools.

Some Social Media monitoring services allow companies to customize the source of their results and add sources that are not currently included in their monitoring or omit services that the company does not want to include. Trackur and Alterian openly say they will work with the customer and add sources if they are not already included in the service. However, Google Alerts, Radian6 and Visible Technologies do not allow customers to add sources and claim they already scan all public content on the Internet.

All five companies allow users to see the source and location of the customer feedback. However, Google Alerts reports the feedback as it appears online. The spam filtered out from each search is not available to users with Trackur or Radian6 services and limited spam results are available with the Alterian and Visible Technologies services.

With the exception of Google Alerts, four out of five companies offer ways to measure the customer sentiment and influence of each post. Additionally, all services are 100 percent computer-based. However, Visible Technologies offers help for users to develop strategies for using Social Media. Analysts are also available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Google Alerts</th>
<th>Trackur</th>
<th>Radian6</th>
<th>Alterian</th>
<th>Visible Technologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>14. What service support would you give to a first-time media monitoring user?</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>45 minute training session for Ultimate Plan; also customer service through email</td>
<td>On-sight training, and unlimited-anytime</td>
<td>Manuals, online-training, customer support via phone and email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How easy have they been to contact and work with thus far?</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emailed but never heard response. Called and talked to representative, then sent an email to him directly with my inquiry. He replied with customized answers and company literature.</td>
<td>Talked to representative on Live Chat but were unable to help. Contacted via email and never heard response. Called directly and asked questions over the phone.</td>
<td>Emailed inquiry but never heard response. Called and questions were answered directly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 - Social Media Monitoring Tools – Customer Service
4.2.4.3 Customer Service

Customer service is important in any industry, but has even more importance for first-time users in the technological sector. Four out of five services, excluding Google Alerts, had some form of customer service available, as shown in Table 10.

Google Alerts offers a brief introduction to their site but no official customer support. However, there are blogs available from various users of Google Alerts that offer help understanding the system.

Trackur offers a 45-minute training session for their Ultimate Plan only, and customer service through submitting a request through their website. During our research with Trackur, we submitted a request through their website and the answers were emailed to us within an hour.

Radian6 offered the most extensive training for their dashboard and engagement console, both monitoring and listening tools. In addition to on-site training, the company offers a system overview and training for topic profiles and keywords, dashboard widgets, workflow and engagement, reporting and alerts, and best practices. Radian6 also offers webinars to get the most out of their monitoring system. Their nearest office is located in United Kingdom.

Alterian offers extensive training manuals and online-training for their SM2 media monitoring service. Additionally, they are available for consultation via phone or email. The company’s nearest office is located in the Netherlands and covers all of Continental Europe.

Visible Technologies offers service experts to assist first-time users with the initial set-up process of their monitoring service. Additionally, they will assist users with data analysis. Visible Technologies nearest office is located in United Kingdom.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Google Alerts</th>
<th>Trackur</th>
<th>Radian6</th>
<th>Alterian</th>
<th>Visible Technologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. How many people can use the service within the company? Is there additional charge per person?</td>
<td>Each person can create individual query.</td>
<td>Depends on the plan</td>
<td>One – web access anywhere; engagement console for everyone in workplace</td>
<td>Typically there are three logins – may add more for additional cost.</td>
<td>One workspace, three users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Can users ‘bookmark’ or comment on specific feedback so colleagues can see thoughts?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes, you can add an item for future follow-up or share it with a co-worker or client</td>
<td>Yes, active workflow</td>
<td>Yes, interactive workflow to use across departments.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. How do I export results?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Export to Excel Document</td>
<td>Export to Excel Document</td>
<td>Can export ‘overview’ section or export into Excel document</td>
<td>Export directly from software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. How often do I receive updates?</td>
<td>Once a week, once a day, or once an hour.</td>
<td>Updates every 30-60 minutes when new search matches are found.</td>
<td>Updates are available via email or instant message at desired rate</td>
<td>Most frequent is once per hour.</td>
<td>Can enter query and receive results instantly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 - Social Media Monitoring Tools – Details of Use
4.2.4.4 Details of Use

Identifying and comparing the details of use for each Social Media monitoring company helps to find the best fit for an MNC. The Social Media Monitoring service should support the MNCs organizational structure. Important questions to ask are shown in Table 11.

When comparing the number of people who can use the service within an MNC, Google Alerts requires each user to create an own search which will be sent directly to their individual email. Radian6 has created a dashboard and engagement console that allows all members of the office to partake in Social Media monitoring and engagement activities. Their services potentially allow for each member within an organization to have a dashboard on their desktop which reports Social Media monitoring feedback, the ability to assign colleagues specific feedback comments in need of action and see if the feedback has been addressed.

Trackur, Alterian, and Visible Technologies have a limited number of logins available for their services. Trackur’s services vary from plan to plan, while Alterian and Visible Technologies offer three logins – with the potential to add more for an additional cost.

Each media monitoring service, with the exception of Google Alerts, offers an interactive workflow for easy use between users. This allows for an MNC to bookmark feedback, apply comments and send to the appropriate person within the company. This also gives companies options to respond to feedback or simply ‘listen’ and measure the results.

Exporting filtered results is available with each service, with the exclusion of Google Alerts. Trackur and Radian6 allow users to export results into an Excel document. Alterian allows users to export the report overview as it is shown in their service, and they also allow users to export into an Excel document. Visible Technologies allows users to export information directly from their software.

Each of the five services gives frequent feedback updates. Google Alerts gives users the option to receive updates once a week, once a day or once an hour while Trackur offers updates every 30-60 minutes when new results are found. Alterian offers alerts once an hour,
Visible Technologies gives results instantly when you enter a new search query, and Radian6 can send alerts via e-mail or even instant message at the rate desired by the user.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Google Alerts</th>
<th>Trackur</th>
<th>Radian6</th>
<th>Alterian</th>
<th>Visible Technologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. How much do your services cost?</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Packages range from 18 – 400 USD/month</td>
<td>Packages begin at 600 USD/month</td>
<td>Packages begin at 500 USD/month</td>
<td>Packages begin at 2,500 USD/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. What is the length of the contract?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Month to month</td>
<td>Month to month</td>
<td>One year</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Do your services support feedback from other languages aside from English?</td>
<td>Service supports only keywords entered</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 - Social Media Monitoring Tools – Cost and Commitment
4.2.4.5 Cost and Commitment

Media monitoring services have various terms and conditions. Cost and commitment may be two important variables for deciding if a media monitoring service is the right fit for an MNC. Additionally, depending on the nature of the MNC, it is important to inquire what language or languages are supported by the monitoring service.

Table 12 shows the price comparison of the five companies. As most of the services are primarily US-based, all of the costs are compared in USD. However, some of the services also have operations in Europe and offer prices converted into Euros.

Google Alerts is a free service with no monthly contract. Google Alerts supports only the keywords entered in the inquiry and does not translate any other languages than the language entered in the inquiry.

Trackur services begin at 18 USD per month upon signing a month to month contract. Although other languages are sometimes included in their searches, there is no official language feature offered.

Radian6 offers services beginning at 600 USD per month and only a month to month contract is required. Radian6 supports various languages.

Alterian requires a one year contract with a monthly fee beginning at 500 USD per month. Alterian offers services in various languages.

Visible Technologies also requires a one year contract with packages beginning at 2,500 USD per month. With their computer-based platform similar to Google, the service has the ability to search the entire public web, some private sites and accommodates many different languages.

4.2.5 Identifying the Place of Monitoring Tools within an MNC

Social Media experts, Joel (2011) and Wall both agree that Social Media is the new wave of how people connect. Greenberg (2011) says, “Your job as a company is to figure out a program to respond to it which utilizes those channels, if it makes sense, and provides value
to the customer, who in return provides value to you [the company].” The opportunities and risks of entering into Social Media are important to weigh, but if the MNC decides to enter into Social Media or Social Media monitoring, the first step is important.

According to Wall, “The first thing a company should do is figure out what the purpose of it is. What is the purpose with Social Media from our [the company] point of view – from that they can continue to the next step.” This is congruent with the risks identified earlier in this chapter. An MNC must know what it is they wish to gain from Social Media or Social Media monitoring.

The strategy of which to enter first, Social Media or Social Media monitoring, is often debated by companies. Wall suggests, “As the first step, I would monitor – to see what is written out there.”

The next step is identifying the place of the Social Media monitoring tools within an MNC. Questions such as, ‘Who will be taking care of the feedback?’ or ‘What will happen to the feedback once it is collected?’ are important for the MNC to answer. Wall says, “I believe that someone internally should take care of the monitoring process with help from some kind of tool. It is closely related to all kind of marketing and communication you are doing with your customer.” Greenberg (2011) strongly states that Social Media monitoring is a matter of customer service rather than public relations. Rather, it is not simply about protecting a company’s reputation, it is about solving the issue or problem concerning the customer.

4.2.5.1 Identifying the Place of Social Media Monitoring within Region International

Region International does not currently participate in Social Media marketing or Social Media monitoring. According to Bragberg, “We publish news and press releases but nothing on Social Media.”

However, when asked if Volvo CE is currently present on the Internet in Social Media outlets, Camilla Gustafson mentioned LinkedIn and YouTube as two active channels. Referring to the YouTube Volvo-branded channel, she stated, “I think they have Volvo CE as a base and then they translate it to Spanish, Portuguese and Russian” (Gustafson).
Bragberg, Kenar and Gustafson agree that the Internet and Social Media monitoring are becoming important tools for BI within an MNC. According to Bragberg, “There are better ways to listen to the customer. I think Social Media monitoring is the way at the moment because then you get the analysis of what they actually think and feel.” When asked if he would find Social Media monitoring useful to his everyday business tasks, Kenar states, “Sure. Market intelligence is really important in this business. Of course this type of other information is always welcomed.” Gustafson explains that Social Media is a credible way to hear the customer voice but also admits some reluctance. “We have to go that way. At the same time you need to be a little bit careful” (Gustafson).

Kenar explains the importance of the Internet on business in his sub region, Turkey:

> The use of the Internet is getting higher and higher. I mean everyone is using it. […] today the next generation is coming and everyone has iPhones, so it is really important. […] And this new generation is aware of your products and they are checking it and following it.

Social Media monitoring would not replace the current CSS process within Region International. Bragberg admits that it would not be possible to replace the current CSS process with Social Media monitoring because some markets are less active on the Internet. Additionally, she states that Social Media monitoring is a way to look at what the customers are really saying, not just structured responses from their current CSS process. It would be a way to see what the customers really think about the products and services provided by Region International (Bragberg).

Instead, the objective of Social Media monitoring is to “Complement the CSS and other surveys with a modern real-time survey method” (Bragberg). She explains that Social Media monitoring within Region International would not be useful unless it was completed more often than the current CSS process:

> It could be that we do it for specific occasions like a press release or a launch or something; but it could also be that we do it on a monthly basis. Every month we [could] do a listening so to speak and look at what happened during the last month and get a nice report.
Bragberg already has a working knowledge of some Social Media monitoring tools on the market today.

*I saw it [Social Media monitoring] for the first time this autumn and I was really impressed because you could get real-time information. Not waiting a half year. You could divide it in so many ways. You could look at the issues and talk about Volvo.* (Bragberg)

When asked how Social Media monitoring would be integrated into the organizational structure of Region International, Bragberg explains that once a report is generated, it would go to the ASM and ACSM and then onto the dealer. She states, “*This is the same kind of process that you need for CSS results.*” Additionally, Bragberg explains that the process of using Social Media monitoring results will differ from market to market just as the CSS process differs from market to market. Factors of influence include type of dealership, market characteristics and the current processes developed to integrate the CSS process.

### 4.2.5.2 CSS Timeline of Events with Inclusion of Social Media Monitoring Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Customer Purchase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Customer Feedback via Social Media</td>
<td>(+4 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Results Consolidated/Available to Region International</td>
<td>(reported instantly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Analyzing of Results</td>
<td>(+2 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Care for Feedback Meetings</td>
<td>(+2 weeks)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 12 - Timeline of Social Media Monitoring Feedback**
(Source: Own)
Figure 12 shows the proposed steps for the CSS process with the inclusion of Social Media monitoring results. The new process begins with A. *Customer Purchase* and ends with F. *Feedback is realized and actions are put in place to resolve issues*, just as shown in Figure 11. However, with the addition of a Social Media monitoring service, the search results are consolidated and available to Region International almost instantly, allowing for a much shorter waiting time. This process eliminates one step and the total timeline shortens to eight weeks or roughly two months instead of the initial six months. Additionally, this process includes the feedback from non-customers.
Chapter five will develop an analysis between the theoretical framework and empirical findings. Further, it will incorporate the case company with the empirical findings and describe the place of Social Media monitoring within Region International.
5.0 Analysis

5.1 Region International Adopts Customer Relationship Management

Many authors (Christopher et al, 1991, Grönroos, 2002, Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995 and Hultman and Shaw, 2003) have noted how a change from an exchange perspective towards a relationship perspective has taken place. Region International has also realized the importance of enhanced customer relations by creating methods to ensure satisfied customers. One way for the company to focus on customer relations is by listening to the customer voice through their CSS process. The company also states that they are always looking for ways to improve the process.

Grönroos (2002) suggests that companies need to collaborate more with customers, simply changing goods is not enough. In order for long-term relations to succeed, trust is considered an important issue. Volvo CE strives to increase trust through their ‘zero-fault’ quality. In this proactive procedure, the machines endure rigorous test procedures to ensure they will withstand what they have promised. ‘The Volvo Way’ is a culture of trust, respect and cooperation and was adopted to react faster to the needs of customers than competitors.

Authors (Almqvist et al, 2002, Reinartz and Kumar, 2002, Chaffey et al, 2009) explain how companies are realizing the importance of retaining current customers by taking care of them instead of acquiring new customers. The cost of acquiring new customers is more expensive than satisfying the needs of existing ones. By conducting the CSS, Region International is taking action to see how their customers interpret their company. Furthermore, Region International conducts two different surveys with each customer. The purchase experience survey takes place one to three months after the purchase of the machine and the ownership experience survey takes place 12 – 15 months after the purchase of the machine. By conducting these surveys, Region International is able to show their customers how much they care about them in both the long-term and short-term.

Murphy et al. (2007) acknowledges how mistakes need to be corrected immediately in order to build long-lasting relationships with their customers. In the case of an unsatisfied customer, Region International marks the case as a hot key. When a hot key occurs, the
company has to be contacted within 48 hours. If it is not considered a hot key, it can take up to five months or longer before Region International becomes aware of the issue. Contacting customers within 48 hours shows that the company cares about the satisfaction of their customers. Customer satisfaction is especially important within Region International’s industry since it is not considered an ‘everyday purchase’.

According to Bragberg, Region International uses several market research companies to conduct CSS in order to account for the language and cultural differences between sub regions. Region International sells to more than 100 countries worldwide and it is therefore impossible to find a reasonable-priced company that can manage the language and cultural differences between these countries. Using a local market research company means that customers may be more precise in their answers and also that the company is better able to provide both linguistic and cultural understanding. Customers may be more comfortable talking with someone local rather than someone from abroad. Also, by using market research companies that know the market, it is also be easier to localize possible hot keys.

5.1.1 Customer Satisfaction Survey
Most of the questions in the CSS process are structured and closed. Customers are read the questions over the phone by a market research representative and their answers are scaled from one to six. The final questions in the survey are open-ended and allow customers to speak more freely.

Bragberg and Kenar state that the CSS questions make it easy to compare results from quarter to quarter. Bragberg further states that the open-ended questions in the end of the survey are sometimes the most valuable because they allow the customer to speak freely. Although the open-ended questions are asked up to three months after a purchase and again one year after a purchase, the impulsive feedback from customers may not come to the surface during the calls. Therefore, the dealer and Region International may never hear the feedback.

As the survey works today, the results are conducted over a long period of time and short-term direct responses are not possible. Instead of immediate feedback, Region International is gathering a long-term overview of customer perceptions. The process of collecting feedback is not the only time-consuming aspect of the CSS process. As explained in the empirical
chapter, the consolidation of the results delays the process further. Bragberg also explained that each sub region receives the results at different times because of the time it takes to consolidate the results; there is even more of a delay if errors are found.

5.2 Social Media Described by the Experts

Social Media, as described by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), is based on the technological foundation of Web 2.0 that allows for the exchange of user generated content. As identified by Joel (2011) and Greenberg (2011), this interface has also created a new way of doing business which allows customers to connect with other customers. Instead of looking to a company website, customers are now looking at Social Media and other media channel reviews to read what people ‘just like them’ are saying about products or services. This generates an aspect of trust for the customer because it allows them to relate their own needs to those who are writing the comments. As Wall suggests, it also provides increased transparency for the company and develops more trust.

The convenience of online communication through Social Media has now increased even more by the increasing popularity of smart phones and the customer’s ability to remain connected on-the-go. Kenar supports this logic when he states that more and more end-users in his territory are becoming connected to the Internet through computers and smart phones.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Greenberg (2011) and Wall agree that MNCs can no longer decide whether or not they can participate in Social Media. Wall states that companies are already connected to Social Media because customers are already writing about their products and services on the Internet. Huberman (2010) suggests that Social Media has an increasing ability to change the direction of the market and set trends due to its speed, reach to large quantities of people, and easiness to use. SNSs are also increasing the speed of communication through Social Media. Although Mayfield (2008) and Fischer and Reuber (2010) suggest different ways to differentiate Social Media types, in practice they are all linked together in one form or another. Now, instead of simply posting a comment on one SNS, many sites can be connected to increase the speed of dispersing information. For example, a user can post a message on their Facebook account and also have it appear on their Twitter account.
Therefore, it is important for an MNC to listen or even take part in the conversations that are currently happening around them. By ignoring these conversations, MNCs are ignoring one of the most reliable and raw sources of customer feedback. In the case of Region International, the company is also losing valuable time by solely relying on traditional feedback methods such as their CSS.

5.3 Social Media and Social Media Monitoring is Changing Business

Social Media monitoring as identified by Wall, is an overview of everything that is said about a company on the Internet. Newlands (2011) suggests that Social Media monitoring is the MNC’s tool to receiving information about their company’s brand, customer needs or wants, or even the overall public relations. However, as identified in the comparison of Social Media monitoring companies, the services offer more than just marketing or public relations solutions. Greenberg (2011) supports this when he explains that Social Media monitoring is a matter of customer service and not just a matter of public relations. According to Lexalytics definition of Social Media monitoring, as cited by Marshall (2008), Social Media monitoring acts as the vehicle to transport information into an organization. It is also important to note that the monitoring results cannot generate knowledge but instead give the MNC the resources for knowledge creation.

The use of Social Media monitoring within an MNC is different from company to company. The place of Social Media and Social Media monitoring differs slightly between B2B and B2C companies. The extent of usage may also differ based on the nature of the product or service. Although White Horse (2010) suggests that B2C companies may use Social Media monitoring more frequently, experts agree that Social Media is driving all business – regardless of the industry or company. Empirical evidence shows that different Social Media monitoring services offer different solutions that any company can use.

5.4 Developing Social Media Monitoring Tools for Region International

Encyclopedia Britannica (2011) defines monitoring as the ability to watch or keep track of something. When applied to Region International, the company is looking at possible ways to keep track of customer feedback and more specifically, things that need to be changed within an organization. In an interview with Bragberg, she outlined the criteria for the market
research companies that currently conduct CSS. She stated that it is important to employ many different companies due to cost and more practical issues:

*It is so important that you have a market research company that knows the market. They have to know the country and know the language. We do not know any research company that can cover the world because it is so specific; [...] there are so many factors they can master. They have to be cheap enough. The ones that cover the whole world tend to be a lot more expensive than using local.*

Similar criteria are important for Region International when identifying a Social Media monitoring service. It would not be practical to develop a service that could not be used in multiple markets, for example a service that could not support different languages. Therefore, the first need is to cover various languages.

Another important feature is the availability of use throughout the company. Based on the requirements of organizational learning and knowledge management, it is not enough for one person to record the results. Instead, more members within the organization must read and collectively interpret the data or information collected.

Finally, the financial cost and commitment for a Social Media monitoring service is a factor for Region International. The service must be budget friendly and not require a long-term contract.
Table 13 illustrates a comparison of Region International’s needs as identified by company representatives, compared to the coverage offered by the five chosen Social Media monitoring services.

Radian6, Alterian and Visible Technologies claim that their tools monitor multiple languages. Therefore, Google Alerts and Trackur will not fulfill Region International’s need for multilingual coverage. Trackur, Radian6, Alterian and Visible Technologies offer services that allow for more than one user from the organization. Google Alerts requires each person to sign-up for an individual account which would not allow employees to save results, and send answers to coworkers in an easy fashion.

In terms of cost and commitment, Trackur and Radian6 fulfill Region International’s preference to choose a budget-friendly service with a month to month contract. Although Alterian offers services for less cost than Radian6, the company requires a one year contract. Visible Technologies also requires a one year contract and services begin at 2,500 USD/month. Google Alerts does not charge a fee and does not require a contract.
Based on the self-identified needs of Region International, it appears that Radian6 is the only service in our study that fulfills the requirements. However as empirical evidence shows, there are additional factors that Region International should consider before choosing a Social Media monitoring service. Experts agree that choosing a service is personal to the organization and MNCs should not hesitate to call directly and discuss Social Media monitoring options.

5.5 Measuring the Vo.I.S. of Social Media Monitoring Results

Creating a measurement for the results of Social Media monitoring is important. Greenberg (2011) states that measuring Social Media monitoring results will vary from company to company. In the case of Region International, a company who is not yet active in Social Media monitoring, we have identified the Vo.I.S. Model as a preliminary test for measuring monitoring results.

The first step of the Vo.I.S. Model is the *volume* of posts regarding the MNC’s brand or products. This is especially important when beginning to monitor media outlets. If there is a lot of discussion regarding the MNCs brand, it is important to take a deeper look at what the customers are saying. If there is little activity, it may not be as imperative to take immediate action. The second aspect is the *influence* of the post. For example, Region International should look at the post and identify if it was written by a strong influencer in the construction equipment industry. Region International may not yet be aware of their industry’s influencers on Social Media, and this may take further research. Once the influencers are identified by the company, or the users that have the ability to change market trends, it is easier to listen to customer needs. The third aspect, and perhaps the most complex aspect of the Vo.I.S. Model, is *sentiment*. Sentiment through Social Media outlets is difficult to read due to sarcasm or reading a post out of context. Although there are services that identify different levels of sentiment as shown in chapter four, it takes careful analytical thinking to successfully interpret the sentiment of each comment. In the case of Region International, this would take place within the company after the results are generated.
5.6 Social Media Monitoring Complements Existing Business Intelligence and Leads to Increased Knowledge Management

Scheps (2008) defines BI as taking the information of today and using it to assist an MNC to make decisions for tomorrow. Based on this definition, empirical evidence supports that Social Media monitoring is a complement to Region International’s existing BI because it takes the feedback of current customers and motivates an MNC to take action based on that feedback. Greenberg (2011) describes Social Media monitoring as a way to maintain existing customer relationships. Although traditional customer feedback methods provide actionable and valuable results, Social Media monitoring provides more accurate or less biased results, in less time. Additionally, these methods allow companies to disseminate real-time results.

In the comparison of Social Media monitoring services, there is a clear distinction between the outputs of each service’s results. Some services, such as Google Alerts, report information as it is found on the web. Other services such as Trackur, Radian6, Alterian, and Visible Technologies offer graphical illustrations of the results. As discussed in chapter three, data has no value until turned into a ‘message’ by the person reading the data and thus it is turned into information. However, information is not enough to integrate new processes within an MNC. The information must be learned by the members of the company and thus turned into working knowledge. Working knowledge helps to create value for the charts that were once mere data.

According to Sabherwal & Becerra-Fernandez (2011), the inputs of knowledge management begin with BI. Knowledge management within an MNC is the wealth generated from intangible assets. We argue that Social Media monitoring is a BI tool that helps to transport information into the MNC so that it may be transformed into knowledge. For example, Wall describes one of the greatest benefits of learning customer feedback is having the ability to actually make changes. In the case of Region International, feedback from Social Media monitoring has the potential to help the company learn from reoccurring issues that are documented via Social Media or traditional media channels. Once the team has become aware of this data or information, they can then create a method to solve the problem. Solving the problem would create value for the customer, the company, and also generate knowledge within the organization.
5.6.1 Transferring Data into Information
According to Davenport and Prusak (1998), Region International must first convert data into information, then convert information into knowledge in order to achieve profitable ends. The process of converting data into information is repeated in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The C’s for Converting Data into Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextualized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Categorized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calculated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Condensed</td>
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Table 6 - The C’s for Converting Data into Information
(Source: Davenport and Prusak, 1998)

In the theoretical framework it is stated by Liew (2007) that data can take the form of numbers. Data collected from the CSS process is mainly in the form of numbers from one to six. Davenport and Prusak (1998) also state how the change from data to information occurs when “its creator adds meaning.” In the case of Region International, the market research companies add meaning to the data when they consolidate the results. The material is also categorized through the usage of hot keys where the dealer contacts a customer who gives a low score or requests assistance. The file with the results is then calculated and condensed by summarizing the average scores of the closed questions. The open-ended questions are also combined to make it easier for the dealer and Region International to compare answers. According to Bragberg, errors often occur after the answers are consolidated. In the case of errors, the Excel file with the information is sent back through the process until the file is corrected. However, this process allows Region International to successfully convert data collected into information.

5.6.2 Transferring Information into Knowledge
In the case of transferring information into knowledge from the results of Social Media monitoring, Region International would need to use the Davenport and Prusaks (1998) four C’s for converting information into knowledge. The process requires analytical thought and would need to be performed by someone within the organization with a thorough knowledge of the markets, the products and previous customer feedback. Additionally, Social Media
monitoring can be integrated into Region International through internal meetings to develop a collective understanding of the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The C’s for Converting Information into Knowledge</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparison</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Consequences</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Connections</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conversation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 - The C’s for Converting Information into Knowledge
(Source: Davenport and Prusak, 1998)

The CSS has been active for some time, allowing Region International to compare and track past and present results. As both Kenar and Bragberg explained, changes have been made due to the results received. Kenar further described how meetings are held, also known as CFF meetings, between Region International and independent Volvo CE dealers to discuss the survey results. Kenar explained a common platform to share feedback, where the dealer and Region International are responsible for logging actions associated with the CSS. By using this process, Region International is converting information into knowledge.

5.7 Generating Knowledge Creation within Region International

The concept of ‘Ba’ as described by Nonaka and Konno (1998), also generates a way to develop information into working knowledge within an MNC. ‘Ba’ is defined as a shared space for knowledge creation. We believe that Social Media monitoring services combined with CFF meetings will generate a shared space for collective learning from customer feedback from Social Media monitoring. This is further explained through socialization, externalization, combination and internationalization in the SECI Model. Through the move between tacit and explicit knowledge within the organization, knowledge is created.

Region International can generate knowledge creation within their organization by engaging in the SECI Model as stated by Nonaka and Konno (1998) in chapter three. The use of Social Media monitoring begins at the combination step or in ‘Cyber Ba’. This integrates the feedback results generated from external parties and requires strong leadership for follow-up
actions on the feedback. As identified in the empirical evidence, Social Media monitoring services provide functions to measure the influence or the sentiment of a post. However, it is important for the MNC to engage in human-based analytical feedback to convert the data or information into knowledge. ‘Cyber Ba’ illustrates many groups working together within the organization to develop explicit collective knowledge. In the case of Region International, this may require the ASM and ASCM working together with the dealers and bringing the feedback back to the headquarters. This is also shown in the company’s CFF process.

The ART Model better illustrates this step as the actions, reflections and triggers needed to manage dynamic knowledge. Dynamic knowledge is the ability for knowledge to change or evolve over time. Level three of the ART Model as identified by Nonaka et al. (1998), is the most relevant to this topic because it requires the externalization of shared tacit knowledge. Additionally, it requires Region International to act and reflect on the information collected from Social Media monitoring results.

In the internalization step, also coined as ‘Exercising Ba’, the MNC begins to turn the explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge. This is also when the organization begins to integrate the newly found knowledge into business practices. In the case of Region International, this could mean the company offers an extra service due to consensus from customer feedback that something is lacking.

5.8 Social Media Monitoring Leads to Increased Organizational Learning

As established previously, Social Media monitoring is a form of BI. The use of BI generates some inputs into knowledge management and knowledge management leads to organizational learning within the MNC.

Dixon (1999) states how it is not enough for one member of the organization to participate in organizational learning. Therefore, in the case of Region International, it is not enough for one member of the company to be responsible for Social Media monitoring and exclude the subsequent members. Instead, the team should collectively view the new information to ensure a shared understanding. After looking at the results, the team should interpret the information to see which areas need actions. Actionable areas should be addressed by individual team members and documented for the collective knowledge. Creating
standardized systems also helps to integrate organizational learning into the MNC. This is currently achieved in the CFF meetings that can also be used for interpreting Social Media monitoring results.

5.9 Region International Uses Care for Feedback Process to Integrate Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Crossan and Bedrow (2003) suggest organizational learning is important because it creates capabilities that are valued by their customers. As stated previously, customer satisfaction is of major importance for Region International. Thus, Region International successfully converting data into information is not enough. Dixon (1999) states it is not enough for individuals to learn, the whole organization must also learn.

As explained in the empirical chapter, CFF meetings are a new project with the aim of discussing, analyzing and acting on the results. Dixon (1999) also states that organizational learning is especially important for new processes. Since CFF meetings are new and not implemented in all sub regions within Region International, the learning process will be even more critical.

The four steps of successful organizational learning are stated by Dixon (1999) in the theoretical chapter and reproduced in Figure 8.

![Figure 8 – The Organizational Learning Model (Source: Dixon, 1999)](image)

The first step of generating information is created through the CSS process. Outside data from customer feedback is collected from the surveys conducted by market research
companies. The second step, integrating the information into the organizational context is created through the actual meeting. When the dealer discusses the results together with the ASM and ACSM they are bringing the information to the surface. These discussions help Region International to successfully integrate the information into the corresponding parts of the organization. Furthermore, suggested actions from the meeting are logged with accessibility for both Region International and the dealer. By logging these actions, other dealers are able to see the solutions to issues in neighboring sub regions.

The third step is to convert information into knowledge within a MNC. As analyzed above, Region International is successful in the converting process. This is also achieved through the CFF meetings. The last step of organizational learning is to act based on the interpreted meaning. Employees should act on the newly developed knowledge to achieve end results. In the case of Region International, the dealers are acting as the ‘face’ of the company and therefore, they are responsible for acting on the newly developed knowledge. As analyzed previously, changes have been made and implemented due to the constructive feedback from customers.

To ensure the quality and solutions of eventual problems, there are continuous follow-ups held between the dealer, the ASM and the ACSM. By doing these CFF meetings, Region International has the tools needed for successful organizational learning.

5.10 Social Media Monitoring Results Lead to Business Decisions

MNCs who become more involved in Social Media are finding ways to make an impact on business. Ostrowski (2010) identifies one car company that discontinued an entire new line due to negative customer sentiment regarding the sample product. Other companies are using the engagement features offered by Social Media monitoring companies to respond quickly and directly over the Internet with customers. Experts, Greenberg (2011) and Joel (2011), agree that by engaging in personal dialogue with customers, they feel valued and are more likely to remain loyal customers. In the case of Regional International, engaging with customers can be seen as more of a long-term goal when the company is more active or familiar with Social Media monitoring.
Greenberg (2011) looks at Social Media monitoring as an invaluable resource to find out exactly what customers are saying. Learning short-term customer feedback is essential, especially in the case of a new product launch. For example, it provides a way for the company to hear what their customers are saying about product use, or why a potential customer did not buy the new product. The customer feedback gathered from Social Media monitoring can help the company to make immediate changes to the product. If the company chooses not to respond directly to feedback posts, they can use a press release to convey messages to a larger amount of people. This is also a way to combine traditional media with Social Media.

Social Media monitoring is also beneficial in terms of long-term relationships. Instead of creating a way to attract customers, it is creating a way to retain loyal customers (Greenberg, 2011). For example, Region International can listen more closely to the feedback of existing customers through Social Media monitoring. Through listening to this feedback, the company can make changes to future product models to satisfy the demands of customers or supply a spare part in demand by customers.
Chapter six will re-explore the purpose of this thesis and answer the initial research questions. Conclusions will be identified based on preceding chapters.
6.0 Conclusion
An analysis of the theoretical framework and empirical findings helps to define how Social Media monitoring can add value to current feedback processes within an MNC. Throughout the theory and empirical evidence chapters, we describe how the company should identify their objectives of Social Media monitoring, listen to what their customers are saying, and then choose the tool suited for the nature of their feedback. Furthermore, conclusions are reached based on the findings of previous chapters.

6.1 Purpose
The purpose of this thesis is to provide an MNC with a literature review of Social Media and Social Media monitoring while also answering the research questions. In the theoretical framework, a literature review of Social Media and Social Media monitoring has been completed. This includes a deeper look at SNS, as well as the effect of Social Media on business.

The definition of Social Media is complex because all posts on the Internet can be linked to one another, whether though a website, an SNS, or even a traditional online media source. Therefore, we define Social Media as, “any user-based content posted online.” We then define Social Media monitoring as “scanning the Internet and reporting the user content relevant to the search.”

Additionally, the Star Linkage was created to illustrate the power of Social Media. Each of the Social Media platforms is connected to one another. This shows the ability for a message posted on one platform to spread to other platforms quickly.
The Vo.I.S. Model was created as a qualitative measurement for companies using Social Media monitoring for the first-time. As described in theory, it measures how many people are talking about your company or brand, who is talking about your company or brand and what it is they are saying about your company or brand. The results from the volume, influence and sentiment help companies to define their needs from a Social Media monitoring company.

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<th>Vo</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Volume)</td>
<td>(Influence)</td>
<td>(Sentiment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How many people are talking about you?</td>
<td>Who are the people talking about you?</td>
<td>What are the people saying?</td>
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Table 5 - Vo.I.S. Model
(Source: Own)

In addition to a literature review, the following have been addressed:

- Explore how to best utilize feedback from Social Media monitoring BI systems
As defined in theory, BI takes the data or information from yesterday and uses it to make decisions about tomorrow. In this thesis, five Social Media monitoring companies have been identified. In simple terms, the tools offered by these companies scan the Internet, collect results based on a keyword search, and organize the data to generate measurable information in the form of tables, graphs, etc. This feedback can be used in the same ways as traditional feedback but instead of gaining the opinion of one stakeholder, the company is able to hear from non-customers as well. We also argue that the services of these companies provide BI systems to transport information into the MNC that can then be transformed into knowledge. BI systems also provide inputs into knowledge management which are used for overall organizational learning.

The feedback collected from Social Media monitoring will not only help in the short-term by hearing customer feedback and fixing problems in less time, it will also help with long-term company goals by comparing the results from quarter to quarter. Region International currently compares the results of CSS from quarter to quarter and this will be seen as a complement to organizational learning within the company. Comparing the results from CSS and Social Media monitoring is also a way to convert tacit knowledge from customers into explicit knowledge within the organization. In the future, Region International also has the option to begin engaging directly with customers via Social Media.

As shown in the comparison of Social Media monitoring companies, many of the services cover various languages. This allows the company to hear comments about their brand, their products or their services regardless of location or language.

- Identify and explain current feedback processes concerning B2B relations with emphasis on the end-user

Region International’s current customer feedback process is identified as their CSS. This process uses an outside market research company to call customers once after the purchase and again upon the expiration of their warranty. Most of the questions are closed, however customers are also asked for additional comments at the end of each survey. Additionally, Region International does not receive answers until months later, unless the survey is marked as a hot key. This process is used in all of Region International’s sub regions. The results
from these surveys help the company to make customer-centric changes to ensure long-term customer satisfaction.

- Combine existing feedback processes with feedback generated from Social Media monitoring and analyze the benefits from implementing BI based on Social Media monitoring

As identified in the analysis, the existing CSS focuses on long-term customer relations with the exception of hot key items. Currently, two sub regions have developed CFF meetings for CSS documentation and follow-up. This allows the dealer, the ASM and ACSM to see progress and common issues that have been documented in the past. The TOD for 2011 is to instate the CFF process in the remaining sub regions. Once this process is instated, it would allow both parties to discuss traditional feedback methods and add the discussion of Social Media monitoring results.

6.2 Sub-research Questions

There are three sub-research questions that help to answer the main research question.

Sub-research question 1: How can an MNC use Social Media monitoring to gain constructive customer feedback?

The first sub-research problem is answered by acknowledging that MNCs are already present in Social Media through customer comments and feedback. Therefore, it is in the company’s favor to monitor what is already taking place around their business. These comments are unstructured and are often the true opinions and feelings of customers. This can be compared against the current CSS process used by Region International. In the CSS process most of the questions are closed and structured with the exception of some open-ended questions at the end. In a way, Social Media is today’s word of mouth, or e-word of mouth, where customers look to find ‘people like them’ whom they trust to tell them about a product or service.

Social Media monitoring will help Region International to receive real-time customer feedback. Any of the identified monitoring services allow the company to perform a search in much faster time than the company’s existing CSS process. The CSS results should be
official one month after each quarter, but the time it takes for Region International to receive them is always uncertain. Although they would receive the results in time, it may be considered too late from the point of view of their customers. Some of the calls can be made four to five months before Region International learns the feedback, if it is not a hot key.

Customer relations are of major importance for Volvo CE. Therefore, the CSS process in its current form is concerning how the company is interpreted by customers in a long-term perspective. Since some of the issues may take many months to be communicated to the Region International headquarters, we conclude that the current customer feedback process primarily takes care of long-term relationship issues. Since customers expect shorter response times due to Internet and Social Media, it is possible to improve these relations by the use of Social Media monitoring.

Additionally, the use of Social Media monitoring would allow Region International to receive information in its true form directly from the customers and non-customers. This is compared to the existing CSS process where the feedback passes through many hands before reaching the headquarters and does not include feedback from non-customers. This process also takes months to complete, depending on the appropriate market.

Sub-research question 2: How can an MNC compare Social Media monitoring companies?

The second sub-research problem is answered by identifying, defining and comparing five Social Media monitoring companies. The companies are compared and contrasted based on each company’s answer to 21 different questions. The questions are further divided into the categories of start-up process, monitoring service coverage, customer service, details of use, and cost and commitment. Each of the five companies represents a type of monitoring service from a free service, such as Google Alerts, to a high-end large-business option such as Visible Technologies.

Social Media monitoring is a new concept for Region International and when asked the basic requirements for a service, representatives were unsure. However, for the purpose of this study, we identified Region International’s basic requirements for finding market research companies and used them to identify a Social Media monitoring service. These needs include multilingual language coverage, ability for more than one user to access and operate the
service, and reasonable cost and commitment. The Social Media monitoring services were compared based on that criteria and Radian6 was identified to be the only service that met the requirements.

However, due to the complexity of Social Media and Social Media monitoring as developed throughout theory, empirical evidence and analysis, it is not enough to compare Social Media monitoring companies based on those three criteria. Instead, the company should use Radian6 as a starting point, and also consider what the service is covering, the customer service offered to first-time users, and the length of the set-up process.

Furthermore, since Social Media monitoring is relatively new and constantly changing, many of the questions that are needed will also change from time to time. It is important to know what questions to ask before choosing a Social Media monitoring company.

Sub-research question 3: How can a MNC use Social Media monitoring effectively?

First, for an MNC to use Social Media monitoring in any sense, it is important for them to know what to do with the data gathered. As analyzed in previous chapters, data has to be transformed into information and then later into knowledge in order to make sense for the company.

It is not enough to convert it into knowledge; the knowledge needs to be spread throughout the organization by organizational learning. As analyzed in the previous chapter, Region International is able to create knowledge from the data gathered. This happens through their current CSS process. Furthermore, organizational learning occurs for Region International through their CFF meetings. The meetings are not yet fully instated in all Region International’s sub regions and this is part of the company’s TOD for 2011. Region International’s instating of CFF meetings will also pave the way for successful use of Social Media monitoring. Therefore, without these steps considered, Social Media monitoring cannot be used effectively.
6.3 Main Research Question

How can a MNC add value to current feedback processes through the use of Social Media monitoring?

An MNC can add value to current feedback processes through Social Media monitoring in the following ways:

- **SHORT-TERM FEEDBACK**
  The use of Social Media monitoring can add value to an MNC’s current feedback process by improving short-term relations and decreasing the time it takes to hear from customers. Social Media monitoring is looked at as a way to improve CRM and provide fast, high-quality customer service. Important short-term feedback can include comments or questions about spare parts or other service-related issues. Short-term feedback can also measure the success of a new product launch or comments regarding a press release. Early feedback can greatly impact business, as explained by the car company who discontinued an entire new line due to negative feedback. It also provides the possibility to hear from customers who decided not to purchase from the company and their reasons for their decision.

- **LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS**
  Social Media monitoring can also improve long-term relationships with customers by listening and measuring feedback overtime. This feedback can improve the company’s future product models by informing the company exactly what the customers want in their products. This can also help in difficult economic times when the cost of obtaining new customers is expensive. Additionally, it can help to develop trust between the company and the customers. As written in theory, Social Media helps to provide transparency for companies and thus increase levels of trust.

- **FLEXIBILITY**
  When comparing Social Media monitoring companies, most are flexible when it comes to adding search terms, sites, etc. Also, for the MNC with a global customer base, Social Media Monitoring companies offer multiple languages and one service can be used for multiple markets.
• **COMPLEMENT**
Since Social Media monitoring collects spontaneous feedback, it is difficult to statistically summarize the results. Therefore, Social Media monitoring should not replace current processes, it should be a complement to traditional feedback with focus on more immediate feedback needs. This is most apparent in markets where the use of Internet is not as widespread.

• **NON-CUSTOMERS**
Region International’s current CSS process includes interviews with customers regarding their overall purchase and ownership experience. However, it does not hear feedback from non-customers. Non-customers are defined as those who are looking to purchase, have purchased from a competitor, or purchased a Volvo machine secondhand. It also does not take into consideration the opinions of industry influencers. However, the nature of Social Media allows anyone to post online and Social Media monitoring allows the company to hear and listen to what is said. This means the company can listen to why a customer chose to purchase from a competitor and potentially fix these issues. It also gives Region International a way to target a potential market based on the needs expressed through Social Media.

• **PURPOSE / STRATEGY**
It is of major importance for the MNC to know the purpose of Social Media monitoring within their organization. Lack of a clear strategy and plan of how to deal with the data gathered from Social Media monitoring will hinder the company from converting the information into knowledge. However, a clear strategy allows the company to align their Social Media monitoring goals with the overall goals of the MNC and the goals of the existing feedback processes. Through aligning goals, the feedback methods will better complement one another.
Chapter seven will identify and explain recommendations to Regional International based on a thorough analysis of the theoretical framework and empirical findings. This chapter will also link company recommendations to conclusions.

- Social Media Monitoring
- Possibility to Monitor and Listen to Feedback from Non-customers
- Measure the Vo.I.S.
- Social Media Monitoring Companies
- Start with a Sub Region, Country
- Care for Feedback
- Collaboration
- Market Research Companies
- Time / Technology
7.0 Recommendations

Companies are already on Social Media through their customers, regardless of their own efforts. The question is no longer if an MNC should enter Social Media, it is how an MNC should respond to Social Media. Many companies believe that Social Media marketing is the only method of responding to Social Media. However, Social Media monitoring is argued by experts to be an even more valuable first step to learning customer feedback through Social Media outlets. It also helps the MNC to become familiar with the world of Social Media including important industry influencers or lingo. However, in order for Social Media monitoring to produce effective results, the MNC must find the appropriate place for this BI platform within their organization.

7.1 Social Media Monitoring

We recommend Region International to enter into Social Media monitoring.

As mentioned in the conclusion, Region International’s current CSS process mainly collects long-term feedback with the exception of hot key items. Additionally, it is proven that Social Media monitoring results, regardless of the Social Media monitoring company chosen, can provide faster feedback. Therefore, the inclusion of Social Media monitoring would also help Region International to act on customer feedback faster.

This recommendation is possible because of the way Region International currently handles customer feedback. The MNC already converts traditional customer feedback, or data, into information and again into knowledge in order to distribute the results within the organization. This means that a process for converting incoming data into knowledge is already in place and can also be used for the results of Social Media monitoring.

As stated in the conclusion, Social Media monitoring should not replace the existing feedback process, it should instead be a complement. Regularly scanning Social Media will help Region International to receive faster updates than their CSS results but will not be able to replace the closed questions in the CSS. The closed questions in the CSS help the company to statistically cross-check customer satisfaction from quarter to quarter and from sub region to sub region. This would be difficult to replicate with Social Media monitoring. However, the
use of Social Media monitoring will help the company to hear more open-ended feedback from customers as well as non-customers.

7.2 Possibility to Monitor and Listen to Feedback from Non-customers

We recommend Region International to enter Social Media monitoring to listen to non-customers.

Region International’s current CSS process only includes feedback from existing customers and therefore excludes feedback from non-customers. In this case, non-customers include anyone who has not purchased a Region International machine. As Bragberg stated in the empirical chapter, it is important to hear the voice of a customer who has purchased a machine. Through listening to company perceptions from customers, the company is also strengthening the perception of itself. Therefore, it is also important to listen to the thoughts and perceptions of non-customers in order for the company to gain a more realistic view of itself.

The use of Social Media monitoring allows the company to monitor and listen to the comments from potential customers who decided against purchasing Region International’s products. Potential customers are defined as those who are looking for a machine but have not purchased or have purchased from another company. Analyzing this feedback creates the possibility to localize the reasons why these potential customers did not purchase, fix the issues and target them for potential sales.

Additionally, it would allow Region International to hear what competitors or industry influencers are saying about their products or services. Social Media monitoring would also make it possible to listen to rumors about the Volvo CE brand, and the negatively spread feedback through online comments.

7.3 Measure the Vo.I.S.

We recommend Region International to measure the results of Social Media monitoring.

Simply purchasing a service is not enough for the MNC to gain profitable end results. Entering Social Media monitoring without a clear strategy would be of non-beneficial value
for the company. If the company does not know what they are looking for or for what purpose they will collect the data, both money and time will be wasted. Instead, the company should examine the Vo.I.S. of their results as a preliminary measurement. The Vo.I.S. can vary for an MNC based on the keywords searched or company chosen.

The first step is volume. By measuring the number of posts, it is also easier to decipher what type of Social Media monitoring service is needed. For example, if there are a limited number of posts, the MNC may find that a more basic Social Media monitoring service will suffice.

The next step is influence. Who is writing the post? In Social Media, there are influencers who have control in various markets. As described by Cooke and Buckley (2008) in the theory, and further strengthened by Wall in the empirical, the words of one person may be more trusted than many posts from various people. Additional research may be required, but it is important to identify your industry influencers. It is also important to identify the language they are using to talk about your products or services. If there are terms they and other customers are using, it is beneficial to know the lingo of customers.

The third step is sentiment. What are they writing about your products or services? Are the majority of posts positive or negative? Identifying the sentiment of a post is difficult due to posts written with sarcasm or reading a post out of context. However, this is often the most useful to solving customer issues because it illustrates what the customer is feeling and can potentially give the company constructive criticism.

Region International can identify the Vo.I.S. of their company by comparing trial results between companies. Furthermore, as many of the most expensive services offer complex analytical data, the collected information may not be big enough to make any generalizations about the information collected.

7.4 Social Media Monitoring Companies

We recommend a deeper look into the Radian6 platform.

Although Social Media monitoring companies are ever-changing, we recommend more research into the services of Radian6. We have used the criteria for selecting traditional
market research companies to also measure the five services in our study. Based on the comparison, Radian6 proved to be the only company to fit the following criteria:

- Multilingual coverage
- Allowance of multiple users within the MNC
- Budget friendly
- Month to month contract

Alterian and Visible Technologies also offer multilingual coverage while Google Alerts and Trackur do not. All of the services studied, with the exception of Google Alerts, allow multiple people to access and use the service within the MNC. In regards to budget and commitment, Radian6 and Trackur both offer services for a reasonable price with a month to month contract. However, we have not selected Trackur for further study because the company does not fit other requirements, for example multilingual coverage. Alterian offers a similar cost but requires a year contract. Visible Technologies is the most expensive service and also requires a year contract. Google Alerts does not require a contract and is free of charge.

However, as identified in the empirical evidence and analysis, there are additional qualifications for choosing a company. More extensive should be asked to each Social Media monitoring company including 21 questions from our study.

7.5 Start with a Sub Region, Country

We recommend Region International to begin Social Media monitoring within a certain sub region or market.

As the identified tools have shown, multiple options can be modified with Social Media monitoring tools. For Region International, a company who is not yet present in Social Media monitoring, we recommend the company begin with a limited scanning area. For example, Brazil accounts for 30 percent of Region International’s sales, and would be a strong starting point. Another important factor in covering Brazil is the language. Since the official language in Brazil is Portuguese, the comments regarding the Brazilian market will be easier to locate.
Since most of the Social Media monitoring companies offer flexible options, it is easy for the company to change their searching profiles.

Another suggestion is to begin Social Media monitoring in Turkey. Company interviews have illustrated that Region International currently has a close working relationship with the dealers in Turkey and the CFF process is already rolled out. Therefore, both parties are already engaging in discussions relating to customer feedback and adding discussions regarding Social Media monitoring results would be logical.

Thus, by starting with one sub region or country, the monitoring results will be easier to handle, and give the company a better overview of what the services can provide for the company.

Furthermore, Social Media monitoring may face similarities with market research companies. As explained previously in the thesis, Region International works with different market research companies throughout their sub regions due to language and the cultural differences. It is also important for the company to consider the same criteria when selecting a monitoring company. However, the need for different Social Media monitoring tools between sub regions is not as important as different people within Region International reading and interpreting the results from different sub regions. Segmenting the results from each sub region allows the company to make the appropriate changes needed in that sub region.

7.6 Care for Feedback

We recommend Region International to schedule more frequent CFF meetings to discuss Social Media monitoring results.

As stated previously, Region International currently has an effective organizational knowledge-creation environment through their CFF process. Although this is only instated in two of their sub regions, Region International has planned to roll-out these meetings in the subsequent sub regions this year. In developing these meetings, the company is holding the dealer, the ASM, and the ACSM accountable for customer service and results. Additionally, the meetings can act as a comparison between traditional customer feedback methods as well as Social Media monitoring results.
One problem with using CFF meetings to discuss Social Media monitoring results in their current form is how irregularly the meetings are held. Since the purpose of Social Media monitoring is to complement the current CSS process and give faster feedback, the CFF meetings would need to be held more often. In order for Region International to integrate the monitoring services successfully, a new process must be started. Therefore, to successfully integrate and run a Social Media monitoring service, the company must hold CFF meetings more frequently to discuss results.

### 7.7 Collaboration

*We recommend Region International collaborate with other Volvo brands.*

As identified by Region International representatives, the Volvo brand is often confused by customers. We see this as a potential issue occurring through Social Media where posts are often relaxed and written without brand consideration. Therefore, it is possible that upon receiving the monitoring results, some of the comments are directed toward other Volvo brands. In order to help solve this issue, we recommend Region International to collaborate with different Volvo CE regions. Furthermore, there may be a need for collaboration with Volvo Group.

The confusion between sub regions in Social Media monitoring is also important for Region International. It is important to locate where the information or comments originate and to which dealer or product they are associated. The Vo.I.S. Model helps this process by acting as the first step of which sub regions, dealers or products to monitor further. For example, if search terms are used for a new product launch in a certain sub region and the volume of the posts is small, the company can then focus on another product or sub region to monitor. However, it is important to identify the source of the posts so the correct dealer or sub region can also be identified. This will also help to eliminate false competitor comments. Finally, the source of the feedback may be the only linkage to a specific sub region due to the informal nature of Social Media comments.
7.8 Market Research Companies

We recommend Region International demand more from their current market research companies.

After interviewing Region International representatives, it is clear that the time in which they receive the information is unreliable and often the files are corrupt. Therefore, we recommend Region International to find a more direct method for the market research companies to enter the information. More direct methods could include entering survey results into an online database or sending them directly to Region International once they are collected. If an online database were selected, Region International could use the same database for all market research companies regardless of sub regions. The market research companies would be required to enter the information as they receive it, helping to eliminate corrupt Excel files. This would also allow Region International to access the information anytime, for purposes such as the CFF meetings. Both methods would also allow the company to receive real-time answers.

7.9 Time / Technology

We recommend Region International to allocate time and human capital to the internal use of Social Media monitoring.

The results of Social Media monitoring are not valuable without conducting an analysis after each search. Therefore, we feel that it is important to allocate at least one person to the beginning stages of Social Media monitoring within the organization. This person must be familiar with the company and have a focus of customer service rather than just marketing or public relations. This person would also be responsible for ensuring that each ASM, ACSM or dealer receives the appropriate information from the monitoring results.

Over time, this function could be more liberally used throughout the company. For example, the ASM or ACSM for each sub region could conduct searches and be required to save and record the results of each search.
Future Research Areas

Chapter Eight will identify points of further research for Region International that correspond to Social Media monitoring.

Method of Study
Social Media Monitoring Companies
Benchmarking
Customer Analysis
Industry Influencers
Brand Recognition
Feedback Measurement
8.0 Future Research Areas

8.1 Method of Study
This thesis was conducted by using a case study with a qualitative method. For further research, other research methods such as conducting an experiment or using a quantitative method may supply different findings for Region International. Through conducting an experiment, it would be possible to measure the effects of scanning Social Media for a new product launch or press release. Through conducting a quantitative study, it may be possible to measure the profitability of using Social Media monitoring.

8.2 Social Media Monitoring Companies
Social Media monitoring companies are changing rapidly due to mergers and acquisitions. It is possible that the companies in this thesis will not be industry leaders in the upcoming months. Therefore, further research may be needed into Social Media monitoring companies. Additionally, some Social Media monitoring companies supply the names and case studies of current customers. This will be helpful for a closer look at each company’s existing customer’s strategies in Social Media monitoring.

8.3 Benchmarking
Taking a closer look at B2B companies who are currently using Social Media monitoring services is recommended. More specifically, further research into companies with similar industries would help to benchmark Social Media monitoring activities.

8.4 Customer Analysis
Despite our analysis, this thesis did not provide any research about Region International’s customers regarding Internet access. Thus, Social Media is a new and exploding topic and is not yet globally spread. The number of Internet users is not even one third of the population. Extended research is needed before making a final decision.

8.5 Industry Influencers
The need to locate and identify online industry influencers is important for an MNC looking to enter into Social Media or Social Media monitoring. These influencers have the ability to affect the market and customer opinions. Locating industry influencers is even more important when the MNC decides to engage with customers via Social Media. Additionally,
it is important to learn the customer’s language within the industry to better understand feedback via Social Media.

**8.6 Brand Recognition**

Prior to investing in Social Media monitoring, a deeper knowledge of the customer’s awareness of different brands within Volvo is recommended. As we have identified in our empirical evidence, some customers struggle to identify the difference between Volvo brands and by conducting more extensive research, it would be possible to see what resources can simultaneously be allocated instead of working with almost the same thing from other regions.

**8.7 Feedback Measurement**

This thesis has provided research about the CSS and how Social Media monitoring can help Region International to improve current processes. Other feedback surveys including Brand Tracking Surveys, Competitive Satisfaction Surveys, and Dealer Satisfaction Surveys, have not been taken into account in this paper. In order to develop a more holistic view of customer feedback through traditional means or otherwise, all surveys should be included.
“If your products and services suck, Social Media can’t save you – marketing cannot save you – advertising cannot save you. Only you and your desire to not have a sucky product can save you.”

– Mitch Joel
9.0 Bibliography

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**Articles**


**Online resources**


**Videos**


**Company Material**


**Interviews**


Kenar, G. Area Sales Manager for Turkey, Volvo Construction Equipment Region International. Personal communication. 14 April 2011.

Wall, S. Social Media expert. Personal communication. 07 April 11.
Appendices

Appendix A: Social Networks with at Least One Million Site Visitors a Day

Appendix B: Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Websites | March 2011

Appendix C: Interview Questions
Appendices

Appendix A: Social Networks with a Least One Million Site Visitors a Day

Source: Royal Pingdom, 2011.
Appendix B: Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Websites | March 2011

![Unique visitors March 2011 (expected)](image)

Source: *eBizMBA Rank, 2011*
Appendix C: Interview Questions

Susanna Wall
Social Media Industry Expert

Social Media

1. What is your definition of Social Media?
2. Would you recommend companies to enter into Social Media marketing? Why/why not?
3. What is most important to think about for a company entering into Social Media for the first time?
4. What is the creditability from Social Media?
5. In your opinion, what is the company’s view of Social Media?
6. How do Social Media impact Customer Relationship Management (CRM)?

Social Media Monitoring

7. What is your definition of Social Media monitoring?
8. What is the most important thing to think about for a first-time Social Media monitoring user?
9. In your opinion, what are the risks and opportunities with Social Media monitoring?
10. Who are the key players in Social Media monitoring?
11. Would you recommend Social Media or Social Media monitoring as the first step for a first-time company?
12. What is the most important Social Media platform to be active in or to monitor?
Hanna Bragberg  
Process Leader Core Value Support  
Volvo CE Region International

CSS Process Background

1. When did the CSS process begin?  
2. Did you use something for customer feedback prior to the CSS? If yes, what was it?  
3. Do you always conduct a CFF meeting two weeks after receiving the CSS results?  
4. Who attends the CFF meeting more than the Dealer Representatives, ASM and ACSM?  
5. Are the CSS results shared with anyone outside the meetings? If so, how do they receive the information?  
6. Is there a follow-up procedure after the CFF meeting?

CSS Process Specifics

7. When and how do you receive CSS results?  
8. How does the customer feedback affect your job?  
9. Do you learn anything from reading the CSS results?  
10. What are the strengths on the current CSS process?  
11. Can you identify the weaknesses of the distribution of your current CSS feedback process?  
12. Do you receive new tasks based on the customer and dealer feedback?  
13. Can you name changes that have occurred because of the CSS feedback?  
14. Have you noticed any difference between the purchase experience and the ownership experience surveys?  
15. Do you notice different kinds of feedback from each quarter?  
16. Do you exchange feedback with other regions or divisions?  
17. Would you like to change the process of CSS in any way, how?

Social Media and Social Media Monitoring

18. Are you currently active in Social Media?  
19. What do you currently know about Social Media Monitoring?  
20. What is Volvo Construction Equipment Region International’s main objective for Social Media Monitoring? i.e. brand management, product launch campaign  
21. Is there someone or a specific department within the organization that you feel would have the responsibility of using a Social Media monitoring service?  
22. What is most important when selecting a Social Media monitoring company?  
23. Do you have any expectations for a Social Media monitoring company?  
24. Is there a specific price point the company is willing to spend?  
25. What is your spontaneous reaction of Social Media and Social Media monitoring?
Customer Satisfaction Survey

1. When and how do you receive CSS results?
2. Do you have time to look through the feedback from customers?
3. How does the customer feedback affect your job?
4. Do you learn anything from reading the CSS results?
5. Do you discuss the results with anyone?
6. If issues come up regarding your team, what is the next step?
7. What are the strengths of the current CSS process?
8. Can you identify the weaknesses of the distribution of your current CSS feedback process?
9. Do you receive new tasks based on the customer and dealer feedback?
10. Can you name changes that have been done because of feedback from CSS?
11. Have you noticed any difference between the purchase experience and the ownership experience surveys?
12. Do you notice different kinds of feedback from each quarter?
13. Do you exchange feedback with other regions or divisions?
14. Would you like to change anything about the CSS process? If yes, how?

Internal Relations

15. How do different teams cooperate in Volvo?
16. How do you work with your corporate values (quality, safety and environmental care)?
17. Do you have any direct contact with end-consumers?
18. How is Volvo creating customer satisfaction?
19. In your opinion, what is the best way to create customer satisfaction?
20. Have you noticed any change in customer relations because of Social Media or Internet in general?
Camilla Gustafson  
Marketing and Communications  
Volvo CE Region International  

Customer Satisfaction Survey

1. When and how do you receive CSS results?  
2. Do you have time to look through the feedback from customers?  
3. How does the customer feedback affect your job?  
4. Do you learn anything from reading the CSS results?  
5. Do you discuss the results with anyone?  
6. If issues come up regarding your team, what is the next step?  
7. What are the strengths of the current CSS process?  
8. Can you identify the weaknesses of the distribution of your current CSS feedback process?  
9. Do you receive new tasks based on the customer and dealer feedback?  
10. Can you name changes that have been done because of feedback from CSS?  
11. Have you noticed any difference between the purchase experience and the ownership experience surveys?  
12. Do you notice different kinds of feedback from each quarter?  
13. Do you exchange feedback with other regions or divisions?  
14. Would you like to change the way with the CSS process, if yes how?

Relations

15. How do different teams cooperate in Volvo?  
16. How do you work with your corporate values (quality, safety and environmental care)?  
17. Do you have any direct contact with end-consumers?  
18. How is Volvo creating customers satisfaction?  
19. In your opinion, what is the best way of creating customer satisfaction?  
20. Have you noticed any change in customer relations because of Social Media or Internet in general?

Social Media and Social Media Monitoring

21. Are you using Social Media as a marketing channel?  
22. Are you active on Internet in any sense? (if no on previous)  
23. Are you currently monitoring Social Media?  
24. What is the creditability of Social Media?  
25. Do you think it would gain Region International to be more active in Social Media/ Social Media monitoring?  
26. Would you have time to look at the results of an eventual Social Media monitoring site?
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