

Digital Darwinism and the Social Revolution: What Basic Needs of Man Represent the Fuel of the Revolution on the Part of the Customer?

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Today, we can justifiably speak of a **social revolution**, because the possibilities of the Internet help provide millions of users a previously unimaginable attentive ear and thus a **plentitude of power**. The central lever of the new power the customers have is their **worldwide network**. However, this is where we have to be careful not to let the **power users**, who dominate social media with their actions and opinions, dominate us in our actions and reactions. No matter what, it is, however, the companies' responsibility to establish an effective online **counterprevailing power**, in order to not end up being the chased in social media.

To understand the customer's side of the social revolution, we first need to understand the basic need structure of human beings, in order to be able to attend on them (cf. Fig. 2.1). Taking the own "ego" as the starting point in this **basic need structure**, the needs for solidarity on the one hand and freedom/autonomy on the other—facing each other in the area of conflict—are aspired. **Solidarity** covers the need for safety as well as the sense of belonging to a partner, family, group, team, and company. An attempt is made to be part of "something larger." The negative characteristics of this are dependency on third parties and self-abandonment. In contrast to that, there is the pursuit of **freedom/autonomy**. In combination with that, power and control are pursued. The uncontrolled satisfying of this need can lead to loneliness.

A further basic need of human beings is the quest for **creativity/self-fulfillment**. This is about creating something and to effect performance. An excessive expression of this need can lead to an inability to cope. Somewhat isolated from these three basic needs, we have the quest for **being**. This is about being accepted because you "exist"—not because you have done something. In an ideal situation of being, flow sets in. Then you feel in accord with what you are currently doing. The physical challenge experienced and your own capacity are in absolute balance. Only the moment counts—and time flies by unnoticed. A dominating factor when expressing this need for "being" may, in contrast, be the feeling of boredom and uselessness. The entirety of these four needs, aspired by every human being in varying intensities, represents the important drivers of human behavior.

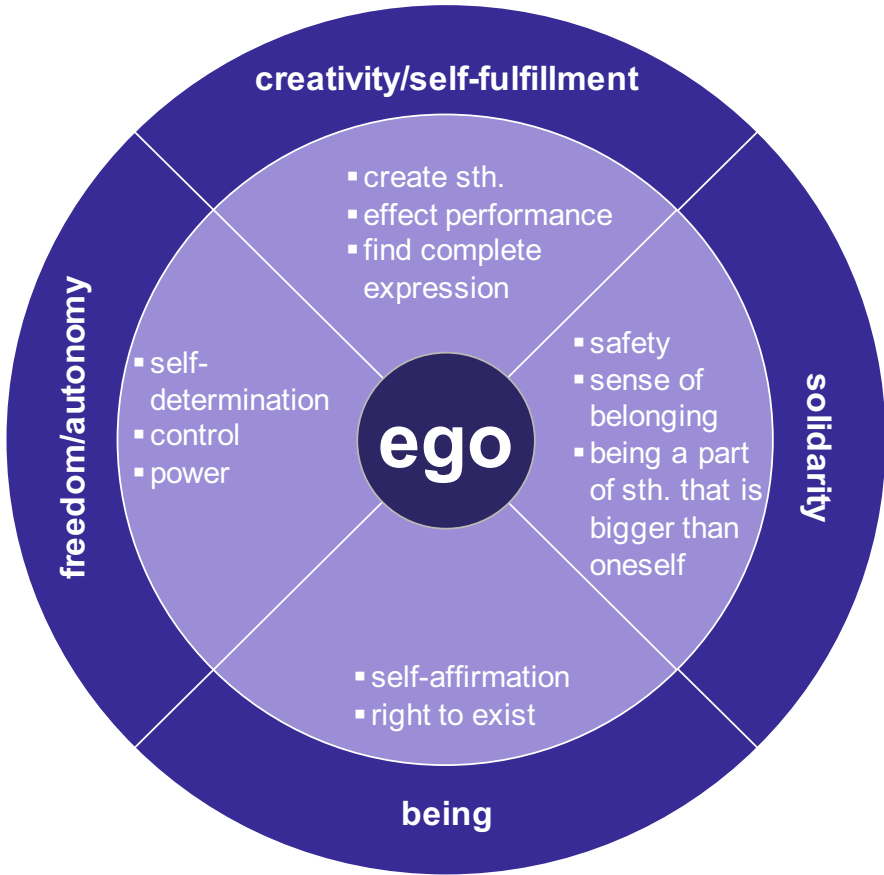


Fig. 2.1 Basic need structure of human beings (Source Author illustration)

Derived from these fundamental needs of human beings, we can now proceed in search of the **motives for specific behavioral patterns on the Internet** (cf. Fig. 2.2). The **motive** represents the reason for why we human beings do something. In the case of the target group that is of particular importance to us, that of potential customers and customers as online users, we must differentiate between commercial and noncommercial motives for what they do. **Commercial motives** include, for example, the attempt to purchase products or services for as low a price as possible. This motive leads people visiting price comparison sites (such as *bizrate.com*, *nextag.com*, *shoplocal.com*, *slickdeals.net*; cf. Ebizma, 2013). Commercial motives also lead to people selling their own services or other products (e.g., photos, videos, music recordings, texts, and hand-made crafts), without actually being a professional seller in e-commerce. The previously mentioned platform *Etsy* but also more diversified providers like *eBay* or *amazon* offer these semiprofessional sellers interesting means of access to the market. These help to

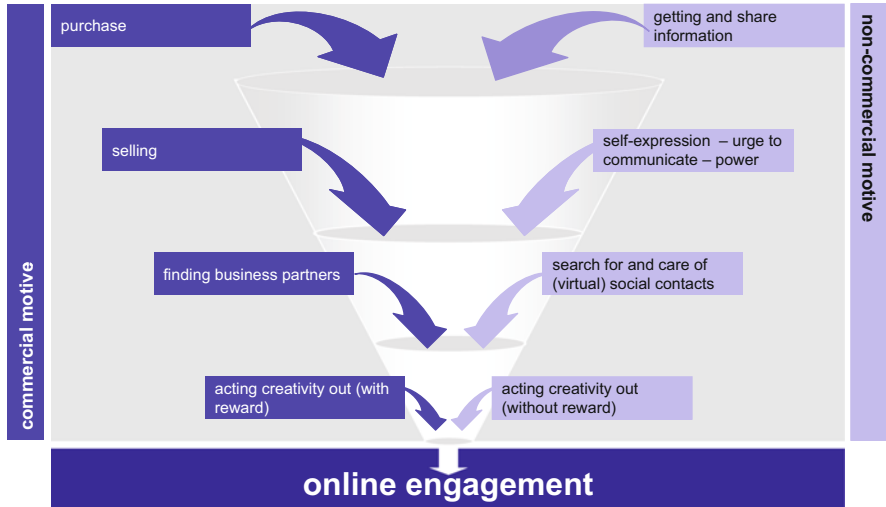


Fig. 2.2 Motive structures of online users (Source Author illustration)

make contributions towards satisfying the needs for autonomy and in particular for creativity. Apart from that, the search for business partners (also as a potential employer) can be promoted by networks such *LinkedIn*, *talkbiznow.com*, or *meettheboss.tv*. These activities based on the aspiration for solidarity.

Besides that, there is a large number of **noncommercial motives**, which result in increasingly more time being spent online. The dominant driver behind that is the quest for affinity. The basics for this are **getting and sharing information**, which is supported by online research using search engines and can make a contribution to commercial goals. The evaluation of or the participation in evaluation platforms, blogs, forums, and communities satisfies the need for affinity. In addition, the latter concepts offer the possibility of making one's own contributions, whereby the motives of **self-expression** and the **urge to communicate** as specific characteristics of creativity are accommodated. The entirety of these motives leads to millions of *Facebook* members elaborately creating their profiles and pinboards, updating them on a daily basis, and filling them with videos, photos, and/or recordings. The spectrum for living out one's own urge to communicate ranges from the answer to the simple question "What am I doing," which is answered via *Twitter* and *Facebook*, to the editing of complex topics on *Wikipedia*. In the case of the latter involvement, solidarity with the knowledge community is established. At the same time it can be ascertained that "Private television gave everybody the chance of 5 min of fame. In the mass culture of the Internet, the fear of losing significance in the ocean of opinions opens the private locks" (Thiel, 2012, p. 27). Is a lot of what is happening here a cry for attention and a scream for affinity in a world where more and more securities are disappearing?

A **striving for power** can also be connected to the urge to communicate based on freedom/autonomy. Until now, consumers were predominantly a part of an unorganized, invisible “mass.” They were hardly able to exert influence on companies. Now, individuals can vote via the Internet in social networks and by means of blogs, forums, and communities, put the fear of God into companies. This is also successful with politicians when diligent researchers provide evidence of neglect when writing up their dissertation. All in all, a previously unknown **position of power**—based on the **power of the mass**—is emerging which we, as companies, have to learn to deal with.

Through this, the **significance of previous opinion makers** is being embedded in the public. Until today, the (public) opinion was primarily affected by the exposures by (professional) opinion makers in discussions taking place in (mass) media. The voices of the (alleged) experts dominated. Due to the greater diffusion and active use of social media, not only will previous experts find it difficult to convey their monopolies of opinions, but a much greater diversity of opinions will emerge. And the job of our companies will be to catch them in the organization (cf. Chap. 9).

Specific offers on the web enable users to live out the quest for affinity, creativity, and autonomy simultaneously—and at no risk. Offers such as *FarmVille* or *CityVille* make it possible to start up dream careers and to take over the power over one’s own company—at least in the virtual world (cf. fliplife.rtl2.de). The objective of such offers is to accommodate the quest for social recognition by becoming, for example, a boss or by winning an international sport tournament—only in the virtual world, however!

The motive of **acting creativity out** can, on the one hand, refer to the further development of third-party performances. These include, for example, the involvement in the development of *Lego* bricks as well as the answering of complex research questions which, for example, are presented by companies such as *Novartis*, *DuPont*, and *Procter & Gamble* on *innocentive.com*. In some cases, in doing so, commercial motives may play a role if creative services are also rewarded by the companies. The creativity motive may, on the other hand, refer to the design of third-party performances, which the customer himself wishes to buy. This is the case with the concepts of *spreadshirt.com* or *cerealize.com*. Contributing one’s own creativity can at the same time make a contribution to the motive of **self-expression** (the need to be) in the relevant reference groups, whereby the **search for and care of (virtual) contacts** can be supported as expressing the quest for affinity. For many users, this represents the main motive for their involvement in social media.

This **analysis of the needs structures** and the **motive structure of online users** provides an important background for actions for the organization of our marketing and communication measures. For, only the extensive consideration of the insights presented safeguards what is vital for an involvement of our target segments.

► Relevance!

All of what has been previously said can be summarized into the following **relevance triggers of an engagement in social media** from the users' point of view:

- Entertainment/fun
- Education/growth/enable people
- Save money
- Save time
- Solve something

It becomes obvious: we definitely have to offer the users **added value for the engagement in social media** to motivate their involvement. **Relevance** will only be created if at least some of the added value dimensions stated here are present. Concerning our own dedication to social media, we can take the *Facebook* mission as a reference:

Give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected.

Think Box

- To what extent is the need structure of the target persons taken into consideration in general when organizing our marketing concept?
- Which needs do we address in particular with our social media involvement?
- Which needs should and can we address?
- Which triggers of an involvement can we apply in a particularly credible way: entertainment/fun, education/growth/enable people, save money, save time, or solve something?
- Is it being monitored whether we are applying or can apply such triggers in a really targeted manner?

At the same time, we must recognize what **expectations potential customers and customers** have of us as a company—which we should take into consideration when organizing our products and services. To put it simple, these can be characterized by the buzzwords “**me, all, immediately, and everywhere.**” How these expectations are defined in the individual cases is shown in Fig. 2.3.

Due to the great intensity of competition in almost all sectors, under “**me,**” the customer can take the liberty of expecting or even demanding great **appreciation in the interaction** among other things. If he is denied this, there are usually many competitors waiting to win over the customer. “Lived appreciation” includes a **correct personalization**, for example, the correct addressing of the target person by name. At the same time, the expectation increases that, as an individual, he is

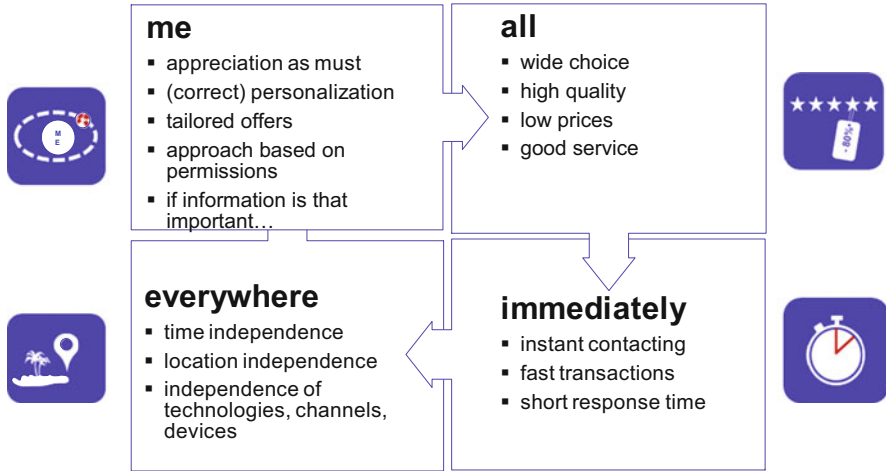


Fig. 2.3 Ascertainment of the new expectations on the customer side (Source Author illustration)

taken seriously with specific and, under certain circumstances, with customized wishes and thus receives personalized communication and offers. The **demands from the potential customers' and customers' perspective**—which we see ourselves increasingly confronted with—are summarized, for example, in the following questions:

- Are the offers customized to my needs?
- Does the sender speak my language and does he put that across?
- Do I receive precisely that information that I wish by email, e-newsletter, mailing, posts, status updates, etc.?
- Are my instructions for addressing me by mailing, posts, telephone, email, and fax respected by the company advertising?
- Can I find the information I want fast both online and offline?
- Can I simply order and pay?
- Do I find the help I need?
- Can I effect the desired transactions when I choose to and from where I choose to (research work, reading newspapers/magazines, posting inquiries, and placing orders)?

The question of appreciation is anchored in another point—**the way the terms** (General Terms of Business) or other agreements **are dealt with**, above all data policies presented to the potential customers and customers. The terms of use on *Facebook* are laid down on three pages. A further 12 pages cover the “Statement of Rights and Responsibilities” of *Facebook* and a further 20 pages define the Data Use Policy (as of 2014). The most frequent lie on the Internet is surely: “I have read the Terms,” as they are frequently very lengthy and presented in small writing. Despite or rather due to this behavior of our customers, we as companies are well

advised not to plant any biased, uncommon, or surprising clauses and conditions on the users. Either they may be illegal and thus become ineffective or they are legally agreed upon and are interpreted to the customer's disadvantage. If the conflicts involved are dragged out in social media, long-term damage to one's image can be the consequence. Both impacts should be avoided.

The expectations regarding **individualization** materialize in the **granting of permissions** to contact. These permissions are specific authorizations a potential customer or customer gives a company regarding the "permitted" ways of contacting them (such as by letter, email, telephone, and/or fax). The permissions called **tokens** needed to access user data on *Facebook*, for example, are of particular importance (cf. Chaps. 6 and 7). These permissions can be withdrawn by the potential customer or customer at all times. Companies are obliged by law to strictly observe these permissions for contacting.

The self-centeredness also materializes in the **demands on entertainment electronics**. Fewer and fewer—in particular younger—people want to watch films and documentaries when they are actually being broadcast on TV. With that said, **on-demand and streaming services**, which besides linear TV are also obviating the need for CD and DVD players, are booming. The manufacturers of hardware will lose in favor of content sales platforms (such as *amazon*, *Spotify*), as long as they themselves do not become content marketers (such as *Apple* with *iTunes*).

An additional element of the self-centered expectancy materializes in the statement: **if the news is that important, it will find me** (cf. Mathew, 2008). This means that people believe that they no longer need to actively search for information and offers, because they are presented with it in particular via posts in social media—if relevant!

The customer becomes a **master of communication**. He decides when, who, about what, and via which channels one can communicate with him. To this end, the customer is granted this power due to his legally protected position and the support coming from social media.

The expectant attitude "**all**" shows the great expectations customers reveal in most sectors. Customers have learned that "everything is possible" frequently applies:

- Award-winning products of the *Consumer Reports* at *Walmart* are to be found in the range as best buy products.
- *H&M* offers clothing by the designers *Jimmy Choo*, *Roberto Cavalli*, and *Sonia Rykiel* at favorable conditions.
- *amazon* offers a wide and extensive range, combined with a highly personalized recommendation of other "matching" products—including delivery the following day.
- Increasingly more brands are enabling the individualization of the product—from *Ray Ban* spectacles over pullovers by *Laura Biagiotti* to the *Prada* bag. In the case of some prestige brands, anyone can now become a self-made designer.

- On the Internet, an almost inexhaustible range of information can be found—around the clock, frequently highly topical or as a news stream even in real time and mostly free of charge.

At the same time, an **“it won’t be paid for”** or **“as long as it’s free mentality”** is prevailing in many areas of the Internet. That makes it very difficult for companies to motivate users to overcome **paywalls** they have installed to earn money with their content on the Internet. The acceptance of paywalls by the customers still represents a great challenge for the majority of publishers. The user has learned that he doesn’t have to pay anything for great tips—for example, where there are savings at the moment (such as at *tightwad.com*), which hotel is offering a particularly good price-performance ratio (such as at *trivago.com*), which airline offers the cheapest flight from New York to Delhi (at *farecompare.com*), and for all possible and impossible answers at the site from moms for moms at *soulmom.com*. And there is another offer of news—the *Huffington Post*. Why should he then pay for editorial news in the *New York Times*?

This is how many users consistently avoid overcoming the paywalls the publishers—called **content providers**—have set up or are currently doing so. Again and again, attempts have been and are being made to put a price tag on the contents also offered on the Internet with great effort. Whereas few people would come up with the idea of asking for a free copy of a printed newspaper at a kiosk, free access to the same material in an online format is quasi-presupposed, a fact that can lead to existential problems for many companies. It will thus be interesting to see how the **fee-charged apps** of selected publishers (at present, e.g., of the newspapers *New York Times* and *The Financial Times*) will be accepted by user groups in the long run.

For, we as users need to be clear about a great **risk of the “it mustn’t cost anything mentality” on the Internet**: “Anybody who is not willing to spend good money on good journalism, puts himself at the mercy of commerce and the search engines, which are ready to pounce on our data. And when the last decent newspaper has disappeared, all that remains is gossip” (D’Inka, 2012, p. 1).

The expectant attitude of **“everywhere/immediately”** is also being fulfilled by many companies in the meantime. Mobile availability—not only via telephone but also as access to the Internet—is taken for granted nowadays in the developed industrial nations. The buzzword for this is **always on**—meaning “always being available”—irrespective of whether this takes place in a work or private environment and stationary or mobile. This also causes the thresholds between private and public or professional spheres to increasingly merge. For this reason, potential customers and customers frequently expect around the clock access to the customer service center: every day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year—without giving the financial implications for the company a thought.

The access to company offers is thus increasingly shifting from “classical business hours” at certain places to a **customer-driven interaction process flexible in time and location**. Thus, the potential customers and customers are able to both receive and send from anywhere and around the clock. This challenge makes

great demands on companies. In this **instant society**, the motto of “any channel, any device, anywhere, anytime” holds true.

In addition, there is the expectant attitude “**immediately**,” which causes **acceleration effects** in various areas. Generally speaking, potential customers and customers give companies increasingly less **time to respond**. If there is still no response to an email after 4 h, this is followed up many times. And why should a customer wait 2–4 weeks with a seller if an order placed with *amazon* is usually fulfilled within 24–48 h—or even the same day? Past experience with *amazon* is drawn on as a benchmark (i.e., as a reference value) for the rating of other companies—even beyond the borders of sectors. Whether this appears appropriate in a specific case from a seller’s point of view is of little interest to the I-driven customers. **Channel hopping** helps the user to punish the slow companies by means of a mouse click on a competitor—possibly with the consequence that the slow company has lost the user forever.

This “immediately” leads to a further interesting development, which can be described by the term of a **culture of now**. It is not only increasingly ascertained from younger target groups that when watching TV (which in many cases takes place on a laptop, smart phone, or a tablet PC), they not only check their *Facebook* account or email inbox on a regular basis but also send text messages and compare notes about various topics via *Twitter* or *WhatsApp*. **Multitasking** causes employees and managers to continuously check their email inbox on their *Blackberry*, *iPhone* & Co.—even and especially during ongoing conferences, meetings, and lectures. Recent studies on multitasking make it clear, however, that this is not the nature of man and one therefore achieves significantly worse results when concentrating on several tasks at a time. In addition, it becomes clear that this phenomenon not only holds true for men, but that women are also not really able to multitask (cf. DGUV, 2010)! But what is the greatest **driver of the culture of now**, if it is not an improvement in service provision?

► The danger of missing out on something!

When it comes to **time as a critical success factor**, the process presented in Fig. 2.4 thus needs to be considered. When examining an offer, a customer’s **motivation** first increases. At the highest point, a request for more information or an order is frequently made. After that, the level of motivation goes down again because other offers are fighting for attention and one’s own doings slowly fall into oblivion. The faster the requested catalog, the first e-newsletter or sample copy of a newspaper or the delivery of *Zappos* arrives, for example, the greater the motivation to be found, which can have the effect of being promotional towards the image and ordering. One thing is certain: the later the request happens, the less remains of the initial motivation, because other companies have possibly—and faster—provided further information or submitted interesting offers. And with that, we are possibly not talking about weeks, but days and—in particular in e-commerce—hours!

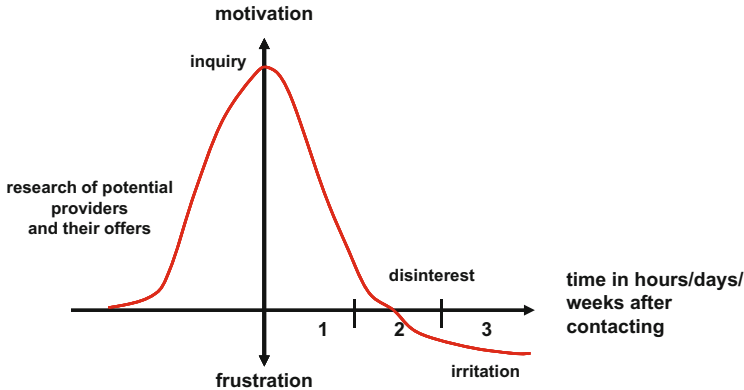


Fig. 2.4 Speed as critical success factor (*Source* Author illustration)

If, in contrast, the information or the offer requested or the goods ordered (online) arrive significantly later than expected, the delivery is possibly met with **disinterest**, because the potential customer no longer remembers his request or has decided in favor of a different seller in the meantime. However, **irritation** may also arise, because the information or products were not available at the expected point in time and one does not feel having been taken seriously enough as a person or company. As a result, information remains unread or goods are returned.

- **Food for Thought** “With customers today being increasingly connected, informed, and ultimately empowered, their expectations only escalate. In short, they are more discerning and demanding than ever before.”

Brian Solis, Principal of the Altimeter Group

Think Box

- How thoroughly have we already looked into the requirements “Me, all, everywhere, immediately”?
- What are the consequences of the expectations for our value chain?
- How well positioned are we compared to competitors?
- Which levers can be pulled promptly in order to meet the expectations, for example, of accelerated internal processes?
- Where is the corresponding responsibility to be placed in my company?

With that said, the question arises as to how the **customer journey**—meaning the “customer’s journey to the company”—and **customer expectations** have changed it. This “journey” covers the various phases a customer goes through before deciding to purchase a product or service. At the same time, particular

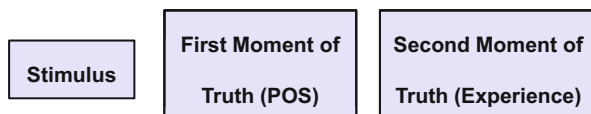


Fig. 2.5 Classical sequence: stimulus–FMOT–SMOT (*Source* Author illustration)



Fig. 2.6 Classical AIDA formula (*Source* Author illustration)

significance is attached to the so-called customer touch points of the company or a brand, with which the customer comes into contact on this journey. Some facets of the classical purchasing process have shifted due to the entering of the online era. Until recently, only the first and second moments of truth were differentiated after the stimulus in the course of the decision-making process to purchase (cf. Fig. 2.5).

The **first moment of truth (FMOT)** describes the moment when a potential buyer can physically examine a product or service for the first time. This is where the expectations established by advertising, meet the “harsh reality” of the product or service. The **second moment of truth (SMOT)** covers the moment when the buyer actually makes use of the product or service. This, in turn, is where the expectations established upon first inspection are in contrast to the actual performances and experiences when using the product or the service. One speaks of the “moment of truth” because these two “moments” reveal whether the expectations formed in particular by advertising, the presentation of the offer, or possible advice at the POS is also actually fulfilled. It was possible to present this traditional customer journey in a concise and very simple way with the classical **AIDA formula** (cf. Fig. 2.6).

However, we should say farewell to this classical concept because, at present, a fundamental change is taking place in the decision-making and purchasing process of the customers. The first and second moments of truth are now coupled with the **zero moment of truth (ZMOT)** in the online era (cf. Fig. 2.7). This means in particular the online access to an almost unmanageable amount of third-party information preceding the other two “moments.” Part of this so-called user-generated content is reports from other people providing information about their experiences prior to, during, and after the act of purchasing and using.

The information from blogs, communities, comments on *Facebook*, *Pinterest*, or via *Twitter* enable potential customers “to help themselves to third-party experience,” which shapes the content of this ZMOT. With that, own possible experiences

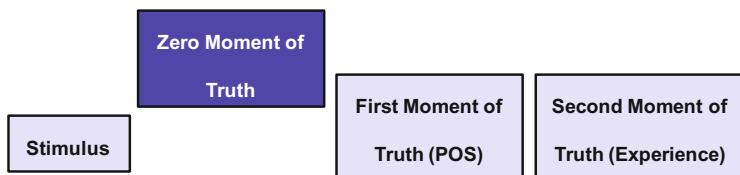


Fig. 2.7 Position and sources of the ZMOT (*Source* Author illustration)

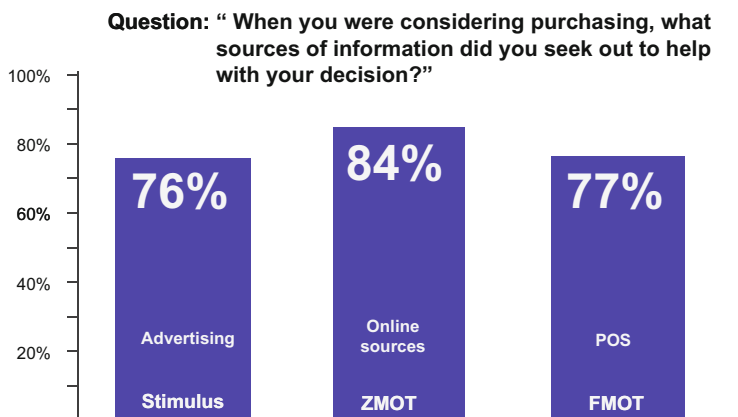


Fig. 2.8 Importance of different sources of information in the buying decision process—in % (US consumer, $n = 5,003$, 2011) (*Source* Author illustration, data source: Lecinski, 2011, p. 19)

are frequently “anticipated” by unknown third parties by accessing reports, photos, and videos. A large amount of information can thus give an impression about the pre-sales, sales, post-sales, and usage stages of other people even before the potential buyer has been able to get his own impression of the target object. The ZMOT is thus fed by the experiences others have had along their **customer relationship lifecycle** (for more details cf. Kreutzer, 2009, pp. 49–56; cf. Chap. 8).

When asking oneself how important the **significance of the ZMOT** is for companies, the following can be determined. According to a study of US consumers in 2011, the number of sources of information availed of increased from 2010 to 2011 from 5.3 to 10.4 (cf. Lecinski, 2011, p. 17). At the same time, Fig. 2.8 illustrates what significance is attached to the ZMOT nowadays during the buying decision process.

► **Remember Box** Classical Recommendation Marketing Is Experiencing an Unforeseen Renaissance!

And a further result deserves our attention: “It’s well known that consumer research expensive products like electronics online, but coming out of the recession, consumers are more scrupulous about researching their everyday products



Fig. 2.9 Consumer trust in types of advertising and promotion—in % (multiple answers possible, around 60,000 US online adults) March 2013; % rating 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 (do not trust at all) to 5 (trust completely) (Source Author illustration, data source: Forrester, 2013)

such as diapers and detergent, too. More than a fifth of them also research food and beverages, nearly a third research pet products and 39 % research baby products, even though they ultimately tend to buy those products in stores, according to WSL Strategic Retail, a consulting firm” (Byron, 2011, S. 1). This makes it clear that a new target group is becoming more important:

► ROPOs: research online, purchase offline

Why are companies better off recognizing the **relevance of the ZMOT** and to react accordingly? The most powerful arguments for this are provided by Fig. 2.9. In response to the question about which **sources of information** the customers **trust most**, “**brand or product recommendations**” are—not surprisingly—in the first place with 70 %. It is interesting that “**professionally written online reviews**” and “**consumer-written online reviews**” with 55 and 46 % follow in second and third place (cf. Forrester, 2013). It must be pointed out, however, that according to a recent study, about every third hotel rating on the Internet is a fake. Yet it was determined that merely one single rating can increase the number of bookings by 70 % a year (cf. Oberhuber, 2012, p. 45).

It becomes obvious that consumers trust statements made by “professional authors” and “unknown third parties” and follow them to a much greater extent than is the case with “information on websites of companies and brands” and any kind of advertising. This makes it understandable that great importance is attached to the ZMOT when building up trust. What is the consequence? Companies are increasingly losing **control of the information about brands and demand**. The power over the information is increasingly at the hands of the customers. Due to the fact that they access this information from price comparison portals and consumer

forums more and more from a mobile device—i.e., directly at the stationary POS—clever shopping using the ZMOT is not restricted to online users.

- **Remember Box** The **ZMOT** has become a key **success factor** during the **customer journey**. At the same time, the ZMOT can purport either a recommendation or even a rejection of a concrete offer. We as a company must actively take part in creating this ZMOT and must not underestimate it any longer.

Two examples illustrate the relevance of the ZMOT. If one had searched for an *A3 convertible* with an IP address in New York in the summer of 2014, *Google* would have presented the corporate website of a car showroom in first place of the organic list of hits. On the one hand, it becomes clear that this company has conducted an excellent search engine optimization to be positioned right at the top of an organic search. At the same time, it could reveal that the management have probably only attended to the rating of their own performances by customers a little. How may a potential customer react when confronted with such a result during his search? This is where those in the companies concerned, who are responsible for this, are called upon to motivate their—hopefully existent—satisfied customers to post positive feedback. Doing nothing would be wanton.

This ZMOT forces companies to dedicate themselves to their own processes—and not only with a focus on the sales and, where necessary, post-sales areas, in order to reach a holistic positive **customer experience**. If this does not succeed, other potential buyers will be informed in the form of the ZMOT whether a company likes it or not! The company cannot stop this type of communication; at the most, it can try to become involved in it in the corresponding media. Sophisticated **web monitoring** is a mandatory requirement for this, in order to at least capture the relevant contents of this ZMOT communication at an early stage and be able to influence it where appropriate.

Think Box

- Of what significance is the ZMOT in the case of our business model?
- How much information do our potential customers and customers retrieve about my company, our brands, and our offers on the Internet?
- Which platforms do they use to do this?
- What information do searching find there?
- What tone towards our performances is dominating?
- What indications are there for optimizing our performance?
- Where can the responsibility for ZMOT management be anchored in my company?

Figure 2.10 shows the **intensity of the networking between offline and online channels**. 91 % of the people visiting a stationary shop buy there. But 65 %

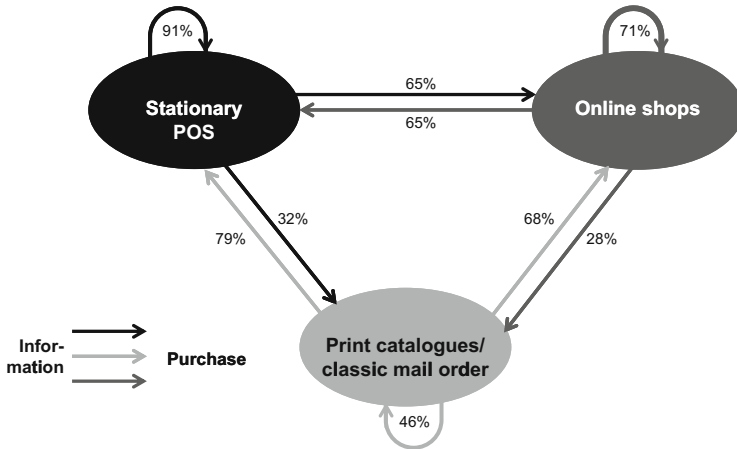


Fig. 2.10 Relevant information sources and their impact on purchases within the customer journey—usage in % (multiple answers possible) (Source Author illustration, data source: Kersch, 2013, p. 11)

purchase at online shops or use traditional print catalogs for placing their orders, too. The figure also shows that visitors of online shops buy offline (65 %) or based on printed catalogs (28 %). With this in mind if nothing else *Zappo* and many other digital pure players started up the large-volume dispatch of catalogs.

With that, a detailed evaluation of the customer journey in 2012 revealed that the majority of possible sources and channels of information give birth to the most diversified **customer journeys** (cf. Fig. 2.11). We thus need to find out what type of customer journeys dominate among our customers, in order to support them as much as possible with information and, where necessary, direct the resources towards the most important **customer touch points**. At the same time, it must always be taken into consideration that customers are increasingly becoming **multichannel customers**.

The big question is: Will we be able to sit in the “driver’s seat” in the future when creating customer relationships and, in particular, when forming the customer journey? Or are the relationships reversing, and CRM becomes CMR—**customer managed relationship**?

- **Remember Box** **The customer defines which channels he uses in the course of his own individual customer journey.** Therefore the customer alone decides where he gets information from and where he makes his purchases in the end. If a company is not represented there, they will lose their position in the relevant set.

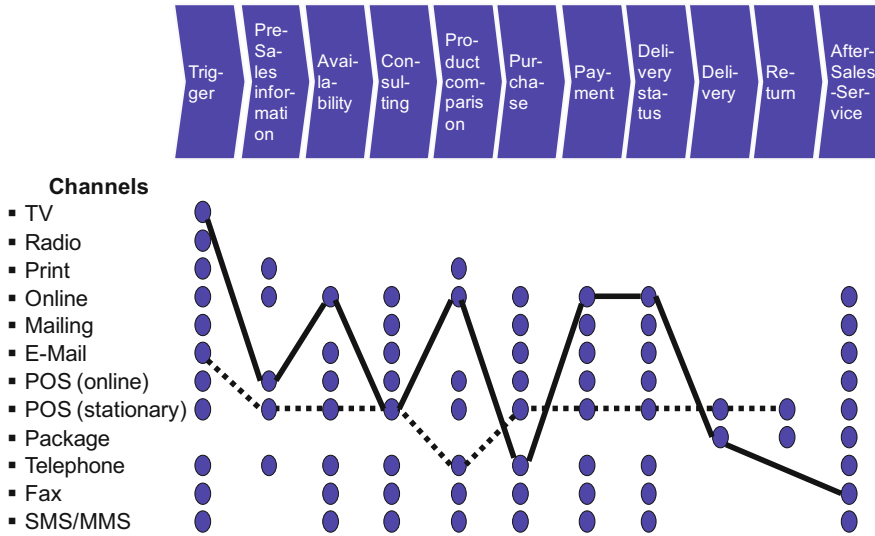


Fig. 2.11 Two customer-specific customer journeys regarding non-digital products (Source Author illustration)

Think Box

- Do we know the typical customer journey of our customers?
- Which channels and which sources of information are used particularly intensively—or are hardly made use of?
- Do we really know the preferences of our customers along the customer journey?
- Or do we only know how intensively the channels that we offer are used?
- Are we prepared for the customer deciding the way we have to walk when it comes to the information and distribution channels?
- Who in my company is responsible for Customer Journey Management?

With this experience in mind, the AIDA formula presented above needs to be consistently developed further in order to accommodate the additional activities during a customer journey. The result of this is the formula presented in Fig. 2.12: **ASIDAS**. The acquisition of attention for a certain offer is now frequently followed by an extensive **search**—which can lead to ZMOT. However, ASIDAS no longer represents an unflexible sequence of steps. In fact, the search process penetrates the steps of establishing “**interest**” and “**desire**” as well as triggering “**action**.” In all steps of the process, feedback can be exchanged with friends and unknown third parties. “**Share**” happens parallel to or at the end of a customer journey. With this, all activities are described which cover the sharing of one’s own experiences. This



Fig. 2.12 ASIDAS—the advanced AIDA formula (*Source* Author illustration)

can be via posts on *Facebook*, *Twitter*, or *WhatsApp*; by comments in forums, blogs (e.g., *Tumblr*), and communities; and of course in personal dialog.

Think Box

- Which platforms and which instruments do we offer for the potential customers and customers to go through the process called ASIDAS in such a way that they purchase from us and also give positive feedback about us?
- How extensive is our knowledge about what happens in each individual phase?
- In which sectors is my company active and how?
- Where can we arouse the attention of potential customers and customers?
- Where do they search, what increases their attention, where do they buy, where do they share their experiences and feedback? Enter your level of knowledge into the following form (cf. Fig. 2.13)!

Given all the euphoria about the involvement in social media, we need to visualize the **1:9:90 rule** (cf. Fig. 2.14). Studies show that—across all countries—approx. 1 % of Internet users are very active and post own contributions in blogs or online communities, for example, 9 % of Internet users respond to such entries—whereas a “silent majority” of 90 % is merely active by reading (cf. Petouhoff, 2011, p. 231). This means that we need to recognize the 1 % of **opinion leaders** on the Internet, in particular, and ideally win them over, so that the ZMOT works for us and our offer.

What can we derive from this information? The decisive point is that we attach much more significance to an extensive **customer journey analysis** than has previously been the case in many companies. In the process, our primary task as a manager is to identify the customer journeys preferred by the customers—even if they relatively clearly deviate from those processes we have planned. A great challenge for many companies comprises first and foremost defining effective **customer touch points** and to recognize their (positive or negative) contribution within the scope of the customer journeys (cf. Fig. 2.15). In general, touch points are those points that exist between stakeholders (i.e., potential customers, customers, employees, suppliers, cooperation partners) and our company. Figure 1.11 demonstrates the diversity that needs to be considered these days.

Actions by	Attention	Search	Interest	Desire	Action	Share
Company						
Customer/ Prospect						
Company						
Customer/ Prospect						
Company						
Customer/ Prospect						
Company						

Fig. 2.13 ASIDAS—appraisal for your company (Source Author illustration)

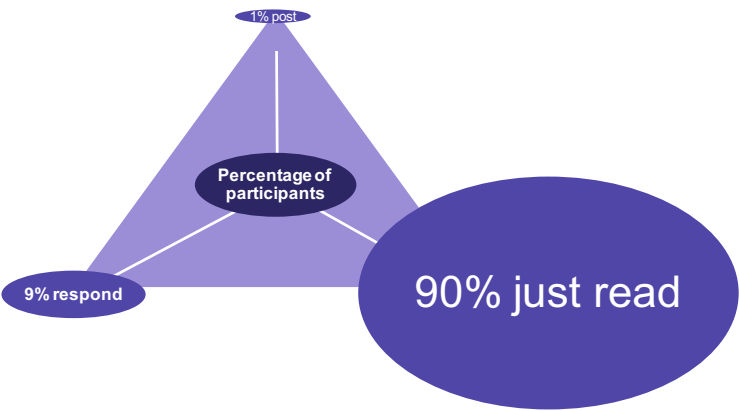


Fig. 2.14 The 1:9:90 rule (Source Author illustration, data source: Petouhoff, 2011, p. 231)

There are two types of customer touch points, by means of which a potential customer or customer can come into contact with a company, to be differentiated. These are, on the one hand, the **customer touch points of the company’s own sphere**. These include the classical communication channels such as TV, radio, billboards, newspapers, and magazines. Spots, billboards, and adverts can be designed both monologically and to prompt a dialog. In addition to that, the following dialog media belong to this type of touch points: phone calls, mailings, emails, the corporate website, apps, online advertising, brochures, customer magazines, and the POS. Apart from that, the customer service center as well as corporate involvement in social media also belong to the company internal touch points. Yet also—merely seemingly—profane things represent touch points: In the case of e-commerce, these are the parcels delivered and in the case of many

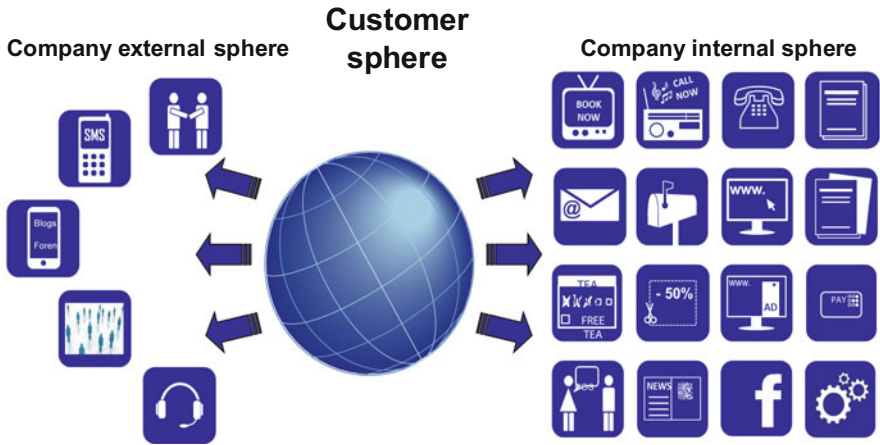


Fig. 2.15 Advanced concept of customer touch points (Source Author illustration)

providers, the packaging of the product itself (*Apple* and *Montblanc* are masters of this). But also invoices—frequently sent in a rather cold manner by mail or email—are important touch points.

On the other hand, there are the **customer touch points of the company external sphere**, on which the companies only have limited influence. This includes the communication within one's circle of friends, which can be activated company—and brand-specific by a tell-a-friend concept. It also covers the involvement of customers in blogs, forums, and social networks. As a company, we can and should try to have some influence here; it is however limited.

In the scope of corresponding analyses, we have ascertained time and again that the managers in the company were **not aware** of many of these **customer touch points**. As well as that, the **number of relevant touch points**—from a customer's perspective—was regularly **underestimated** considerably. This experience is confirmed by a study by *Esch*, for which 106 marketing decision-makers were asked. About half of the respondents presumed less than 50 touch points. In contrast, the study identified more than 100 touch points for most companies (cf. *Esch*, 2012, p. 3). And—of similar importance—it is important to know the perceived touch points from the customers' point of view. A recent study—based on 1,250 interviews—showed that the POS, the completion of a contract/process of payment, the homepage, personal advice, and a written offer are the touch points with the highest awareness level (cf. *Keylens*, 2013, p. 6). Yet how should **holistic customer relations** be achieved if not even the number—not to mention the contents and awareness—of these touch points is known?

In the course of own analyses, it has been regularly revealed that many touch points—and not only those previously unknown—are not managed sufficiently. This is regularly the case with the touch points of the ZMOT in particular. In addition to that, the significance of individual touch points is frequently evaluated completely differently from a company's and customer's perspective. This is where

we need to determine—across the entire customer journey—how important the various touch points actually are for the potential customers and customers in the pre-sales, sales, and post-sales phase. According to a study by the *Internationale Hochschule Bad Honnef*, 59 % of all users allow themselves to be influenced “very much” by Internet criticisms and a further 37 % “somewhat,” when, for example, the choice of hotel and traveling offers is involved (cf. Ludowig & Schlautmann, 2012, p. 7). It becomes obvious: the significance of the ZMOT can no longer be denied.

Furthermore, the following must be pointed out. The touch points with the strongest effect after the product are the direct—frequently also personal—**contacts with employees from our company** (cf. Esch, 2012, p. 6; Keylens, 2013, p. 8). These frequently have the most long-term effect—positive as well as negative. However, it also holds true that the employees actually in contact with the customer are frequently the most poorly paid. And these employees have the least information about significant developments in the company and the core values of the brands. It’s worth thinking about this!

- **Remember Box** Without extensive stock-taking of a company’s own touch points and their effects on the customers, no successful **customer touch point management** can be conducted.

Think Box

- Have we ever done extensive research as to which touch points exist in my company and our brands?
- Of what significance are these various touch points from a customer perspective?
- Which touch points are relevant in the pre-sales, sales, and post-sales phase—and for which groups of customers?
- How extensively are the particularly important touch points managed by my company—from a customer perspective?
- What measures are suitable for the optimization of touch point management?
- Which KPIs can be used to determine the success at the various touch points?
- Who should be responsible for this customer touch point management?

In order to fulfill this task, the topic of **Expectation Management** needs to be shed light on. Here, we also speak of **customer experience management**. We need to realize that through our communication (in particular in advertising), we constantly establish expectant attitudes with the addressees. Incidentally, this holds true not only in business life but also to the same extent in private life. Anybody promising “delivery within 48 h” and takes 4 days to deliver knowingly produces

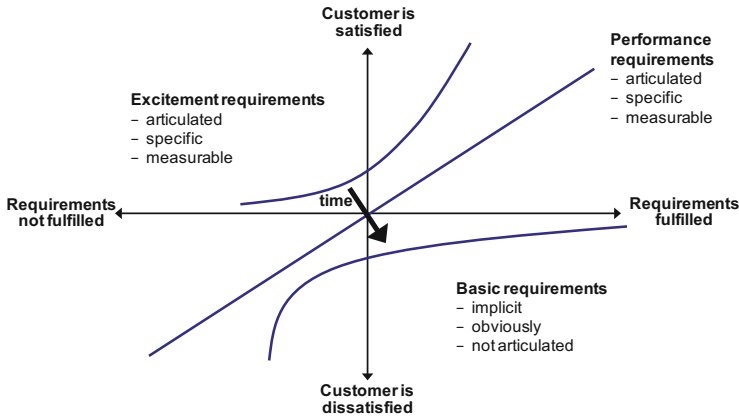


Fig. 2.16 Kano model of customer satisfaction (Source Author illustration, data source: Berger et al., 1993, p. 26)

unfulfilled expectations. For this reason, it is our quintessential responsibility to guide the expectations of customers into an area we can satisfy. Only those who accomplish more than promised will trigger excitement as illustrated in the following.

The so-called Kano model illustrates the significance that can be attached to the various services of a company for the so vital achievement of customer satisfaction needed for long-term company success (cf. Fig. 2.16). *Kano* examines the relationship between the fulfillment of customer requirements and the achievement of customer satisfaction (cf. Berger et al., 1993). In the course of this, it became clear that a proportion of the customer requirements have no or little impact on customer satisfaction (cf. the curve at the bottom in Fig. 2.16). The non-fulfillment of such requirements called **basic requirements** does indeed lead to dissatisfaction; the fulfillment of these does not lead to satisfaction or excitement. The fulfillment of them is taken for granted without making a contribution to satisfaction in the long run. In an online store, for example, this includes functional payment systems. Customers thus take the fulfillment of these basic requirements for granted.

Performance requirements are evaluated by the customer according to the principle “the more, the better.” An excess of performance requirements increases satisfaction (cf. the middle line in Fig. 2.16). In the online store, this includes, for example, the number of products offered and the possibility to be able to save various selected products. It is not until the third category in the shape of **excitement requirements** that the excitement of the customer can be triggered, because then, services are rendered, which were not expected. If such services are frequently rendered, the risk is, however, that these mutate into performance requirements and are then expected (cf. the upper curve in Fig. 2.16). In an online store, free delivery for the first order, a small gift in the parcel or the indication of price reductions for the products marked as interesting, can trigger excitement. Frequently, though, it is

usually only a question of time until such services become performance requirements.

Think Box

- Is it known in my company—from a customer perspective—what basic, performance, and excitement requirements are, respectively?
- If this knowledge is still lacking, how can we close this information gap as fast as possible?
- How do our competitors succeed in gearing their services to the various requirements?
- Who can be entrusted with the implementation of the Kano model at my company?

The **triggers of an involvement in social media** from a user perspective have already been presented with the terms entertainment, education/growth, save money, save time, and solve something. These triggers come along with a phenomenon which can justifiably so be called a **social revolution**. It can be described as:

► Public is the new private!

More and more aspects, which in the past rather remained hidden, are being dragged into the public eye. A lot of impressive examples could be found on *webfail.at*. And this trend towards “public” and thus “social” is continuing. In the course of research work for this book, we intensively analyzed the relevant specialist and public media and identified a downright **social hype**. A flood of new terms with the word “social” put in front of them became visible. While discussing “social media” for a long time, in the past few months, new coinages have constantly cropped up. Figure 2.17 provides an overview of the most important terms with the word “social” put in front. The term **social landscape** is used for this because the landscape in which companies are active nowadays has shifted towards “social” in the long run.

The drivers behind many developments are applications called **social software** (also cf. Li & Bernoff, 2008a, b). At the same time, it holds true that “The social software of 2.0 is an attack on the established rules of power and forces fundamental rethinking” (Stüber, 2010). The most important—and long known—characteristics of this social landscape are the **social networks**. With *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Google+*, and *LinkedIn*, they are enjoying increasingly more attention with regard to time and content—by users and companies equally.

Major significance is also being attached to the concept of **social sharing**. Thanks to concepts such as *YouTube*, *Vimeo*, *Flickr*, *Snapchat*, *Pinterest*, and *Slideshare*, it is becoming possible to upload all kinds of video and image files and make them “socially” accessible. Social software also facilitates the development of **social news sites** such as *reddit* and *NewsVine*. These allow registered users



Fig. 2.17 Social landscape—the inflation of the word “social” (Source Author illustration)

to post links or own contributions which others, in turn, can rate. A special concept for recommending online contents is represented by **social bookmarks**. These involve online users placing bookmarks for websites that are interesting and which it should be possible to access in the future without conducting a new search. As these bookmarks are managed by social bookmarking services such as *Delicious*, *Mister Wong*, *StumbleUpon*, and *digg*, they are visible to the outside and thus “social” because they are shared with friends and like-minded people. The so-called social badges make a significant contribution to the previously mentioned social media. These are requests on the Internet, placed by users and companies, to turn potential customers and customers into fans, followers, or “pinners.”

New developments, in contrast, are platforms such as *Eventful*, *Meetup*, and *Upcoming*, which provide support when organizing **social events**. **Social commerce** is enjoying increasing importance. A suitable definition of social commerce is “Help people to connect where they buy and to buy where they connect” (Marsden, 2011). Friends are thus connected virtually when shopping (e.g., via *Facebook*). Here, so-called *Facebook* mirrors are being tested—like in clothes stores such as at *adidas*. Photos of people in the selected outfit can be taken with a digital camera at the POS in order to present them right away to friends via *Facebook* or *Twitter*. And instant feedback can be reckoned with in this always-on generation. And while still in the store, the virtual thumbs of friends can go up or down and thus influence the purchasing process (cf. Geisler, 2012). In this way, the POS is becoming a **social POS**—even more so than before. This can also be successful that the number of *Facebook* Likes—here in a flagship store of *C&A* in Sao Paulo—is displayed in the clothes hangers, in order to be of “social” help when purchasing.

Think Box

- How can we involve social networks even better to create added value for our customers and added value for my company?
- How can we advertise for my company on the social sharing platforms with our contents?
- Does the use of social bookmarks create value for our customers and thereby for us?
- How can we place social badges?
- How can we create our on- and offline POS in a “social” way?

What significance social networks already have as “currency” today is shown in the concept of the social log-in. With **social log-ins**—also called social sign-ins—users use log-in information already available from social networks such as *Facebook* and *Twitter* to log in to third-party websites. By means of this, the user does not need to set up a new account for every new platform protected by a log-in. This has a decisive advantage for the user: **convenience thanks to a one click log-in**. For the providers—both on the side of the social networks and the third-party websites—this form of log-in comes along with exciting additional information. For nothing other is being achieved than a **one-to-one tracking of the ongoing activities of online users**. This possible use is frequently permitted by clicking the Terms of Business—not read by the majority of users—as read and accepted. And with each new access, further exciting information is gathered which, all in all, provides further fuel for social commerce.

Even the search processes on the Internet are becoming increasingly “social.” Even today, with each of these search processes, there is a **social search**. The evaluation and consideration, controlled by algorithms, of searches by others form the basis for the autocomplete function—for example, on Google. By means of this, the passive search engine turns into an **active indication engine**, as in this way it becomes transparent to the (non-biased) user what other users have frequently searched for in particular. One thing becomes clear here: the suggested search terms can influence the user’s further surfing behavior in the long run. And it also holds true that if, for example, customers search for negative reports about companies and, in the process, enter terms such as “deceit” or “mafia,” they are automatically added to the search terms of the companies concerned. This also happens even if there is nothing to the allegations, because *Google* merely (predominantly) displays the search interest without evaluating the contents. However, *Google* and other search engines influence how reality is perceived in the long run!

The process of the **social search** also describes an online search where further user data are taken into consideration during the search process. The classical algorithms of the search engines determine the relevance of web content merely in view of the defined search terms. In the case of the social search, the relevance of

web content is also measured according to whether it is of interest for the specific user. **Social metadata** are evaluated to this end. These are, for example, like statements by the user, social bookmarks placed and/or commented on, or other labeled or tagged contents. Thus the users' preferences influence the results of the organic list of hits of the search engines.

In the further course of the social revolution, the relevance of the **social filter** also increases. The consequence of such a filter, on the one hand, is that I am only shown what my friends also like. On the other hand, the social filter also has an effect via the previously discussed phenomenon of the ZMOT. The perception of the potential customers and customers is thus characterized more and more by the experiences of the social environment. This means that companies are increasingly **losing the control over the perception of brands and offers**. This now increasingly lies in the hands of the potential customers and customers themselves (cf. also the explanations on the filter bubble in Chap. 8).

It is interesting that with the increase in the relevance of the social filter, the **private filter** seems to be becoming less important. Thoughts, feelings, impressions, and evaluations are being sent by individuals—often spontaneously and without reflection—into the digital airwaves. When there they are visible for everybody for a digital eternity—with no sell-by date. Many millions have already regretted their **digital spontaneity of expression** in retrospect, because partnerships, friendships, business relationships, and work relations were put to an end after such posts!

Closely connected to the social filter are the so-called social ads on *Facebook*. The outstanding feature of these adverts is that they take the social context into consideration in which recipients of advertising can be found. Thus, social ads use the social influence of private networks as well as the **opinion leader & follower structure** found within them. At the same time, the various types of social ads are differentiated. One type could say "*Karl-Heinz* and three more of your friends like *Heinz Ketchup*." Another variation involves "sponsored stories" whereby the posts by companies are sent out to the circle of friends by one of them outing himself as a fan of the famous watch manufacturer *Lange & Söhne*, for example.

The **social CRM** is of particularly great importance. Here, **social media services** and **social media technologies** are used to intensify the interaction between customers and companies even more. The core of it is the intensification of the interchange between a company and its customers, which goes far beyond the primary relationship in dialog form of a classical CRM and thus involves instruments, channels, and contents from the social online involvement of the customers. This topic is dealt with in more detail in Chap. 7.

An exciting development for "social" is also revealed with TV. Under **social TV**, we understand the connection between the classical TV and social media (cf. Chap. 3 for more detail).

Think Box

- Do we want to use social log-ins to learn more about our customers?
- What consequences does a social search have for my company? And how can we benefit from that?
- What could we achieve via social ads?
- How can we benefit from the trend towards social TV?
- Who analyzes the implications of these developments on my company?

In the case of **social recruiting**, the social networks are involved in the search for new employees. The initiative can come from either the employee or the employer. Particularly widespread is the job search via *LinkedIn*, *Facebook* (with *BranchOut*), *Google+*, and *Twitter*. Whereby with this, a new—and frequently also more affordable—way of accessing certain target groups exists, one danger must not be ignored. Former and current employees can—partly protected by anonymity on the Internet—exchange information about the employer and, in doing so, spread internal matters that are not suitable for the aspired **employer branding**. At the same time, however, employers have the chance to see how applicants present themselves in blogs, online communities, or in social media. In the USA in 2014, it could be observed that employers asked for the password for the access to *Facebook* during the interview, in order to analyze the applicant's environment. This led, in our opinion rightly, to an uproar in the media, because in this case privacy was not being observed.

The increasing networking between people leads to a massive increase in **social pressure**, too. Where failures and mistakes made by companies in the past were only registered by a few insiders, a corporate failure today, can be distributed across the world in only a few minutes—by (former) employees, customers, competitors, bloggers, or journalists. The wave caused by a viral distribution of real or supposed “sins” of companies emerging is called a **shitstorm**. If people are severely criticized online, we speak of **cyber mobbing**. Instead of that, our ambition should rather be to initiate a viral **rose shower**—as an alternative draft to a shitstorm—by involving social pressure.

Even the intranet is becoming “social” so that one increasingly speaks of a **social intranet**. This means the internal exchange of knowledge within the company which makes use of social media. By means of this, the exchange of knowledge between the company's employees is simplified and accelerated—as the exchange of information via emails with long lists of recipients and even longer replies to the many questions posed by others is avoided. It is thus possible to dynamize static content by integrating in social media and to accelerate the social interaction. Employees working together on projects can get together via closed user groups within social networks. The exchange of information can be organized at the same time via internal wikis, blogs, forums, and/or *Facebook* groups—even beyond country and time borders. Newsfeeds keep those involved in a project up-to-date and make sure that all of those involved are at the same level of information at a

certain point in time. At the same time, these mechanics promote a high degree of involvement—for even the respective superiors can obtain an overview of the status of the project’s progress at all times. Ideally, a better informed and more strongly focused team is reached by means of a social intranet. This is particularly successful if the access to these social platforms can be made irrespective of time and place. Corresponding tools are offered by *jivesoftware.com*, for example.

Think Box

- Which possibilities of social recruiting do we employ or should we use?
- How can we prepare ourselves for social pressure?
- What potential does social software offer for the setup of a social intranet in my company?
- Who could check the relevance of these developments for my company?

The **social revolution** has only just started, yet the upheavals caused by it are already becoming visible. As companies, we are well advised to contemplate the challenges associated with it at an early stage. Even here, it holds true to do the first finger exercises, so that we are prepared to be pulled onto the **social field**. For that is where everybody is watching whether one falls flat on their back or leaves the field as a winner.

Think Box

- Of what significance are the different forms of the social revolution for our business model? How can we benefit from it?
- Where are we at risk of being run over by the social revolution?
- Who bears the responsibility of evaluating the challenges for my company described by the social revolution?

- **Food for Thought** **For a start, all customers are in search of good feelings!** Good customer support, a wide range of goods, convincing advice, or a successful appearance in social media can contribute towards building up these “good feelings” just as well as handling personal data in a responsible manner can. For in the end, it is all about the positive emotional connection between your company and your customers. No more, no less!

In view of the **challenge posed by the digital and social revolution**, there is one thing we must bear in mind: The **selection process of digital Darwinism** starts when systems and processes in the economic system and society change faster than companies are able to adapt. At the same time, it holds true that Every company, every brand, and every offer is vulnerable. No business is “too big to fail” or “too small to succeed” (Solis, 2012b). With that said, the following aspects apply:

- The knowledge available in recent years is depreciating enormously. This also means that the **success stories and best cases of the past** can no longer be sustained in the future.
- The **currency of experience** is being systematically inflated and thus depreciated by new developments. This is why many companies are revealing enormous resistance towards the upcoming changes. For it means leaving appreciated zones of comfort.
- In many fields there—still—are **no comprehensive methods of measurement and metrics** to make it possible to measure the economic results. Yet, this must not lead to being not responsive to new challenges.
- **Marketing** will have to change dramatically in order to fulfill its role as a **strategy and energy driver** in the future.

► **Food for Thought** Many the one person or other person concerned should remember this guiding principle:

“In danger and dire distress, the middle of the road leads to death.”

Friedrich Freiherr von Logau
Poet of the baroque period

The impact of the changes in consumers' and customers' behavior has a direct impact on the communication process. *Dirk Ziem*s presents interesting insight of cross-media communication campaigns.

Article by Guest Author *Dirk Ziem*s

On the Mechanics of Cross-Media Communication Campaigns

The new **era of digital, interactive, and social media** has initiated a movement from classical mass media brand campaigns to new forms of interactive cross-media brand campaigns. Empirical research on the impact and mechanics of the new campaign formats shows the rich creative potential of the new genre as well as the rules of this new chapter of advertising culture.

Cross-media campaigns have become standard in recent years. Whereas communications planning in the 1980s and 1990s often still focused on one lead medium—either print or TV commercials—it has been standard practice to design **advertising campaigns as integrated communication campaigns** since the 2000s.

Based on numerous qualitative psychological market research studies on the subject, the mechanics of cross-media campaign forms will be described from the perspective of **media psychology**. The findings are based among other things on studies for *IP Deutschland* and *Seven One Media*, the two major TV advertising marketers in Germany.

Cross-media campaigns were traditionally a simple linking of the media channels by repeating or more closely specifying the announcement of a product or promotion in a commercial in print or Internet media. An example is that the *Mon Cheri* chocolate season is declared open by a TV commercial and the

subject repeated in magazine print ads. For the case that all possible media channels are used for the same brand communication message (TV, radio, print, out of home, web), the term **360° communication** is commonly used.

For about 10 years, a new creativity in playing with the media channels has found its way into **brand communication**. In this connection, just think of the large number of so-called e-tales like the *Hornbach DIY* store campaign with the invented stuntman *Ron Hammer* from 2006 (cf. crossmedia.de/cases/hornbach-ronhammer) or the *Mark Ecko* fashion designer campaign with the faked story of the *Air Force One* graffiti sprayer likewise from 2006 (cf. wired.com/techbiz/media/news/2006/04/70718). Both examples make use of the same communication mechanics: generating news with something incredible that has never been seen before and exploiting this news for the purposes of the own brand. Strictly speaking these mechanics can already be traced back to one of the founding fathers of public relations, *Edward Bernays* (cf. Ewens, 1996, p. 15). In the case of *Hornbach*, the incredible is the motorbike stunt on the occasion of opening a new DIY store that leaves the biker unscathed despite explosion and long fall. In the case of *Mark Ecko*, it is the apparent ease with which the masked man can approach the *Air Force One* machine of the president and spray it with graffiti. As a result, the video hoaxes become a talking point, quickly spread via *YouTube* and social media, and are also discussed in TV news and talk shows. Until in a second phase the hoax is resolved, the brand (or the creative adman assigned by the brand) appears on the scene and transfers the hero or outlaw values to itself.

Cross-Media Story Telling

The e-tales or hoaxes reveal a **mechanism of digital cross-media communication** that points way beyond the classic linked campaigns. The story or advertising idea is no longer just told and repeated in different channels, corresponding to the classic 360° communication scheme. Rather, in the **digital and interactionist cross-media campaigns**, the advertising idea develops cumulatively like in a chain reaction through interaction of the various media, formats, and channels. In media sciences these relations are also termed “**transmedia story telling**” (cf. Jenkins, 2006, p. 97). Therefore, successful cross-media campaigns are characterized by a high level of efficiency. The spark of the *Hornbach* campaign was ignited, for example, by just a few airings. The *Air Force One* video of *Mark Ecko* was only placed in *YouTube* and immediately began to lead a life of its own with discussions in news broadcasts, interviews with security staff, and general speculations in the media. The campaigns quickly connect all possible channels: TV commercial and social media, PR and sponsoring, dialog and POS (cf. Mahrtdt, 2009, p. 41f., 117f.). Whether the spark of **e-tales** and **hoax campaigns** catches or not is hard to predict. It is thus understandable that cross-media campaign types like co-creation and casting are now used far more often than the electronic tales.

Backgrounds on the Trend Towards Cross-Media Campaigns

Before making a more detailed typology of cross-media campaigns, a closer look is to be taken at central backgrounds first of all. The trend towards cross-media campaigns is to be understood as the result of crossing two main lines of development. Firstly, the **development from advertising recipient to advertising user**: consumers deal in a more relaxed and confident way with advertising nowadays. The times when the consumer was critical of advertising and resisted the deluge for fear of being manipulated and influenced by advertising seem to be a thing of past.

Today, consumers basically see themselves in a strong position. Kreutzer and Land describe the new **emancipation of consumers** from the supply and competence function of market providers in this book with the formula “**Me, Everything, Immediately, Everywhere.**” “Me” means that the consumer takes it for granted that he is the center of attention. He naturally expects appreciation and personalized offerings. “Everything” and “immediately” mean that there is nothing in a long-tail economy that can’t be gotten immediately. And “everywhere” means that consumption is not fixed to place and channel and becomes ubiquitous within the digital possibilities.

Given this feeling of emancipation, **advertising communication** is just another of the many thematic and communication offers which is taken up autonomously and received as **part of wider entertainment and development offers**, shared with others (sharing via social media) and played with interactively.

These relations become particularly clear when recalling the new **viral potential of communication**. Every ad that has high talk value has a high viral potential, too. **Viral commercials** have long held top positions in the hit parade of the mostly widely viewed commercials, e.g., the roller babies commercial of *Evian* which, with over 100 million clicks, is one of the most viewed full-video commercials (cf. digitaltrainingacademy.com/casestudies/2012/11/evians_roller_babies_the_viral.php).

Secondly, the **development from mass media paradigm to the interactionist media paradigm**: classic advertising is decisively shaped in its sociological and psychological functions by the classic mass media paradigm—more than the admen and marketers usually realize. According to this, there are the powerful manufacturers and brands that have sovereignty over the media channels, whereas the consumers are part of an anonymous crowd of recipients, without any feedback channel or interactivity worth mentioning. Being at the mercy of the mass media and constantly confronted with its advertising manipulations also triggers instinctive advertising criticism and defense as backlash.

By contrast, the relationships change fundamentally in the new digital media era shaped by the Internet: the **advertising recipient**, who is the receiver of messages and is more or less passively involved in, **becomes the advertising user**. The **new advertising paradigm** builds on **symbolic interactionism**—the campaign message is started up, developed, or even fleshed out in joint interaction between brand and brand community (cf. Fig. 2.18; cf. Blumer, 1969, p. 94).

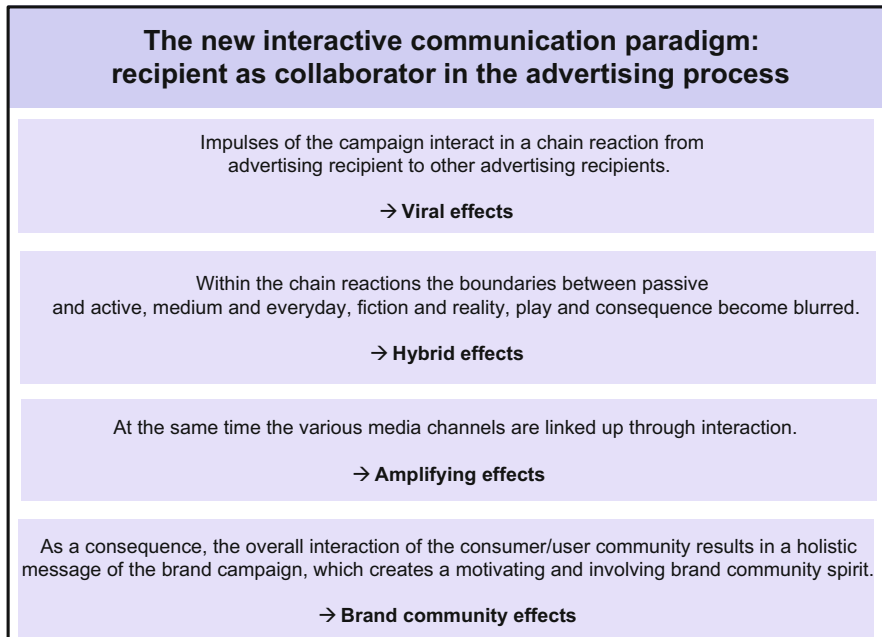


Fig. 2.18 The new interactive communication paradigm (Source Illustration by Ziemis)

An example for illustration: in a casting contest from 2011 *McDonald's* called on its customers to “Build Your Own Burger.” **Gamified creative elements** on the microsite further encouraged and motivated the customers to join in the casting. For example, someone could put a photo of themselves in the back of a stretched limousine taking a test drive to the award ceremony of the casting winner. The burger casting subsequently went through a number of selection steps (customer jury, test kitchen, voting) until the five winner burgers were actually sold in the restaurant and advertised in all channels (city lights, TV, radio).

The most widely aired TV commercial of the campaign gives a particularly good insight into what part of the **cross-media campaign interactivity** it was important to “build” on: The viewer sees proud *Alex*, an average customer in a baggy sweatshirt who could have been overlooked in *McDonald's* just yesterday, and how he observes other customers enjoying his creation, the “*New McPretzel with Meat Loaf*.” *Alex* goes up to the customers, pats them on the shoulder and asks “Do you like it?” (cf. [youtube.com/watch?v=iaUo5F0nWUw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaUo5F0nWUw))

What does this commercial want to tell us about the point of the campaign? *McDonald's* is not just concerned about delicious tasting new burgers but wants its customers to feel accepted and in good hands with their preferences and wishes. *McDonald's* offers its customers to even gain a **field for shared self-realization** (new extended emotional end benefit on the brand benefit ladder).

The campaign opens up a **playground of interactions** between the customers and the brand leading to the customers interacting with each other as a community. Instead of “customers recruit customers,” the warm emotional message of “customers feed customers” arises. *McDonald’s* becomes self-referential as a brand—a **feedback culture of brand ambassadors** among themselves.

The “*Day One*” campaign of *Prudential* from 2011 is another good example of successful **interactionist cross-media story telling**. The initial spark that *Prudential* ignited at the start of the campaign was to request its own pension product customers to take a photo of the first sunrise in their new life as pensioners and to reflect on “day one” of their new stage of life. *Prudential* was thus offering its customers room for reflection that otherwise often falls short in the ambivalent subject of being put out to pasture. The US American customers evidently enjoyed taking stock, telling stories about their life and their plans, and presenting their environment and favorite places. At any rate, thousands of videos and tons of photos accumulated on the online platform of the campaign. In a final commercial, all the photos were compiled into a joint collage (cf. [youtube.com/watch?v=162Qv2O2LK0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=162Qv2O2LK0)). It conjured up a common image that, in many variants, holds together the **spirit of the brand community**, i.e., the image of reframing the concept of old age. Getting old and retiring is not the dark tunnel in the *Prudential* community. The ideal verified by thousands of customers is that of the new beginning repeated a 1,000 times over, with more than 6,000 sunrises on average still awaiting the US American customers after reaching the pensionable age.

The Variety of New Possibilities

In the **new cross-media world of communication**, many different possibilities of campaign creation are presented because different interaction schemes converge with different modes of effect. The **cross-media campaign orchestra** is a vivid model illustrating these relations (cf. Fig. 2.19).

- **Classic TV commercials** are one pole in the field of possibilities. Here the advertising user remains in the classic and comparatively passive reception mode.
- **Viral campaigns** basically remain in the reception scheme—with the difference that campaigns in social media networks are further spread by the recipients themselves.
- **Interactive online ads** build on restricted interaction (cf. example *Tipp Ex Buzzmann*, wuv.de/kampagnen/kreation_des_tages/interaktive_spot_kunst_von_tipp_ex). Only few interactive ads have proven successful in practice.
- **Apps**: Prolonging moving image campaigns in smart phone apps and games appears to be more promising and now more up-to-date. One example is the “*dumb ways to die*” campaign of the *Metro Melbourne* (cf. [youtube.com/watch?v=IJNR2EpS0jw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJNR2EpS0jw)). More than 70 million views demonstrate the impact.

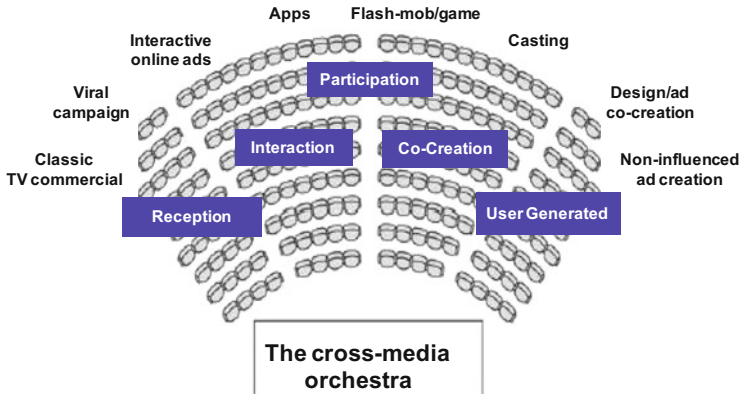


Fig. 2.19 The cross-media orchestra (Source Illustration by Ziemis)

- **Flash mob and games:** The central mechanism of this campaign type is staging a participation of normal everyday consumers in a brand event. An example of this is the variety of English *T-Mobile* flash-mob campaigns based on spectacular choreographies in railway stations and airports (cf. one at *Heathrow airport* youtube.com/watch?v=ZMG2vNVq0ww).
- **Casting:** The named example from *McDonald's* shows the motivating power a casting offer has on consumers. Here the consumers/customers become direct collaborators. Another of numerous examples is *Seven Eleven Slurpee—Bring-Your-Own-Cup-Day* (cf. youtube.com/watch?v=OVXQniWfzig).
- **Design/ad cocreation:** Besides the cocreation of new products (see *McDonald's*: Make Your Own Burger) the cocreation of commercials is a motivating proposition. The ad is based on user-generated content. Aside from *Prudential*, think of the *Telekom Million Voices Project* where *Telekom* initiated the biggest choir of the Internet (cf. youtube.com/watch?v=cZIB6UK9OiE).
- **Non-influenced ad creation:** Forming an extreme pole in the orchestral fan are campaigns which develop on their own from the Internet community uninfluenced by companies or organizations. An example of this is the women against breast cancer campaign in which thousands of women show their breasts on the Internet (so-called mamming) to draw attention to the need for screening (cf. focus.de/digital/videos/virale-kampagne-gegen-brustkrebs-internet-trend-mamming-fordert-brueste-raus_vid_42150.html).

Control of Sovereignty Over the Brand

The **diagram of the cross-media fan** clearly reveals that the brand loses its classic authoritative role, the more consumers' participation and creation increases. Practice shows the need to observe a critical limit beyond which **companies lose control over the sovereignty of the brand**. This critical limit comes at the threshold from casting to the non-influenced user-generated content.

This relation is made evident by two examples:

- **Negative example** of *Pril* packaging casting: what turned out to be a flop of innovative cross-media campaigns was the washing-up liquid casting of *Pril* in 2011. The Internet community was asked to create their own original designs for *Pril* bottle labels. To the dismay of the marketing people, the community chose the design “chicken fragrance” showing an ugly chicken as the winner. Of course, *Henkel* could not put this product on the supermarket shelf and was hence forced to cancel the Internet casting.
- **Positive example** *McDonald's* “*Build Your Own Burger*”: Here *McDonald's* subtly incorporated restraints in the casting process allowing the brand control over the chosen products. Particularly worthy of mention in this respect is the test kitchen run by *McDonald's* where burgers with too expensive ingredients were silently eliminated from the contest.

The Key Role of Full-Video Commercials in Cross-Media Campaigns

Practice has also shown that **cross-media campaigns** can only seldom manage without the medium of **moving images** and **TV as channel**. This applies for most, not all, cross-media campaigns. An exception from this rule is, for example, the brand *Red Bull*, which bases its marketing on event marketing causing a sensation as such. Background to the **dependence of most cross-media campaigns on classic commercials** is the particularly emotionalizing power of full-video commercials. Neither with static print visuals nor with online interactivity is it possible to reach the involvement in emotionally moving story telling that is possible with full-video commercials.

Emotional story telling is the basis for igniting the big idea that gets the cross-media campaign going and initiates the subsequent cross-media chain reactions. Therefore, full-video commercials often form the start to cross-media campaigns or play the role of summarizing the overall interpretation of the campaign (see above: *Prudential* campaign, *Hornbach* campaigns). However, the question is raised as to whether **full-video commercials** will necessarily be tied in the long run to **linear TV programs**. Full-video commercials can also be integrated in other media like *YouTube*, social media, etc. Movements away from linear TV are currently taking place among media users, the consequences of which cannot be fully foreseen.

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Quick Wins

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- This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. A vertical margin line is positioned on the left side, creating a narrow left margin. The paper is otherwise blank, with no text or markings other than the printed lines.

Digital Darwinism

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