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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TOOLS: THE
CASE OF WOMEN-OWNED SMEs IN MALAYSIA**

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Master of Science (Management)
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
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CASE OF WOMEN-OWNED SMEs IN MALAYSIA**

By

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Thesis Submitted To:

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ABSTRACT

The majority of studies conducted on effectiveness of social media as marketing tools has been conducted outside Malaysia. Hence, the purpose of this study is to address the needs for research in the relationship between brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth (WOM), conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools focusing on women owned SMEs in Malaysia. To answer research question, four hypothesis has been developed namely; (i) There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools, (ii) There is a positive relationship between engagement and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools, (iii) There is a positive relationship between words of mouth and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools, (iv) There is a positive relationship between conversion and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. Quantitative method has been used in this study with questionnaires distributed to women owned SMEs involved in online marketing has been used to obtain data. A total of 150 usable questionnaire has been obtained from the survey and SPSS were used to analyse the obtained data. Relationship between dependent variable and the independent variables tested using multiple regression analysis. The findings of this study shows that three of the independent variables specifically brand awareness, words of mouth and conversion has positive relationship with the dependent variable while one independent variables specifically engagement has negative relationship with the dependent variable. Limitations of the study as well as recommendation for future research were also addressed in this study.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Brand Awareness, Engagement, WOM, Conversion.

ABSTRAK

Kajian tentang keberkesanan media sosial telah banyak dijalankan namun majority kajian yang telah dijalankan adalah dari luar negara. Oleh itu, tujuan kajian ini dijalankan adalah untuk memberi penumpuan kepada kepada satu penyelidikan tentang hubungan diantara kesedaran jenama (KJ), penglibatan diri (PD), perkataan mulut ke mulut (PM), penukaran (P) dan keberkesanan media sosial sebagai alat pemasaran (KMS) yang memfokuskan kepada perusahaan kecil dan sederhana (PKS) milikan wanita. Untuk menjawab soalan-soalan kajian, empat hipotesis telah dibangunkan iaitu; (i) Wujud hubungan positif diantara KJ dan KMS, (ii) Wujud hubungan positif diantara PD dengan KMS, (iii) Wujud hubungan positif diantara PM dan KMS dan (iv) Wujud hubungan positif diantara P dan KMS. Kaedah tinjauan kuantitatif telah digunakan di dalam kajian ini dan bagi tujuan pengumpulan data pula, soal selidik telah diedarkan kepada PKS milikan wanita yang terlibat dengan penggunaan sosail media dalam pemasarn mereka. Daripada keseluruhan soal selidik yang diterima, sebanyak 150 soal selidik boleh digunakan untuk tujuan penganalisaan data dan SPSS versi 19 telah digunakan untuk menganalisa data yang diterima. Bagi menguji hubungan diantara pemboleh ubah bersandar dan pemboleh ubah-pemboleh ubah tak bersandar, analisa regresi berganda telah digunakan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa wujud hubungan positif diantara KJ, PM dan P dengan KMS manakala hubungan negative wujud diantara PD dengan KMS. Di dalam kajian ini juga, limitasi kajian dan cadangan untuk penyelidikan di masa akan datang telah dikemukakan.

Katakunci: Keberkesanan, Kesedaran Jenama, Perkataan Mulut ke Mulut,, Penukaran.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one is to provide readers to the general introduction to the study. In this chapter readers would have the general ideas on the study conducted and it would also facilitate readers in understanding the whole research background. Readers will also be presented with the problem statement, the research objective, the research questions and the significant of the study. At the end of this chapter, organization of the study is provided to give understanding on how the research is being structured in order to carry out the study.

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The history of Internet service for the masses begins with the email and later followed by the first graphical web in the form of websites. Since then, the Internet has seen an outstanding evolution especially in this 21st century. It has totally changed the way people and organizations interact and communicate around the world. There used to be a time when Internet is only accessible to specific users and used only for specific reason but in this recent time it has turned into a normal event. Access to the Internet can be found almost anywhere and everywhere. The growth of Internet user around the world is made possible with the inventions and innovations of many devices that made it achievable for people to access Internet regularly.

The word Web 2.0 was first used by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 and in late 2004 the word has been popularised by Tim O'Reilly at the O'Reilly Media Web 2.0. (Wikipedia).

Web 2.0 also known as social media has been describe by many researchers as the next generation of Internet application and since the beginning of this social media era more than ten years ago; it has grown tremendously and has reached billions of people across the globe. Whether we like it or not, social media has become part of our lives. Social media is now known as one of the most talked about trend in the world and the rapidity of its growth is unbelievable.

The year 2000 marked the booming of social media and this recent phenomenon has totally transformed not only how individuals interact and communicate but also how entrepreneurs are taking advantage of this virtual explosion in social media. The growth of social media has not only changed the way users communicate but had also influenced the entrepreneurs' way of looking at their business in terms of operation and marketing. Planning a marketing strategy without taking in consideration of social media as part of the marketing strategy is out of the question as social media continues making strong statement of its importance in the recent marketing phenomena (Divya & Regi, 2014).

Social media was a doubtful subject to the entrepreneurs at the beginning but they have been proven wrong as social media continues to catch the attention of all level of businesses and apply social media marketing into their marketing strategy (Neti, 2011). The traditional way of marketing has been reshaped into the new social marketing. Social marketing offers prospects for entrepreneurs to connect with potential customers. Many social media companies such as Facebook, Twitter, Friendster, MySpace, Blogger, Linkedin and many more has developed business-specific tools as an encouragement for entrepreneurs to adopt social marketing into

their business. These social marketing has allowed business of all size to market their products or services effectively and most importantly affordably. Not only that, it also allowed marketed product or services to reach potential customers instantly and more efficiently.

The launched of the first Malaysian Internet Service Provider (ISP), JARING (Joint Advanced Integrated Networking) by MIMOS Berhad (Malaysian Microelectronic Systems) in 1992 marked the beginning of Internet story in Malaysia. However, the commercial Internet era in Malaysia had only begun in 1995 with the launch of TM Net and by 1996, Malaysia sees a growth in the number of Internet hosts. Since then, a steady increased has been seen in Malaysia's Internet users and practically more than half of Malaysia's total population which is 59.35% are Internet users in 2008. (Munusamy & Ismail, 2009).

The number of Internet population in Malaysia is showing a constant growth for the past couple of years where it has been reported that there are 21, 090, 777 Internet users in Malaysia as of July 2016. It means more than of half or 68.6 percent of the total population in Malaysia are Internet users (Internetlivestat.com, 2017). and most Malaysian Internet users are an active social media users. Social Media has become the new lifestyle especially for the X and Y generations.

The time spent on Internet are increasing significantly and made possible with the availability of devices namely Smartphone, tablets, notebook etc. that supported Internet logged in. There's almost no difficulty to log on to the Internet. Thanks to these devices logging on to the Internet can be done anytime and anywhere. This

scenario has also changed the way local consumers are doing their purchasing and they are not shy to share their online purchase with others through social media.

Although many researchers referred to online shopping in Malaysia as in its infancy, a research done by Google recently disclose that retailers in Malaysia have a large prospect in reaching and persuading online shoppers since many consumers who has never shopped online before are considering to do so in the near future. It is undeniable that the social media has changed the way shopping are being done thus the change in how entrepreneurs do their marketing is inevitable.

Taking into consideration the growing popularity of social media in becoming the new platform for micro, small and medium enterprises in Malaysia to promote their business and at the same time grow their market, it is the purpose of this study to provide insight and understanding on how Malaysian women involved in SMEs be able to integrate social media as part of their marketing strategy and use social media as one of their marketing tools that will make them even more competitive in the market. The effectiveness of social media as marketing tools are tested by looking into its relationship with brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the early days, man has always been known as the breadwinner in the family. However, over the past two decades, a change has been noticed on the entrepreneurship trend where numbers of women entrepreneurs has shown a steady raise. According to “US Small Business Administration”, approximately 4.7 million

women are among the 11.6 million self-employed workers in 2005 (Sana'a & Ilhaamie, 2008). In many previous studies conducted on women's involvement in business and entrepreneurship, they have always been described as minority group (Zarina, Hassan & Osman, 2007).

In Malaysia, women entrepreneurs has always been viewed not only as an important contributor in the exceptional growth of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) but has also been seen as an important factor in creating job opportunities thus becomes the fundamental factor of the economic growth in Malaysia. (Teoh & Chong, 2008). In recognizing the contribution of these women entrepreneurs to the nation's economy and as an effort to improve the growth, government has come out with various policies and support systems Cordelio & Marhani, 2012). Unfortunately, despite the steady raise in the number of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia, results on SME Census (2011) revealed that the number of women involved in entrepreneurship are still considered low compared to their male counterpart.

The SME Census (2011) report also revealed that only 19.7 percent from the total number of 645,136 SMEs operating in Malaysia were women entrepreneurs with the majority of 91.7 percent were on services sector and followed by manufacturing sector 6.9 percent. The percentage of women entrepreneurs involved in other sectors such as construction, agriculture, mining and quarrying were smaller accounting for 1.3 percent altogether (Census Reports on SMEs, 2011). The reason for this small number of women's involvement in entrepreneurship is due to the fact that some women are finding it difficult to sustain balance between managing their business and at the same time carrying their role as a housewife.

It has been widely acknowledged that women have been fighting their way against cultural and social biases. They were considered as not appropriate to get involved in business, be it managing other people's business or running their own. In Pakistan, social and religious has always been the reasons to prevent women from getting involved in any outdoor jobs which happen to women even in the urban areas. The existence of social media marketing has enabled these women getting involved in entrepreneurship without having to go against their social and religious constraints (Ul Hassan & Fatima, 2012). However, with the revolution of social media and the rapid growth of social media users, the entrepreneurship field might finally be levelled out. Women and men entrepreneurs can finally fairly compete to strive for their best in this entrepreneurship field.

Regardless of the tremendous intensification of social media around the world, there has been very limited information available on the adoption of social media marketing into their business among women entrepreneurs around the world and it is even more limited on women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. For that reason, it is the main intention of this paper to provide insight and understanding on how women entrepreneurs can take advantage of the booming of social media marketing building this social media as their marketing tools and integrate them as a part of their marketing strategy for the success and continuity of their business.

A statistic provided by internetworldstat.com reveals that as of March 2017, statistics shows that there are more than 3.7 billion Internet users globally indicating that 49.6 percent of the world populations are Internet user. The rate of Internet users from the

year 2000 to the 2017 shows a remarkable growth of 933.8 percent. Whereas in Malaysia, as of June 2016, there are more than 21 million Internet users representing, 67.7 penetration of the total population of more than 31 million (Internet World Stats, 2017). Statistic provided by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, percentage of male internet users in Malaysia, 59.4 percent are higher than female internet users by 18.8 percent (40.6 percent female internet users). The highest Internet users in 2015, are people aged between 20-24 years old followed by those in the age range between 25-29 years old (19.3 percent). The complete percentage of Internet users in Malaysia by age category is presented in Table 1.1 below (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), 2016).

Table 1.1
Percentage of Internet users by age category

<i>Age category</i>	<i>2014 (%)</i>	<i>2015 (%)</i>
Below 15	1.6	0.9
15-19	13.9	14.6
20-24	24.2	22.0
25-29	19.3	16.2
30-34	13.1	14.0
35-39	8.7	10.6
40-44	7.3	7.6
45-49	4.6	5.7
50 and above	7.3	8.5

Source: Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) (2016)

A survey conducted by E-Commerce Company, Rakuten Inc. showed that there has been a steady pace of increases in the numbers of Malaysian doing their shopping online which has landed Malaysia second behind Indonesia. The numbers are

expected to be steadily rising especially with more and more organizations and e-commerce sites linking themselves to social media. Over 67% of the surveyed consumer in Malaysia were enthusiastic to share their online purchases and would suggest a product through social media sites. There's no doubt that online shopping are exploding in Malaysia just how it has happened globally.

A study on how Malaysian Women entrepreneurs especially in SME sectors can use social media as marketing tools is very important since the development of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia is part of the government ongoing efforts to empower women in business. It is the writer's sincere hope that this paper will enable women entrepreneurs in Malaysia to have a better understanding thus make full use of social media marketing for the growth and success of their business.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Women involvement in entrepreneurship is observed to have positive impact to the economic development in the country. Shortage in paid employment either in public or private sector has led to the significantly increasing number of women entrepreneurs (Rhouse, n.d). Another found reason of why women get on entrepreneurial activity was to support their family and to improve the household income (Ekpe, Mat & Razak, 2010). Statistics has proven that the world acknowledging the importance of women entrepreneurs (Karim & Azmi, 2008). Findings of a survey conducted by National Association Women Business Owners (NAWBO) in 2015 reveals that women entrepreneurs acknowledged the importance of online marketing tools to their investment plan and also as a platform to engage

their customers but many of them lack of self-confidence to embrace and utilize the social media as marketing tools (NAWBO, 2015).

Social media has been the most talked about these recent days and due to its rapid and continues growth globally; many entrepreneurs are starting to be aware of the importance of including social media as part of their marketing strategy. Modern consumers requires more than just one way transaction when purchasing products or services from a company and that requirements is being enabled by the applications of social media where consumers will be able to reach the companies where they purchase their products or services from (Cheah, 2012).

Including social media as a part of their marketing tactics also enables entrepreneurs to have more control on their business in terms of reaching and engaging their targeted audience and monitoring the rate of success of their marketing effort thus enabling them to make changes on their products or services which are cheaper compared to the traditional marketing method. The fact that social media trend plays an important role in peoples' lives and also its ability to manipulate consumer' thoughts regarding companies or brands makes it an interesting topic to explore (Nikolova, 2012).

However, despite the vast and continues popularity that social media gained through the years of its existence, there are surprisingly very limited research has been conducted on the subject of the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools especially to women owned SMEs . More importantly majority of the previous studies conducted on social media marketing has not been conducted in Malaysia which in

turn making it favorable for researcher especially local researcher to explore this topic so that an adequate amount of information can be obtained for the benefit of local entrepreneurs in the future (Hassan, Shiratuddin, Hashim, Abdul Salam, Sajat, 2012).

According to Lim, Osman, Salahuddin and Romle (2016), the rapid growth in online shopping trends, especially for the Gen Y are contributed by its' convenience that the consumer experience while shopping. The popularity of online shopping has raised the retailers' interest to focus in this area (Lim, Osman, Salahuddin and Romle, 2016). According to PricewaterhouseCooper (PwC)'s Total Retail 2016 Survey report for South East Asia, Malaysians are slowly accepting online shopping as a normal purchasing way with practically half of Malaysian consumers are making online purchase for at least once a month. Taking into consideration that Malaysian consumers are somewhat new to the online marketplace, the growth in online purchasing activity the growth seen as promising (The Star Online, 2016). PricewaterhouseCooper (PwC)'s Total Retail 2016 Survey also report that The number of consumers in Southeast Asia who used their phone to make online purchase are the highest in the world and Thailand was leading with 73.0 percent of its consumer were making online purchase through their phone. Malaysia and Singapore comes in second where both countries shared the same percentage which is 66.0 percent.

Hence, for this reason, this study is conducted aiming to facilitate In this study, four variables namely brand awareness, engagement, words entrepreneurs in Malaysia focusing on women entrepreneurs in SME sectors to better understand the vital role of social media in online marketing and fully utilize the social media as marketing tools for the growth and success of their business.of mouth and conversion has been

recognized as predictors to the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools thus the relationship between brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth, conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools are further examine. The result of this study may have significance to women entrepreneurs' in planning the marketing strategies for their business and subsequently lead to the success of their business.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

It is a well-known fact that social media is playing an important role not only in people's social life but it is also reshaping the way people do their shopping. The general objectives of this study is to provide Malaysian Women Entrepreneurs knowledge on how they can exploit social media as marketing tool to market their products or brand, to analyse what are the business benefits or opportunities that social media marketing can offer, to determine what are the types of social media that is mostly used in Malaysia, and also to take a closer look on what are the challenges faced by them in the implementation of social media as their marketing tools in order for them to stay competitive in this business arena. From these objectives, there will be a greater understanding on how the social media landscape looks like thus providing Malaysian women entrepreneurs a comprehensive picture of how they can utilize social media in their marketing strategy.

The specific objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of social media when used as marketing tool. For this purpose effectiveness of social media as marketing tools is investigated through four independent variable namely brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion.

- i. To investigate the relationship of brand awareness and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- ii. To investigate the relationship of engagement and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- iii. To investigate the relationship of word of mouth and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- iv. To investigate the relationship of conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool.*

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

A clearly defined and carefully constructed research question is important in order to give the research a clear direction on what is intended to be researched. A research question directs and centers the research as well as answering the questions below which is related to the relationship between the four key points mentioned before and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool for Malaysian women entrepreneurs involved in SME sector.

- i. Is there any relationship between brand awareness and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- ii. Is there any relationship between engagement and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- iii. Is there any relationship between word of mouth and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- iv. Is there any relationship between conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*

1.6 SCOPE OF STUDY

This scope of the study is limited to social media marketing and the four variables affecting the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools focusing on women entrepreneurs in Malaysia involved in SME sectors only. The study has been concentrating on the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools for women entrepreneurs in Malaysia due to the fact that very limited study regarding the topic has been conducted in Malaysia.

The researcher sincerely hoped the study will facilitate and assist women entrepreneurs in Malaysia involved in SME sectors in understanding social media marketing and the relationship between brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth, conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools so that social media marketing can be fully utilize to help promote their products or services and consequently grow their business.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Social Media environment is very dynamic and will continue evolving in fast phase tempo. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blogs, LinkedIn, Pinterest etc. has forever changed the way entrepreneurs market their products or brands to their target market. The most important aspiration of this study is to find out the factors affecting the effectiveness of social media when used as marketing tool. The findings of this study will provide a general idea of the factors that determine the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools namely brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion to help the Malaysian Women SME Entrepreneurs in finding ways to improve their marketing strategy and

also to make their marketing campaigns more effective in reaching their target market.

The effectiveness of social media marketing using different social media platforms might result differently among entrepreneurs. For that reason, the findings of this study can provide insight and awareness to Malaysian Women SMEs Entrepreneurs of the types of social media platforms that can be effectively used as their marketing tool. In terms of academic contribution and practical contribution, this study is significance as it would benefit the Women Entrepreneurs in Malaysia in understanding social media marketing and to effectively use it as their marketing tools in order for them to gain the competitive advantage in this modern way of marketing.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Table 1.2
Definition of key terms

Terms	Definition
Small Medium Enterprise (SME)	According to SME Corp. Malaysia (2013), the new simplified definition of SME were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A Manufacturing: Sales turnover not exceeding RM50 million OR full-time employees not exceeding 200 workers ii. Services and other sectors: Sales turnover not exceeding RM20 million OR full-time employees not exceeding 75 workers
Effectiveness	Oxforddictionaries.com define effectiveness as the degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result; success

Table 1.2 (Continued)

Terms	Definition
Social Media (SM)	<p>Social Media is 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 (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)</p> <p>Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics: participation, openness, conversation, community & connectedness (Mayfield, 2008)</p>
Social Media Marketing (SMM)	<p>Social media marketing or SMM, is a form of internet marketing that implements various social media networks in order to achieve marketing communication and branding goals. Social media marketing primarily covers activities involving social sharing of content, videos, and images for marketing purposes (WordStream, n.d.)</p>
Brand Awareness	<p>How aware customers and potential customers are of your business and its products (Gustafon & Chabot, 2007).</p>
Engagement	<p>Engagement is communicating well enough that the audience pays attention (Falls, 2012).</p> <p>The intensity of an individual's connection or participation with a brand or organization (Oullier and Ramsay, n.d.)</p>
Words of mouth (WOM)	<p>A form of communication among consumers based on their personal experience and impression on product of a product or services (Gildin, 2003)</p> <p>The act of consumers providing information to other consumers (WOMMA, 2007)</p>
Conversion	<p>As adapted from MarketingSherpa handbooks, conversion can be define as the point at which a recipient of a marketing message performs a desired action (Kirkpatrick, 2012)</p>

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF REMAINING CHAPTERS

This research had been organized into five chapters. In Chapter One, background of the study, research problem of the study was explained. This chapter will also described and discuss the research objective, research question, scope of study, significance of the study and definition of key terms.

Chapter Two presents the literature review which will be constructed by reviewing past researchers that is related to this study consisting of the definition, concepts and theories related to this research. The research's dependent variable, the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools and the four independent namely brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth of mouth and conversion will be discussed in detail.

The methodology of this study will be discussed in Chapter Three. This chapter will describe in details the procedures and methodology that were used for data collection and analysis of the research. Theoretical framework, research hypothesis, research design, operational definition, research sample and population, instrumentation technique, measurement of the variables, data collection method, reliability test, and descriptive analysis conducted, and the regression analysis conducted will also be explained in this chapter.

Chapter Four will present the results of the data analysis and the elaboration of the obtained results from data analysis. All the data were obtained through the questionnaires distributed to the chosen sample. The collected data will be processed using the software SPSS of version 19.0 and represented in the form of text, tables, and figure to the reader.

Finally, conclusion and recommendations will be discussed in Chapter Five. The implications of the study will be highlighted by the researcher and some recommendation to improve the study for future research were also being suggested at the end of this research. Subsequently, the researcher will conclude and summarize all of the study based on the analysis results.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two, previous studies related to this research will be discussed. This chapter will also explain definition, concepts and theories which are also related to this study. The discussion of this past studies will start with review on previous studies on the history of Internet and social media sites, followed by discussion on entrepreneurship particularly women entrepreneurs in general and specifically women entrepreneurs in Malaysia.

Related studies on social media marketing will also be discussed and this will be followed by past studies associated to the variables which affect the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools that is brand awareness, engagement, words of Mouth and conversion.

2.2 THE INTERNET AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

2.2.1 The Internet

A look at the internet history and the significant improvement since the early days of its existence until today is important in order to figure out how the internet became so important and played significant role in our life. The internet we know today is not how it was before. Internet was not the creation of a single person neither it is the creation of a group of people. Instead, its development was the result from different people's contribution of ideas which has enabled it to evolve over time. It all started

in early 1960s in United States during the cold war period where two of the most influential country; the United States and the Soviet Union were competing to make their influence bigger in the world.

When Soviet Union launched its first space satellite, Sputnik successfully, the United States through its Defense Department reacted by setting up Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA, 2004). ARPA was intended to encourage innovative research and to develop latest technologies that would put United States in a better position compare to the Soviet Union in the technological battle. Another reason for its creation was to provide a communication networks that could linked the organizations working on a military related research securely (Keefer & Baiget, n.d; Almagor, 2011). J.C.R. Licklider a scientist from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) who was also the first Director of Information Processing Techniques Office (IPTO) has come up with a solution called “galactic network”; a network that would enabled communication even when telephone system was not working.

During the early days, internet was only created and applied in very limited permitted sectors in the United States namely organizations involved in research concerning revolutionary research. The development of “packet switching” by Leinord Kleirock another scientist from MIT in 1965 has enabled communication among computers. The development of “packet switching” led to the “birth” of Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) in 1969. The first public demonstration of ARPANET was in 1972 and it was a success. Following the success of ARPANET demonstration, the first electronic mail was sent on the same year. Electronic mail

better known as email became the predecessor of communication activity among one person to another that we see today. After the success of ARPANET, other networks such as the packet satellite networks, ground based packet radio networks and the others (Leiner et al., 1997).

During the 1970s the Network grew steadily with more and more computers were connected to the ARPANET thus creating difficulty for them to combine all of the connected computers into a single global network (History.com, n.d). The most important obstacle that need to be defeated in order for all of the connected computers to be able to link with one another was to develop a standard signals that could allow the network to become more global. The development of Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) has enabled networking activity among computers. The Internet Protocol (IP) was added later and became what we know today as TCP/IP. The TCP/IP invented by Robert Kahn and Vinton Cerf in the 1970s has transformed the internet into a global network (Leiner et. Al, 1997, History.com, n.d).

The year 1970s were considered as the year research for Internet and the 1980s were where the development of the Internet took place. Researchers and scientists from other fields started using the network for sending data and files from one computer to another. The United States government eventually opened Internet to private enterprise after the program of establishment internet access across United States commenced. During the 1990s, the Internet goes through rapid growth and keeps on growing since then. By 2014, there are more than 3 billion internet users around the world and the numbers keep growing (“Number of Internet Users 2014”)

2.2.2 The World Wide Web (WWW)

Although the internet has managed to enable communication between one computers to another, it only provides text on the screen. The development of the World Wide Web (www) on the late 1980s by Tim Berners-Lee, a computer programmer in the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) has changed the internet to become more interesting, enabling not only exchange of data among computers but also permit computer users on the internet to view and share documents containing text, graphics, animations, audios and videos (History.com Staff, 2010).

The invention the WWW have transformed the way people correspond, carry out their business and handle their life daily. How business is being conducted has also been change with the invention internet and WWW. Electronic Business better known as E-business was born. After almost 30 years (1989 – 2014) since the idea of WWW first introduced by Tim Berners-Lee, it has changed in so many ways. There has been four generations of the web; Web 1.0, Web 2.0, Web 3.0 and Web 4.0. E- Business has also evolved in so many ways and will continue effecting people's lives.

The first generation of the web, the web 1.0 was mainly build up by a group static web pages connected by hyperlinks. The sites content might be useful but it doesn't attract people to come back and visit the site again later. The web sites in Web 1.0 were not interactive where visitors can only be a visitor to the sites but cannot contribute to the site. According to Tim Berners-Lee, the web 1.0 could be considered as the "read-only web" as it only allows users to search and read the information presented to them. Communication and information flow were mono-directional.

There were no two way communications between users and producers of the information.

The web 1.0 era saw the emergence of a large numbers of static websites which grow rapidly during the dot com boom also referred as the dotcom bubble. Even though communication during the web 1.0 era was mono directional it had however marked the beginning of Information age and it has altered the way people communicate, the way business being conducted. The nature of how business being conducted is shifting from the traditional way to the internet based business. After the ban on commercial business operation through the internet by National Science Foundation in 1991, internet based business or e business keep on growing and never look back again.

The shopping cart applications used by most e-commerce website owners in some shape or form, basically fall under web 1.0 category. The website owners' main goal was to establish an online presence and to present their potential consumers with brochures and catalogues of their products just like how they do it using the newspaper. The only different is that, the products and brochures were presented to the consumers through the retailers' website where anybody can obtain information about them and their products anytime (Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani, 2012).

The second generation of the web, web 2.0 which began in the late 1990s is a result of the need to a more active and interactive communication among users. The term "Web 2.0" was invented in 1999 by an information architecture consultant Darcy DiNucci in her article "Fragmantend Future". DiNucci (1999) writes:

“The Web we know now, which loads into a browser window in essentially static screenfuls, is only an embryo of the Web to come. The first glimmerings of Web 2.0 are beginning to appear, and we are just starting to see how that embryo might develop. The Web will be understood not as screenfuls of text and graphics but as a transport mechanism, the ether through which interactivity happens. It will [...] appear on your computer screen, [...] on your TV set [...] your car dashboard [...] your cell phone [...] hand-held game machines [...] maybe even your microwave oven (p.32)

Although the term web 2.0 was invented back in 1999, the term only gained its popularity in the late 2004 in a conference brainstorming session between O'Reilly Media and MediaLive International which was the first web 2.0 conference. Despite the many attempt to define the term web 2.0, people are still unable to give the precise scientific definition to this term (Constantinides & Fountain, 2007, O'Reilly, 2007, p. 17, Paschdeka, 2011). One definition of web 2.0 was given by Tim O'Reilly in his website and it says:

“Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them” (as cited in Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani, 2012).

Constantinides and Fountain (2007) has also proposed the definition of web 2.0 as:

“Web 2.0 is a collection of open-source, interactive and user controlled online applications expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes. Web 2.0 applications support the creation of informal users’ networks facilitating the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing the informational content.”

Table 2.1
The difference of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0

Web 1.0	Web 2.0
DoubleClick	Google AdSense
Ofoto	Flickr
Akamai	BitTorrent
mp3.com	Napster
Britannica Online	Wikipedia
personal websites	blogging
evite	upcoming.org and EVDB
domain name speculation	search engine optimization
page views	cost per click
screen scraping	web services
publishing	participation
content management systems	wikis
directories (taxonomy)	tagging ("folksonomy")
stickiness	syndication

Source: O'Reilly (2005)

Table 2.1 shows the different between web 1.0 and web 2.0 which was formulated during the brainstorming session during the first web 2.0 conference. The most apparent different web 1.0 and web 2.0 was the modification from read-only web to a read-write web. The main characteristic of web 2.0 technology is that it users are able

to participate and not just become a viewer. With the web 2.0 technology, user – generated content are allowed and user are able to share thought, modify content of a website for example in Wikipedia where an entry can be edited, create own entry, communicate with others by commenting on others article in the comment boxes and many more.

Table 2.2 below is a simplified features comparing web 1.0 to web 2.0 given by Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani (2012) in their study.

Table 2.2
A Comparison of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0

Web 1.0	Web 2.0
Reading	Reading/Writing
Companies	Communities
Client-Server	Peer to Peer
Taxonomy	Tags
Owning	Sharing
IPOs	Trade sales
Netscape	Google
Web forms	Web applications
Screen scraping	APIs
Dialup	Broadband
Hardware costs	Bandwidth costs
Lectures	Conversation
Advertising	Word of mouth
Services sold over the web	Web services
Information portals	Platforms

Source: Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani (2012)

The fundamentals of web 2.0 theories are shown by various technologies and applications including but not limited to Wikis, Blogs, RSS Feeds, Aggregations, Mashups and Social Networks (Schröder, 2011). Below is an explanation of web 2.0 given by Sinti (2014) (Sinti, 2014).

1. **AJAX** - An acronym derived from “Asynchronous JavaScript and XML”. Ajax is an important underlying technology used to create interactive web applications. Ajax is what enables Web 2.0 sites to behave dynamically, so that they feel more like computer programs than static web pages
2. **ATOM** – A format for the syndication of online content, atom functions as a newer alternatives to RSS.
3. **Blog** – Originally derived from the word “weblog”, a blog is a simple content website created with inexpensive self-publishing tools. Blogs are the back home of Web 2.0’s democratic spirit
4. **Mashups** – Websites or applications that combine content from one or more sources. For example, Cellreception.com combines Google Maps with a database of 124, 000 cellphone tower locations to help users determine where mobile coverage is strong and where it isn’t.
5. **RSS** – Shorthand for “Real Simple Syndication”. RSS is a protocol that makes it easy for computer users to receive content from their favorite providers whenever the content is updated. Instead of having to remember to visit a website, to read a favorite column, watch a video or listen to an audio program, RSS lets a user subscribe to the content so it’s delivered automatically. The flow of content the user receives is called an “RSS feed”.
6. **Social Media** – A generic term used to describe Web-based tools that harness the power of collaboration and group interaction. This can take

many forms, from the personal web pages of MySpace to the virtual worlds of Second Life to the professional networking popular on LinkedIn.

7. **Tags** – User generated keywords used to describe online content. Tags make it easier for both humans and search engines to find relevant and related information.
8. **Wikis** - A dynamic Web document that allows users to add, change or edit the content displayed on the page. The user-created Wikipedia online encyclopedia is the most famous example.
9. **XML** – An abbreviation for “Extensible Markup Language”. XML is a programming code for online data that preserves the structure and formatting of a digital document regardless of whatever application is used to read it. XML is an important enabling technology for RSS feeds.

Articles by Economist and Time magazine published in 2005 have described the web 2.0 trend as not only affecting the way people live but has also affected businesses. Easy access to information, unlimited choices and ample of knowledge gained online is the main reason for the trend changing environment which has also caused the shift in control of market power from producers or retailers power to consumers power (as cited in Constantinides & Fountain, 2007).

The expansion and the vast popularity of the internet especially with the development of web 2.0 has resulted on the emergence of new marketing channels thus providing producers and retailers another marketing options which has the ability to reach the consumers in a massive way (Paschdeka, 2011). Figure 2.1 below shows 10 of the most popular Web 2.0 Websites as at February 2015.










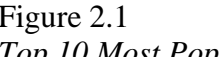
	1 YouTube 3 - eBizMBA Rank 1,000,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 4 - Compete Rank 2 - Quantcast Rank 3 - Alexa Rank
	2 Wikipedia 10 - eBizMBA Rank 475,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 8 - Compete Rank 16 - Quantcast Rank 6 - Alexa Rank
	3 Twitter 12 - eBizMBA Rank 310,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 21 - Compete Rank 8 - Quantcast Rank 8 - Alexa Rank
	4 Pinterest 22 - eBizMBA Rank 250,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 27 - Compete Rank 12 - Quantcast Rank 26 - Alexa Rank
	5 WordPress 24 - eBizMBA Rank 240,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 38 - Compete Rank 15 - Quantcast Rank 18 - Alexa Rank
	6 Craigslist 31 - eBizMBA Rank 111,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 14 - Compete Rank 30 - Quantcast Rank 50 - Alexa Rank
	7 Tumblr 34 - eBizMBA Rank 110,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 55 - Compete Rank 12* - Quantcast Rank 35 - Alexa Rank
	8 IMDb 52 - eBizMBA Rank 106,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 50 - Compete Rank 60 - Quantcast Rank 45 - Alexa Rank
	9 Yelp 65 - eBizMBA Rank 105,500,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 52 - Compete Rank 11 - Quantcast Rank 133 - Alexa Rank
	10 Instagram 77 - eBizMBA Rank 100,000,000 - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors 49 - Compete Rank 145 - Quantcast Rank 36 - Alexa Rank

Figure 2.1

Top 10 Most Popular Web 2.0 Websites as at February 2015

Source: <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/web-2.0-websites>

Web 2.0 has revolutionized the internet in such a way that it has changed so many aspects of people's life. The past few years has seen the booming of web 2.0 applications such as blogs, wikis, networking sites and others which has transformed almost how everything is being done be it personal life or how organizations conduct their business. Despite the huge success of web 2.0, the evolution of WWW keeps on going and the web 2.0 is seen as going out the door to give room to the next generation of the web (Hendler, 2008; Almeida, D. Santos & A. Monteiro, 2013; Spivack, n.d). The third generation of the WWW was called web 3.0. The name web 3.0 was suggested by John Markoff in his article published in New York Times in November 2006 (Patel, 2013; Hendler, 2008; Lassila & Hendler, 2007 Spivack, n.d).

Although experts are not unanimous about naming the third generation of the web as web 3.0, many agreed to refer to this third generation web as the Semantic Web (Almeida, D. Santos & A. Monteiro, 2013; Barassi, Treré, 2012; Hendler, 2010;

Lassila & Hendler, 2007; Nova Spivack, n.d; A Brief Introduction to Web 3.0, n.d).

World Wide Consortium (W3C) explained semantic web in their website as:

The Semantic Web provides a common framework that allows data to be shared and reused across application, enterprise, and community boundaries. It is a collaborative effort led by W3C with participation from a large number of researchers and industrial partners. It is based on the Resource Description Framework (RDF).

Aghaei, Nematbakhsh and Farsani (2012) has stated that:

“The main difference between web 2.0 and web 3.0 is that web 2.0 targets on content creativity of users and producers while web 3.0 targets on linked data set”.

Aghaei et al. has also provided a table to compare the differences between web 2.0 and web 3.0 in a much simpler way to understand both web 2.0 and web 3.0 shown in table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3
A comparison of Web 2.0 & Web 3.0

Web 2.0	Web 3.0
Read/Write Web	Portable personal Web
Communities	Individuals
Sharing content	Consolidating dynamic content
Blogs	Lifestream
AJAX	RDF
Wikipedia, Google	Dbpedia, Igoogle
Tagging	User engagement

Source: Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani (2012)

Another word for semantic web is data driven. Data driven basically means that the data provided by user will be fine-tuned by the web to suits the user's need. The web has the ability to remember user's previous frequent search and will suggest a combination of the user's new search with the user's latest search (What Does Web 3.0 Really Mean, 2013; A Brief Introduction to Web 3.0, n.d). For instance, a user who frequently search for 'computers' before and currently searching for 'design' will be given a search result combining both 'design' and 'computers'(A Brief Introduction to Web 3.0, n.d).

An article published by 36creative.com (2013) has characterized web 3.0 by its ability to 'personalize data'. It means that users and programs will differentiated entirely based on the data constructed by the web. The article further give the characteristic of web 3.0 as 'metaverse' a term refers to most recent advancements in virtual reality (What Does Web 3.0 Really Mean, 2013). John Smart, Futurist and lead author of Metaverse Roadmaps has also stated that metaverse is the union of virtual reality and real world (as cited in Web 3.0, n.d).

Despite the fact that there have been many attempts to define the web 3.0 the real definition is yet to be identified. However, the basic concept of web 3.0 has been characterise as semantic web, Transforming the Web into a database, An evolutionary path to artificial intelligence Evolution towards 3D (Sinti,2014, Impetus Technologies Inc., 2009). One of the largest advantages of web 3.0 development is the mobile technology. The mobile technology has allowed data access or internet access from anywhere and everywhere. The main contribution to this mobile

capability in web 3.0 is the massive improvement in mobile function technology. The development of mobile devices such as smartphones, improvement in wireless internet and broadband speed which makes internet connection faster and more reliable has contributed greatly to the advancement in web 3.0 (Pariante, 2009; What Does Web 3.0 Really Mean, 2013; A Brief Introduction to Web 3.0, n.d).

Web 3.0 technology has definitely altered the way business being conducted eternally. With the web 3.0 technologies which has enabled the development of new software and gadgets, perceptive organizations will keep on finding innovative ways to make the web 3.0 technologies as an essential part of their business development. The enhancement of organizations capability and the ability to create aptitude in their business productions and marketing strategies will enabled them to tackle their customers' needs more accurately with the better interactions and participations from the customers' itself. By taking advantage of what web 3.0 technologies offered, organizations' will be able to create enhanced services and affiliation with the customers (Garrigos-Simon et al., 2012; Verizon business, n.d)

Following its predecessor, web 4.0 is said to be the next in line in the WWW generations. While there have been much discussion going on about web 4.0, it is agreeable that this successor of web 3.0 is still just an idea proposed by some technical person and therefore the definition of web 4.0 is still unavailable (Prasad, Manjula & Bapuji, 2013; Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani ,2012; Pariante , 2009). Edwards (2013) in his article has questioned the relevance of web 4.0 as web 3.0 "*is only just getting going*" (Edwards, 2013).

Web 4.0 was referred to as the symbiotic web (Choudhury, 2014; Janik, 2013; Aghaei, Nematbakhsh & Farsani, 2012; Pariente, 2009; Understanding Web 2.0, Web 3.0 and Web 4.0, n.d). Web 4.0 is regarded as the intelligent web and it will be the read-write-execution-concurrency web (Janik, 2013). The web and the human will interact in symbiosis allowing the machine to respond not only to what the users need but also to appoint where the machine will match the users need to the simplest and most efficient ways possible in completing it (Robinson, 2014)

As cited in Janik's article published online on 2013, Daniel Burrus a futurist and business strategist who has called the web 4.0 "ultra-intelligent agents" has stated that the applications in web 4.0 will be acting like personal assistance to the user telling the user everything from personal matters to the things that is happening locally and globally (Janik, 2013).

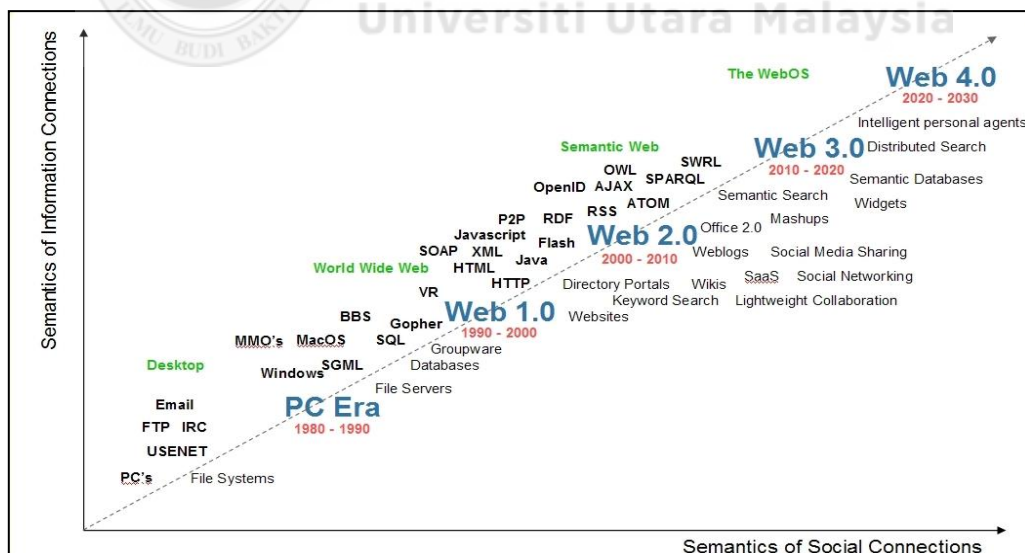


Figure 2.2
Web Evolution Timeline From Web 1.0 to Web 4.0
 Source: Radar Networks & Nova Spivack (2007)

Figure 2.2 which was adapted from Radar Networks and Nova Spivack above shows the evolution from of the web from web 1.0 all the way to web 4.0. According to Spivac (2007), web 4.0 will be intelligent personal agents, the implementation of web 4.0 will only happen in five years' time which is on the year 2020. His statement was later agreed by Pariente (2009) and Edwards, (2013). The implementation of web 4.0 will be a big advantage to the online industry. It will provide customers with the authority and the tools to be able to connect with the desired business without time and place constrain. The web 4.0 technologies will let the customer experienced online activity with the closes possible way to the physical world (Larson, 2012)

2.3 SOCIAL MEDIA – NOTION AND CONCEPTS

Communication has always been humans' main concern for a very long time. Communication has always been humans' way to strengthen their relationship and socially connected. In order to stay connected with each other; humans have always been trying to create mediums to enable them to interact with each other especially those living in separate places far away. For this purpose, many ways has been created to enable communication which has evolved tremendously from the primeval verbal communication and drawings of symbols to a more modern ways of communication such as telephones and computers (Hendrics, 2013; Farrugia, 2013).

Farrugia (2013) further stated that the recent technology in communication has allowed people to communicate face to face with each other without having to be in the same place and the use of telephones and computers has also opened the way for the most recent communication technology – the social media (Ferrugia, 2013). However, in contrast to what Ferrugia (2013) stated, Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame,

Watson & Seymour (2011) claimed that social media is nothing new and started with the telephone during the 1950s. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) has agreed stating that social media might have started about 20 years earlier before Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis from Duke University created the Usenet in 1979 (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson & Seymour, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The social media trend has changed the way people communicate around the world. (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson & Seymour, 2011). It is a well-known fact that the popularity of social media is growing globally (Shiratuddin, Hashim, Salam & Sajat , 2012; Neti, 2011). A Report by the Society for New Communications Research as cited in Shiratuddin, Hashim, Salam and Sajat (2012) disclose that the growth of social has benefitted many organizations be it profit based organizations or nonprofit organizations due to the reason that progressively more are choosing social media to broadcast informations (Shiratuddin, Hashim, Salam & Sajat , 2012).

2.3.1 Defining Social Media

According to Leong (2013), social media were put together based on the ideological and technological fundamentals of web 2.0 (Leong, 2013). On the other hand, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) on their article considered “web 2.0 as the platform for the evolution of social media” Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). An argument on the definition of social media was presented by Jacka and Scott (2011) who declared that “there is no single recognized definition of social media”. Jacka and Scott (2011) further argue that “it can be said that social media is the set of Web based broadcast technologies that enable the democratization of content, giving people the ability to emerge from

consumers of content to publishers” (as cited in Review of Social Media and Defence, n.d).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media 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. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Merriam-webster online dictionary defines social media as “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)” (merriam-webster dictionary, n.d).

Social media is constantly evolving and expanding thus makes it hard to come up with a definition that can be accepted by all. The constant evolution and expansion of social media are due to the fact that social media are part of internet technologies which features are regularly tailored to suit the current trend demanded by the public (Arca 2012; Cohen, 2011).

2.3.2 Social Media Categories

People would have the same opinion that online platforms such as Wikipedia, Youtube, Facebook, Twitter just to name a few are all part of a large group when the word social media mentioned. In contrary, social media nowadays covers bigger variety of websites and online platforms (Saxena, 2014, Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Generally social media can be classified into six categories and to further discuss the categories, the social media categorization by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) is adopted

to provide better understanding on the different types of social media category (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

1) Collaborative projects

Collaborative projects enable the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many end-users. Wikis such as Wikipedia which allow users to modify the text based content and social bookmarking applications which allow group-based collection and rating of Internet links or media content are examples of sites included in this category. Collaborative projects focal idea is for a better outcome which can be achieved with the collaborative effort of many users rather than an effort from individual user.

2) Blogs

Blogs which is one of the earliest forms of social media is like a personal web page that has a huge amount of dissimilarity which can be about almost anything and everything. It is normally managed individually but others can be a part by commenting on the particular posts. Text-based blogs are by a long way still the most popular types but blogs with different media formats has started gaining popularity among users.

3) Content Communities

The most important goal of content communities is the sharing of media content between users and the existent of content communities covers an extensive variety of diverse types of media. Content communities includes text (e.g., BookCrossing where people from all over the world share books), photos (e.g., Flickr), videos (e.g., YouTube) and PowerPoint presentations (e.g., Slideshare).

4) Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

Social networking sites are the applications where members are allowed to have interaction with each other not only through text messages but also through other types such as photo postings and video postings. Members are required to create personal profile where they can include any type of information such as photos, audio files, videos and blogs. Connections among members are through invitation sent to friends and colleagues where the invited persons are allowed to have access on the invitee's account vice versa. The social networking sites are undoubtedly the most popular social media sites and Facebook top the lists with a lot more number of members compare to other sites.

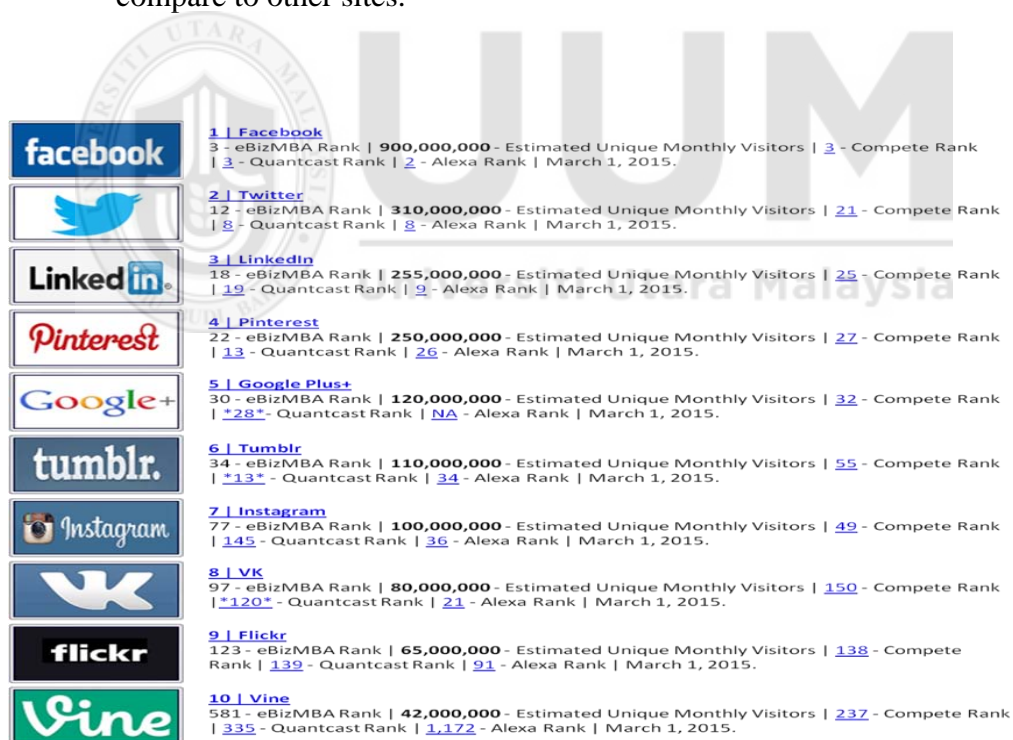


Figure 2.3

Top 10 Most Popular Social Networking Sites as at February 2015

Source: <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/web-2.0-websites>

5) Virtual Game World

Virtual Game Worlds are platforms that replicate a three dimensional environment in which users can appear in the form of personalized avatars and interact with each other as they would in real life according to the rules of the game. The popularity gained by these applications due to the supports from Microsoft's X-Box and Sony's PlayStation which now allow players from all over the world to play together in real time. Example of virtual game worlds is "World of Warcraft,"

6) Virtual Social World

Virtual Social Worlds are applications that allow people to create a virtual life in the form of avatar where they can freely choose their behavior and basically live as in their real life. Perhaps the most popular example of virtual social worlds is "Second Life" application where people can do almost everything possible in real life such as speaking to other avatars, taking a walk, enjoying the virtual sunshine, residents are also allowed to create content such as designing virtual clothing or furniture items and later sell this content to others in exchange for Linden Dollars, a virtual currency traded against the U.S. Dollar on the Second Life Exchange. The huge success of some residents earned them virtual incomes that match their real life income.

2.4 INTERNET AND ICT LANDSCAPE IN MALAYSIA

The year 1995 was considered as the beginning year for Internet in Malaysia however the year 1996 is when the internet growth began. The internet has caused gigantic alteration on how things are being done and on many other aspects of Malaysian culture and it has since then become the way of life for Malaysian just like it is in

many other countries. The number of Internet user in Malaysia skyrocketed with the penetration of high broadband where the initiative for this High Speed Broadband which was launched in 2010 comes from the National Public Policy Workshop (NPPW) in 2005 who proposed a remarkable strategy transformation to encourage ICT and internet adoption in among Malaysian (Salman, Er, Mahmud & Latif, 2013).

National Information Technology Agenda (NITA), launched in 1996, has opened the way for the speedy development of ICT industry in Malaysia which has brought to the allocation 10% amounting RM 4.9 billion of the total amount allocated for Development Expenditure under the 2014 budget. Malaysian has seen an improved and remarkable growth in access to computers and internet among its citizens and it has placed Malaysia in number 59 on the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Between 2005 and 2011, the percentage of Malaysian household with computer increased more than double from 31.3 percent to 64.1 percent and at the same time the increase in percentage of household with internet access saw a significant growth from 15.2 percent to 61.4 percent (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Malaysia, 2014).

According to the 2013 Industry Performance Report (IPR) by Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), the year 2013 has seen Malaysia being ranked No. 1 in broadband affordability by the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) in their first ever report on the drivers on Internet Affordability in 46 developing and emerging countries. The rapid progress achieved by Malaysia is owed to the innovative technologies which are paired with supporting policy as well as regulatory environment which encourage supply and demand. There

are four main factors listed by the IPR for the Malaysia's success to be World's No.1 in the broadband affordability (Industry Performance Report, 2013).

According to MCMC 2013 Industry Performance Report, by the end of December 2013, Malaysia has 20.1 million Internet users bringing the total of the internet penetration per ITU (International Telecommunication Union) in Malaysia to 67 per cent in 2013 (Industry Performance Report, 2013). Based on data provided in communications and multimedia pocket book of statistics for quarter four of 2014, the total population in Malaysia was 30.1 million and the internet penetration has increased to 70.1%. Mobile penetration has also seen an increase from 143.8% in 2013 to 148.5% in 2014 (Pocket book of statistics, 2014).

A survey to find out the statistics of ICT usage individually and house hold usage was conducted for the first time by Department of Statistics Malaysia in 2013. The data was acquired from individual usage and house hold usage on computer, internet, mobile phones and others.

2.4.1 ICT Usage by Individuals

Figure 2.4 shows that a total of 94.2 percent of Malaysian used mobile phone, 56 percent internet user and 57 percent are computer user. The percentage of users from urban area are higher compare to rural area with a total of 95.7 percent used mobile phone, 63 percent internet user and 64.6 percent computer user while on rural area, the total of mobile phone user was 91 percent, 40 percent internet user and 40 percent computer user. Refer Figure 2.5 and 2.6

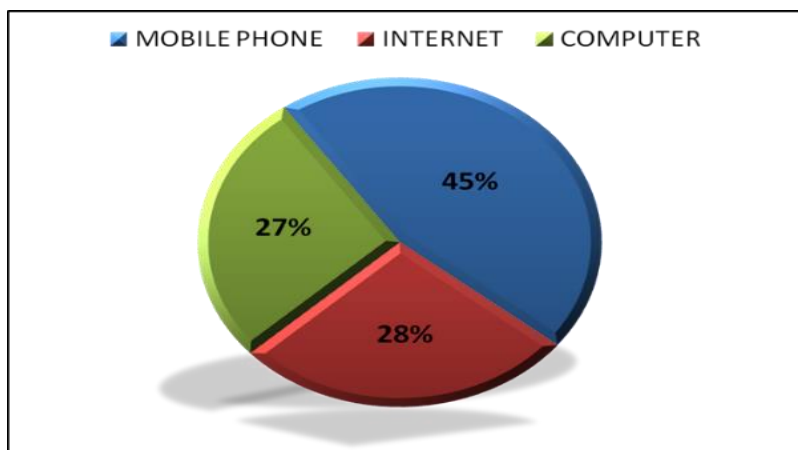


Figure 2.4
Individual use of Mobile phone, Internet and Computer in Malaysia

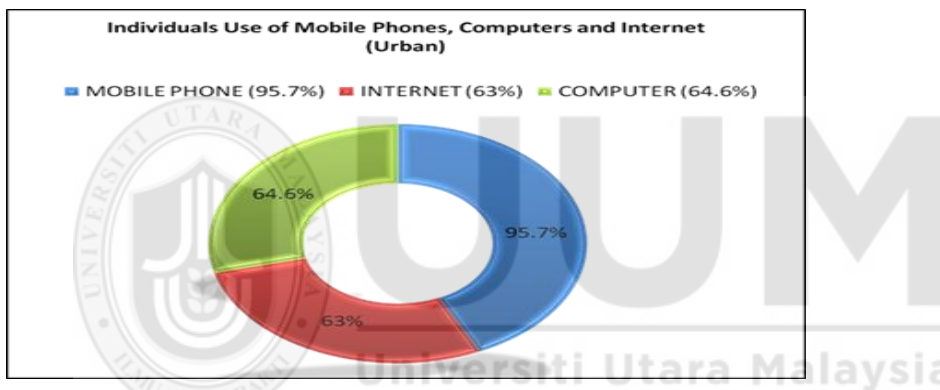


Figure 2.5
Individual use of Mobile phone, Internet and Computer in Urban Area

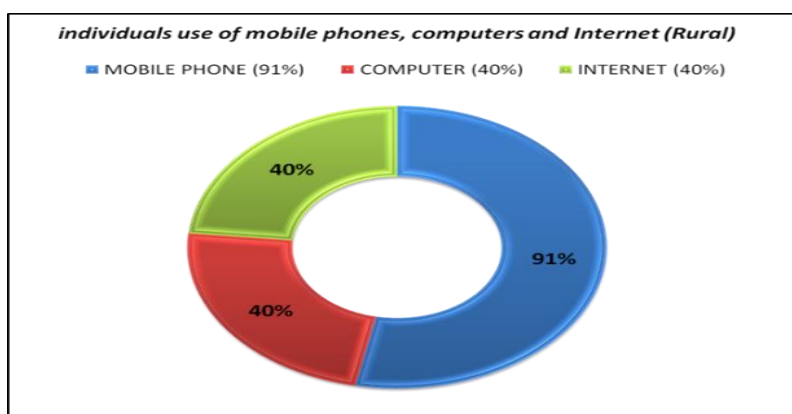


Figure 2.6
Individual use of Mobile phone, Internet and Computer in Rural Area

On the survey of individual's frequency to use the internet, the survey found out that a total of 60.3 percent frequently used the internet and accessed the internet at least once a day. Among the individual internet users, 30.2 percent accessed the internet at least once a week but not on daily basis, 6.7 percent at least once a month but not weekly and only 2.8 percent of the individuals surveyed accessed internet less than once a month, Details are presented in Figure 2.7. The individuals' internet usage frequency is higher in urban area than the individuals' internet usage frequency in rural area presented in Figure 2.8 and Figure 2.9, a total 63.7 percent in the urban area accessed internet at least once a day while only 47.6 percent individuals accessed internet at least once a day in rural area.

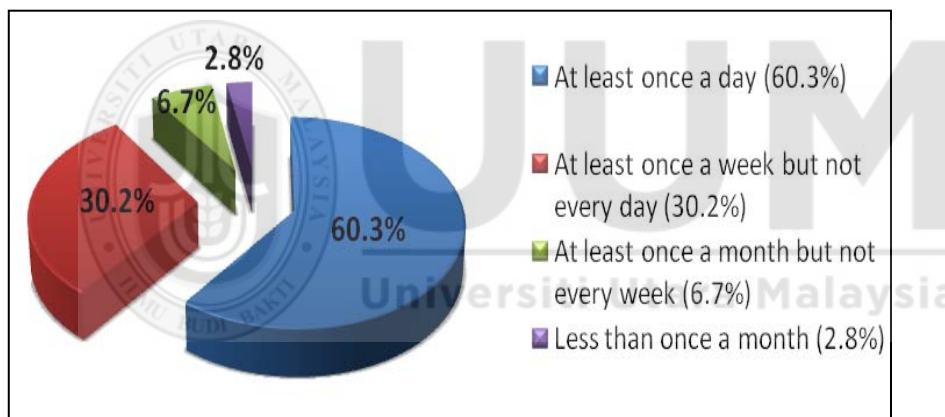


Figure 2.7

Frequency Individual usage of Internet in Malaysia

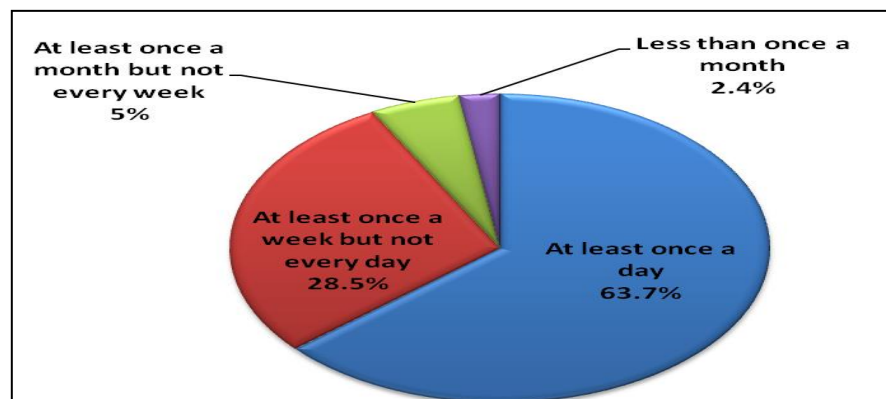


Figure 2.8

Frequency Individual usage of Internet in Urban Area

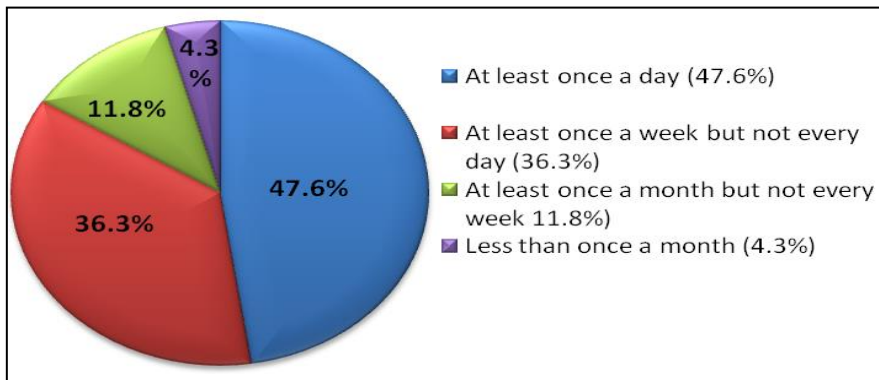


Figure 2.9
Frequency Individual usage of Internet in Rural Area

In terms of individuals' location for accessing internet, most individuals access internet from home with a total percentage of 71.2 percent. Percentage of other places where individuals accessed internet are at places such as anywhere via mobile phone (55.3%), work place (37.8%), anywhere via another mobile access device (22.4%), community internet access facility (17.1%), educational institution (16.6%), another person's house (13.2%) and from various other locations (3.3%). Figure 2.10 presents the detail.

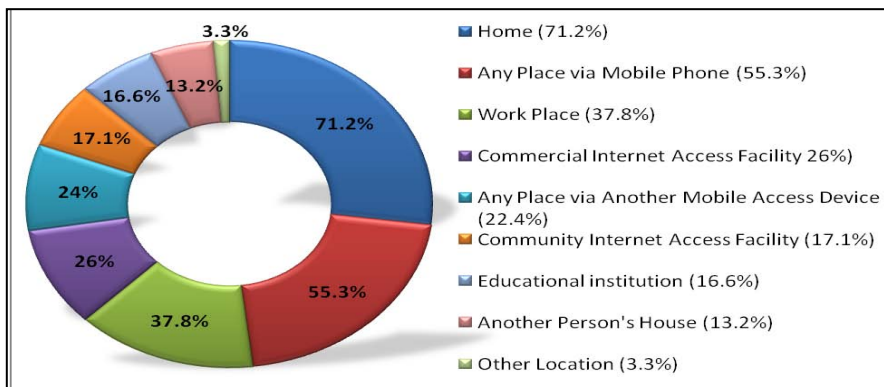


Figure 2.10
Location of Individuals Internet Usage in Malaysia

Figure 2.11 and Figure 2.12 shows the percentage of location used by individuals to access internet in urban and rural area.

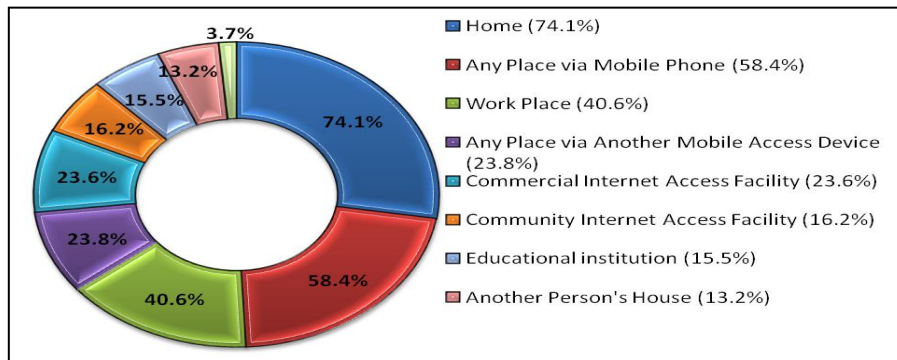


Figure 2.11
Location of Individuals Internet Usage in Urban Area

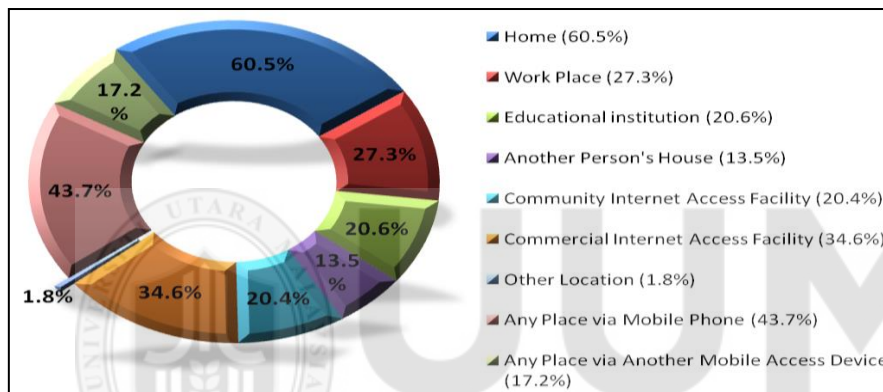


Figure 2.12
Location of Individuals Internet Usage in Rural Area

Table 2.4 below, shows activities done by individuals through internet in Malaysia. The top 5 activities done by individuals through internet in Malaysia are posting information or instant messaging with 69.1 percent followed by sending or receiving emails at 65.4, getting information about goods and services at 65.3 percent, Downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video, or listening to radio or music at 64.6 percent and Reading or downloading online newspaper or magazines, electronic books at 52.1 percent.

Other activities done by Malaysian individuals on the internet includes activities such as Playing or downloading video games or computer games (47.9%), Getting information related to health services (33.2%), Getting information from government organizations (34.3%), Downloading software (31.5%), Interacting with government organizations (27.3%), Telephoning over the Internet/VoIP (26.1%), Education or learning activities (24.4%) and Purchasing and ordering goods and services (15.3%). Apart from these activities, individuals in Malaysia also use internet for their banking activities. The highest percentage of internet banking activities done by Malaysian individuals is for paying bills at 21.2 percent and the lowest percentage is on payment of goods and services at 10.4 per cent while financial transfer for is in the middle with a percentage 13.1 percent.

Table 2.4
Activities Done by Individuals through Internet

No.	Activities	%
1	Posting information or instant messaging	69.1
2	Sending or receiving email	65.4
3	Getting information about goods and services	65.3
4	Downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video, or listening to radio or music	64.6
5	Reading or downloading online newspaper or magazines, electronic books	52.1
6	Playing or downloading video games or computer games	47.9
7	Getting information related to health services	33.2
8	Getting information from government organizations	34.3
9	Downloading software	31.5
10	Interacting with government organization	26.3
11	Telephoning over the Internet/VoIP	27.5

Table 2.4 (Continued)

No.	Activities	%
12	Education or learning activities	24.4
13	Purchasing and ordering goods and services	15.3
14	INTERNET BANKING	
	(a) Payment of bills	21.2
	(b) Payment of goods and services other than item (a)	10.4
	(c) Financial transfer for purposes other than items (a) and (b)	13.1

Table 2.5 and Table 2.6 shows the activities done through internet by individuals in urban and rural area. In urban area the top five activities done through internet are getting information about goods and services (68.8%), posting information or instant messaging (67.5%), sending or receiving email (67.9%), downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video or listening to radio or music (63.3%) and reading or downloading online newspaper or magazines, electronic books (52.5%). On the other hand, the top five done through internet by individuals in rural area are posting information or instant messaging (74.9%), downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video, or listening to radio or music (63.3%), sending or receiving email (56.6%), getting information about goods and services (52.2%) and playing or downloading video games or computer games (53%).

Table 2.5

Activities Done by Individuals through Internet in Urban Area

No.	Activities	%
2	Getting information about goods and services	68.8
1	Posting information or instant messaging	67.5

Table 2.5 (Continued)

No.	Activities	%
4	Downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video, or listening to radio or music	63.3
5	Reading or downloading online newspaper or magazines, electronic books	52.5
6	Playing or downloading video games or computer games	46.5
7	Getting information related to health services	35.8
8	Getting information from government organizations	34.3
9	Downloading software	33
10	Interacting with government organizations	26.3
11	Telephoning over the Internet/VoIP	27.5
12	Education or learning activities	22.8
13	Purchasing and ordering goods and services	17.1
14	INTERNET BANKING	
	(a) Payment of bills	24.3
	(b) Payment of goods and services other than item (a)	12.1
	(c) Financial transfer for purposes other than items (a) and (b)	15.2

Table 2.6

Activities Done by Individuals through Internet in Rural Area

No.	Activities	%
1	Posting information or instant messaging	74.9
2	Downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video, or listening to radio or music	63.3
3	Sending or receiving email	56.6
4	Getting information about goods and services	52.2

Table 2.6 (Continued)

No.	Activities	%
6	Reading or downloading online newspaper or magazines, electronic books	50.3
7	Getting information related to health services	34.3
8	Interacting with government organizations	30.7
9	Education or learning activities	30
10	Downloading software	25.8
11	Getting information from government organizations	23.6
12	Telephoning over the Internet/VoIP	20.7
13	Purchasing and ordering goods and services	8.8
14	INTERNET BANKING	
	(a) Payment of bills	9.7
	(b) Payment of goods and services other than item (a)	4.3
	(c) Financial transfer for purposes other than items (a) and (b)	5.4

The ICT individual usage and house hold usage of internet survey has listed 15 types of goods and services purchased or ordered by individual through internet. Among the purchased or ordered goods and services, clothes, bags and shoes are listed as the highest purchasing or ordering percentage at 50.4 percent while games equipment listed as the least purchased or ordered items with only 5.0 percent. Food and beverages is in number two of the most purchased or ordered goods and services with the percentage of 49.7 percent followed by travel products at 35.4 percent and accommodation services at 28.7 percent (See Table 2.7)

Table 2.7

Goods and Services Purchased or Ordered by Individuals through Internet

No.	Goods and services purchased or ordered	%
1	Clothes, bag, shoes	50.4
2	Food and beverages	49.7
3	Travel products	35.4
4	Accommodation services	28.7
5	Personal accessories	27.9
6	Transportation services	24.0
7	Entertainment tickets	21.2
8	Healthcare products and services	20.6
9	Books, magazines or newspapers	16.1
10	Electronic equipment	8.4
11	Computer hardware and software	7.1
12	Spare parts and	7.9
13	Film, video, music	7.9
14	Financial services e.g. insurance etc.	7.2
15	Games equipment	5.0

Table 2.8

Goods and Services Purchased or Ordered by Individuals through Internet in Urban Area

No.	Goods and services purchased or ordered	%
1	Clothes, bag, shoes	52.3
2	Food and beverages	51.3
3	Travel products	37.4
4	Accommodation services	30.8

Table 2.8 (Continued)

No.	Goods and services purchased or ordered	%
5	Personal accessories	28.9
6	Transportation services	25.3
7	Entertainment tickets	22.9
8	Healthcare products and services	20.8
9	Books, magazines or newspapers	17.3
10	Electronic equipment	8.4
11	Film, video, music	8.4
12	Spare parts and accessories of vehicle	8.1
13	Financial services e.g. insurance etc.	7.8
14	Computer hardware and software	7.4
15	Games equipment	5.1

Table 2.9

Goods and Services Purchased or Ordered by Individuals through Internet in Rural Area

No.	Goods and services purchased or ordered	%
1	Food and beverages	38.4
2	Clothes, bag, shoes	36.6
3	Travel products	21.6
4	Personal accessories	20.6
5	Healthcare products and services	18.9
6	Transportation services	14.8
7	Accommodation services	13.9
8	Entertainment tickets	8.5
9	Electronic equipment	7.7
10	Books, magazines or newspapers	7.6
11	Spare parts and accessories of vehicle	6.7

Table 2.9 (Continued)

No.	Goods and services purchased or ordered	%
12	Film, video, music	4.7
13	Games equipment	4.4
14	Computer hardware and software	4.3
15	Financial services e.g. insurance etc.	2.8

Table 2.8 and Table 2.9 shows the list of types of goods and services purchased and ordered by individuals in Malaysia in urban as well as rural area. Although the most purchased or ordered types of goods or services in both areas similar, the percentage shows a significant difference where in urban areas the percentage were 52.3 percent while in rural areas were only 38.4 percent. The percentage of other listed types of goods and services purchased and ordered were also showing significant difference and the top five in the list were also slightly different.

Table 2.10

Reasons for Not Purchasing or Ordering Goods or Services by Individuals through Internet

No.	Items	%
1	Not interested	69.5
2	Prefer to buy in regular stores	49.1
3	Lack of knowledge, skill	41.8
4	Concern about privacy and safety	21.4
5	There is no guarantee for products received	17.6
6	Delivery takes a long time	11.0
7	Prices are more expensive than regular stores	10.4
8	Internet access not available in the area	2.4
9	Others	1.9

Various reasons were given as to why Individuals decline to purchase or order goods or services through the internet which has been shown in the Table 2.10. The most popular reason with the percentage of 69.5 percent was not interested. Other reasons given were reasons such as prefer to buy in regular stores (49.1%), Lack of knowledge and skill (41.8%), concern about privacy and safety (21.4%), there is no guarantee for products received (17.6%), delivery takes a long time (11.0%), prices are more expensive than regular stores (10.4%), internet access not available in the area (2.4%) and others (1.9%).

Table 2.11
Reasons for Not Purchasing or Ordering Goods or Services by Individuals through Internet in Urban Area

No.	Items	%
1	Not interested	68.4
2	Prefer to buy in regular stores	49.3
3	Concern about privacy and safety	23.0
4	There is no guarantee for products received	17.8
5	Internet access not available in the area	1.9
6	Delivery takes a long time	10.4
7	Lack of knowledge, skill	42.0
8	Prices are more expensive than regular stores	10.1
9	Others	1.6

Table 2.12

Reasons for Not Purchasing or Ordering Goods or Services by Individuals through Internet in Rural Area

No.	Reasons	%
1	Not interested	73.1
2	Prefer to buy in regular stores	48.3
3	Lack of knowledge, skill	41.0
4	There is no guarantee for products received	17.0
5	Concern about privacy and safety	16.1
6	Delivery takes a long time	13.0
7	Prices are more expensive than regular stores	11.2
8	Internet access not available in the area	4.3
9	Others	2.7

Reason No.1 which is “not interested” for not purchasing or ordering goods or services for individuals in rural areas in Malaysia shown in Table 2.12 is higher than the percentage for the same reason in urban area shown in Table 2.11. The percentage in rural area was 73.1 percent while in urban area only 68.4 percent. Although the number two and three reasons are the same but with different percentage, the reason in number four for both areas were different. In urban area people are more concern with privacy and safety (23.0%) while in rural areas people are more concern about the guarantee for the products received (17.0%).

Table 2.13

Individuals' usage of Mobile Phones, Computers and Internet by sex

Sex	Mobile Phone	Computer	Internet
		%	
Male	96.2	57.3	58.6
Female	92.1	54.5	55.4

Table 2.13 shows the percentage of Individuals usage of mobile phones, computers and internet by sex in Malaysia. Among the three, mobile phone was mostly used by both sexes where male user shows higher percentage at 96.2 percent while female user at 92.1 percent. The same goes to the user for internet and computer where male user shows higher percentage compared to female user. For internet male 58.6 percent and female 55.4 percent whereas for computer, male 57.3 percent and female 54.4 percent.

Table 2.14
Activities Done by Individuals through Internet

Internet activities undertaken by individuals	Male (%)	Female (%)
Getting information about goods and services	64.3	66.4
Getting information related to health services	29.3	37.5
Getting information from government organizations	34.2	34.4
Interacting with government organizations	26.9	27.7
Sending or receiving email	65.3	65.6
Telephoning over the Internet/VoIP	25.6	26.5
Posting information or instant messaging	68.2	70.1
Internet Banking		
a) Payment of bills	22.3	19.9
b) payment of goods and services other than item a	10.5	10.3
c) Financial transfer for purposes other than items a & b	13.5	12.5
Education or learning activities	21.7	27.4
Playing or downloading video games or computer games	51.8	43.5
Downloading movies, images, music, watching TV or video, or listening to radio or music	64.5	64.6
Downloading software	33.7	29.0

Table 2.14 (Continued)

Internet activities undertaken by individuals	Male (%)	Female (%)
Downloading software	33.7	29.0
Reading or downloading online newspaper or magazines, electronic books	51.2	53.0
Purchasing and ordering goods and services	13.5	17.3

Table 2.14 shows the list of activities undertaken by male and female individuals in Malaysia. The most favored activities by both sexes was posting information or instant messaging with percentage of female individual doing the activity higher than male individual at 70.1 percent and 68.2 percent. The priority for each activities were slightly different for both sexes but both sexes share the least favored activity which was Purchasing and ordering goods and services at 13.5 percent (male) and 17.3 percent (female). In terms of percentage on online shopping activities for male and female individuals in Malaysia, as shown in Table 2.15 (male) and 2.16 (female), female individuals are keener to do online shopping compared to male individuals. From the Tables, it is clear that both male and female individuals in Malaysia has different preferences on types of goods or services purchased online.

Table 2.15

Goods and Services Purchased or Ordered by Individuals through Internet

No.	Goods or services bought or ordered for personal use	Male (%)
1	Travel products	38.5
2	Clothes, bag, shoes	36.0
3	Food and beverages	35.3
4	Accommodation services	33.1
5	Transportation services	27.9

Table 2.15 (Continued)

No.	Goods or services bought or ordered for personal use	Male (%)
6	Personal accessories	20.6
7	Entertainment tickets	21.7
8	Healthcare products and services	15.7
9	Spare parts and	14.9
10	Books, magazines or newspapers	14.7
11	Electronic equipment	12.8
12	Computer hardware and software	10.7
13	Film, video, music	9.7
14	Financial services e.g insurance etc	8.5
15	Games equipment	6.6

Table 2.16

Goods and Services Purchased or Ordered by Individuals through Internet

No.	Goods or services bought or ordered for personal use	Female (%)
1	Clothes, bag, shoes	63.0
2	Food and beverages	62.2
3	Personal accessories	34.3
4	Travel products	32.8
5	Accommodation services	24.9
6	Healthcare products and services	24.8
7	Entertainment tickets	20.7
8	Transportation services	20.6
9	Books, magazines or newspapers	17.4
10	Film, video, music	6.3
11	Financial services e.g. insurance etc.	6.1
12	Electronic equipment	4.4
13	Computer hardware and software	3.9
14	Games equipment	3.6
15	Spare parts and	1.8

2.4.2 ICT Usage by Household

Mobile phone is one of the highest item used by Malaysian households with percentage of 97.0 percent. On the other hand, more than 50.0 percent Malaysian households use computer and internet with the percentage of 59.4 percent and 58.6 percent as shown in Figure 2.13

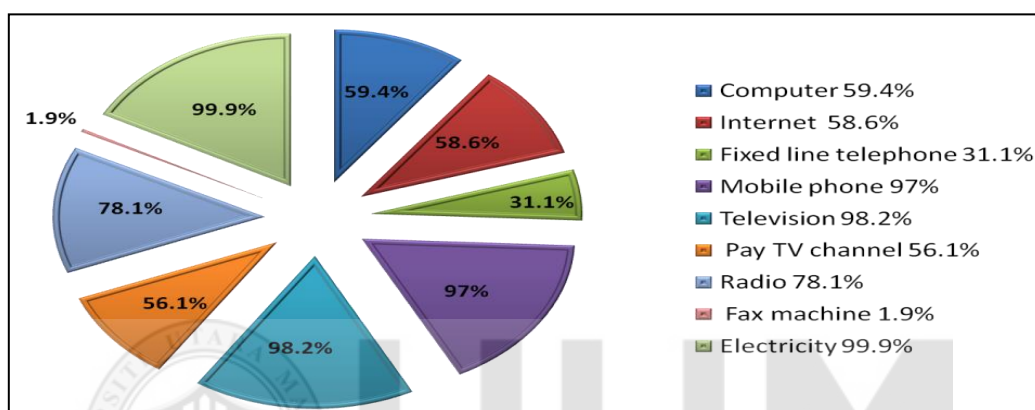


Figure 2.13
Items and Services Use by Households in Malaysia

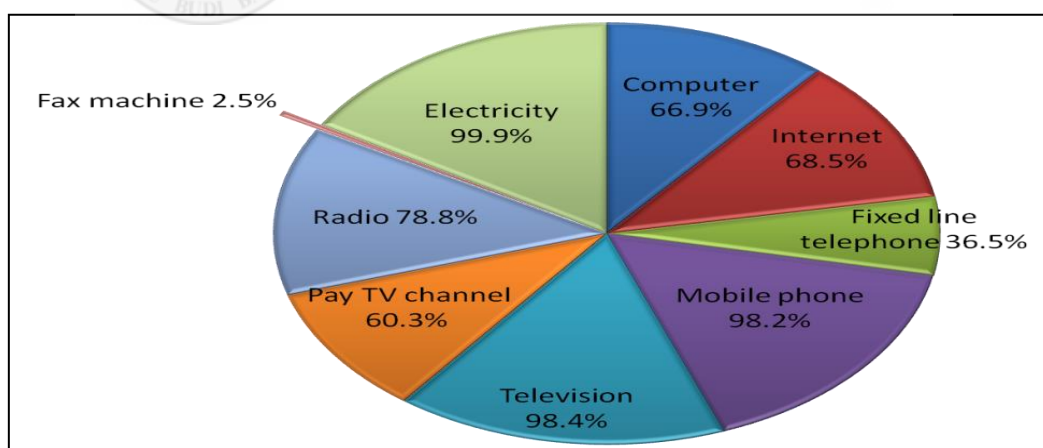


Figure 2.14
Items and Services Use by Households in Urban Area

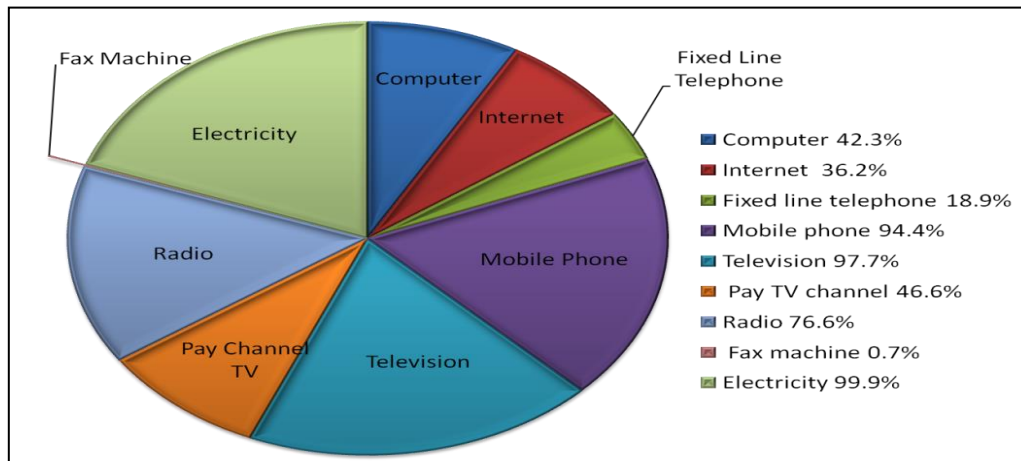


Figure 2.15
Items and Services Use by Households in Rural Area

From the percentage shown in Figure 2.14 and Figure 2.15 there's a huge different on the percentage of computer usage and internet usage between households in urban areas and rural areas in Malaysia. In urban areas, the percentage of computer usage was 66.9 percent while the percentage for internet usage was 68.5 percent. On the other hand, the percentage of computer usage in rural areas was only 42.3 percent and internet usage was only 36.2 percent. However, both households in urban and rural showed high usage on mobile phone namely 98.2 percent in urban areas and 94.4 percent in rural areas.

Table 2.17
Equipment Owned by Households in Malaysia

No.	Equipment owned	Percentage
1	Mobile phone	97.0
2	Personal computer	21.9
3	Laptop	49.0
4	Tablet	21.8
5	Printer	17.2
6	Scanner	11.2

Table 2.17 (Continued)

No.	Equipment owned	Percentage
7	Memory card reader	14.9
8	Video games console	7.5
9	Karaoke equipment	4.9
10	Portable drive	37.3
11	others	1.7

With percentage of 97.0 percent, mobile phone was owned by almost every household in Malaysia. Other equipment owned are lap top (49.0%), portable drive (37.3%), personal computers (21.8%), tablet (21.8%) and other equipment owned by less than 20 percent of Malaysian households as shown Table 2.17.

Table 2.18

Equipment Owned by Households in Urban in Rural Area

No.	Equipment owned	Percentage (Urban)	Percentage (Rural)
1	Mobile phone	98.2	94.4
2	Personal computer	27.1	10.3
3	Laptop	54.5	36.5
4	Tablet	26.7	10.8
5	Printer	20.7	9.2
6	Scanner	13.6	5.9
7	Memory card reader	17.0	10.2
8	Video games console	9.2	3.7
9	Karaoke equipment	5.1	4.3
10	Portable drive	42.2	26.2
11	others	1.8	1.3

Table 2.18 shows the equipment owned by households in urban in rural area in Malaysia. Mobile phone was owned by almost every household in Malaysia for both urban and rural areas where in urban areas with the percentage of 98.2 percent, it shows that less than 10 percent of the households don't owned mobile phone and in rural areas only 5.6 percent doesn't owned mobile phone. Lap top (54.5%) comes in second as the most owned equipment in urban area and the same goes to rural areas where laptop (36.5%) comes in second as the most owned equipment.

Table 2.19
Types of Internet Access Services in Malaysia

No.	Types of Internet access services	Percentage
1	Narrow band	4.4
2	Broad band	95.6
3	Broad band	
	Digital subscriber line	1.8
	Other fixed broad band	48.2
	Mobile broadband	50.0

Table 2.20
Types of Internet Access Services in Urban & Rural Area

No.	Types of Internet access services	Percentange (Urban)	Percentange (Rural)
1	Narrow band	3.6	7.9
2	Broad band	96.4	92.1
3	Broad band		
	Digital subscriber line	1.7	2.2
	Other fixed broad band	50.0	39.7
	Mobile broadband	48.3	58.1

The main services used by Malaysian household to access internet was broadband and the most common broadband used was mobile broadband as presented in Table 2.19 and Table 2.20. Between urban and rural areas, mobile broadband was used more in rural areas with 58.1 percent of the households were using mobile broadband to access internet while in urban areas only 48.3 percent used mobile broadband to access internet. However, the percentage of the household accessing internet using other fixed broadband in urban areas were higher compared to rural areas where 50 percent of the households used other fixed broadband in urban areas and only 39.7 percent in rural areas. Other services used to access internet were services such as narrow band (3.6% in urban areas and 7.9% in rural areas) and digital subscriber line (1.7% in urban areas and 2.2% in rural areas).

Table 2.21
Reasons for Not Having Internet Access at Home

No.	Reasons	Percentage
1	Costs are too high	24.1
2	Lack of confidence or skills	19.0
3	Not interested	17.2
4	Security concerns	1.6
5	Privacy concerns	1.0
6	Concern that children will access inappropriate sites	2.9
7	Have access to the Internet facilities at other place	3.6
8	Time constraint to access the Internet	4.1
9	Language barriers	3.8
10	Others	2.7

Table 2.22

Reasons for Not Having Internet Access at Home in Urban & Rural Area

No.	Reasons	Percentage (Urban)	Percentage (Rural)
1	Costs are too high	17.6	38.7
2	Lack of confidence or skills	13.6	31.1
3	Not interested	13.2	26.3
4	Security concerns	1.4	1.8
5	Privacy concerns	1.0	1.0
6	Concern that children will access inappropriate sites	2.5	3.9
7	Have access to the Internet facilities at other place	2.9	5.1
8	Time constraint to access the Internet	3.8	4.8
9	Language barriers	2.7	6.5
10	Others	1.4	5.7

There are several reasons given for not having internet access at home as presented in Table 2.21 and Table 2.22. In urban areas, the percentage of houses without internet access were very low where only less than 20 percent of the households in urban areas. Although the percentages of households not having internet access were higher in rural areas, it was less than 50 percent.

2.5 INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS IN MALAYSIA

2.5.1 Internet Trends in Malaysia

A study on digital attitude and behaviors conducted by TNS's connected life find out that that Malaysian Internet users are amongst the most socially engaged where more than 62 percent of the internet users in Malaysia accessed social media networks and 52 percent of them using instant messaging daily. The findings of the study also reveals that more than half of the internet users in Malaysia sees the screen of their phone first thing before anything else in the morning where 35 percent of the internet users in Malaysia reach for their phone while still on bed and 34 percent of them use their phone before they sleep. According to the Head of Digital, APAC, TNS Joe Webb, compared to other people they studied, Malaysian internet users are one of the most attached to their digital devices (TNS Global, 2014).

A report by ComScore on the latest trends in web usage, online video, mobile and search, social and shopping disclose that Malaysian Internet user spend an average of 16 hours online and the highest internet users in Malaysia are teenagers between 15-24 years old accounting to 37 percent of the total internet population in Malaysia. Young adults between 25-34 years come in second with 26 percent followed by adults between 35-44 years with 22 percent. Only 10 percent of the internet population are adults between 45-54 years and the least to surf the internet are senior citizens age 55 years and above with only 6 percent. Essentially, the heaviest internet users in Malaysia are user with average age under 35 years. Between male and female internet user in Malaysia, the percentage of male user are higher at 52 percent with average time spent online per visit at 16.8 hours while female internet user's percentage is 48 percent with an average time spent online per visit at 15.1 hours (ComScore, 2013).

2.5.2 Social Media in Malaysia

The media field is drastically being change by the emergence of social media in the last few years. The social media usage varied from getting connected with friends to being the resources for individual to get news, information and entertainment while organizations are using it as a medium for marketing and promotion. The speedy growth of social media in Asia-Pacific region is contributed by the high internet penetration in the region (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2012). Global communication about product or services has been made possible by the emergence of social media which let people to communicate without restrain, the use of various media for information sharing which is not limited to words such as personal pictures, audios and videos (Haida & Rahim, 2015).

Internet technology especially with the development of web 2.0 or social media has managed to capture the world's attention as a communication medium where it becomes a universal assimilation process enabling the formation of a universal society where people are connected in an international network system through the shared of common language and values made possible by the advancement in technology and user acceptance. Malaysian government doesn't use social media to act solely as an agent to broadcast information and to educate people about its policy but also use it as a direction for cooperation with the government's objective and policy in order to be able to keep on going in the media industries.

Although about one million Malaysian are shifting to online news for its fast and regular updates which shows a 35 percent increase in online newspaper reader in more than one year, the traditional media still has its own follower as nine out of ten

readers still read newspaper for their news (Ahmad, Chang, Mustaffa, Ibrahim, Wan Mahmud & Dafrizal, 2012).

According to ComScore report, most online time spent by Malaysian internet users are spent on social media especially on social networking sites comprising of 32.3 percent of the share of total time spent online. Other online activities such as services (16.9%) and entertainment (14.2%). Apart from that, Malaysian internet user also spent small amount of their time online for news or information, retail and others. The overall percentage of web users visiting social networking sites in Malaysia is 92 percent which is higher compared to Vietnam, Singapore and Indonesia but below Thailand and Philippines. Although the time spent on entertainment sites are lower than the time spent on social networking sites, the percentage of visitors to entertainment sites are higher by 3 percent followed by search or navigation sites who shares the same amount of visitors at 95 percent. Other sites visited by Malaysian are multimedia sites (79%), directories or resources (74%), News or information (73%), emails (64%), blogs (64%) and photos sites (32%) (ComScore, 2013).

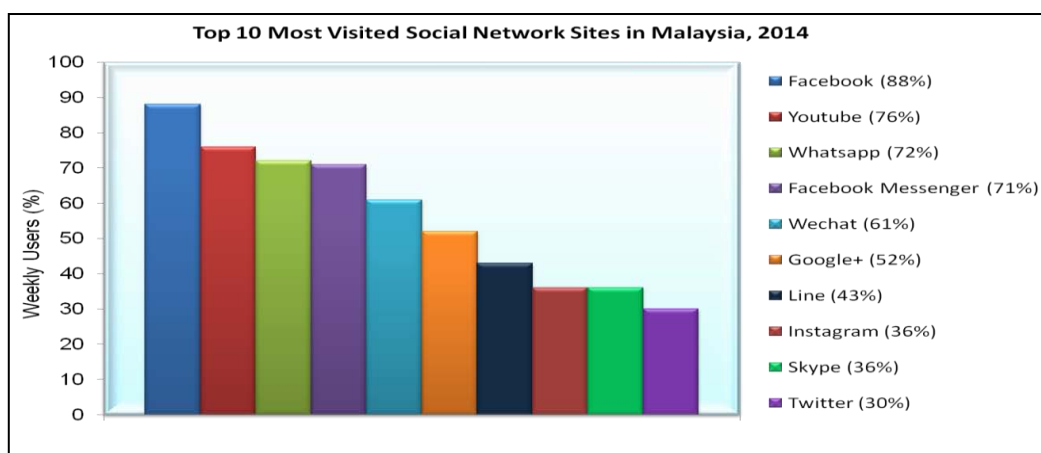


Figure 2.16
Top 10 Most Visited Social Network Sites in Malaysia in 2014
 Source: tnsglobal.com

Figure 2.16 above was constructed based on the research conducted by TNS global between March 2014 and June 2014. The data shows that Facebook is undoubtedly the most popular social networking websites among Malaysian with 88 percent of weekly visits. Following closely is YouTube with 76 percent of Malaysian Internet user visiting the weekly. Other social networking sites visited by Malaysian Internet users includes WhatsApp (72%), Facebook Messenger (71%), WeChat (61%), Google + (52%), Line (43%), Instagram (36%), Skype (36%), Twitter (30%) ((TNS Global, 2014).

2.6 SMEs AND E-COMMERCE IN MALAYSIA

2.6.1 Small Medium Enterprise (SME)

Before The National SME Development Council (NSDC) approved the common definition of SMEs on 9 June 2005, SMEs were defined by different agencies based on their own criteria where annual sales turn over, number of full time employees or shareholders' fund were taken as a benchmark for categorizations purpose and most focus were on SMEs in manufacturing sectors. By establishing and implementing the use of standard definitions for SMEs, SMEs across sectors will easier to be identified hence allowing the government to provide necessary assistance for the growth of SMEs.

There are three categories in Malaysian SMEs namely micro, small or medium enterprise and the categories are based on two criteria either by the number of employees or by the annual sales turnover. The definitions will apply to sectors such as Primary Agriculture, Manufacturing (including agro-based), Manufacturing-

Related Services (MRS) and Services (including Information and Communications Technology).

Table 2.23

Summary of the approved SME definitions based on number of employees

Sector Size	Primary Agriculture	Manufacturing (Including Agro- Based) & MRS	Services Sector (Including ICT)
MICRO	Less than 5 employees	Less than 5 Employees	Less than 5 Employees
SMALL	Between 5 & 19 employees	Between 5 & 50 employees	Between 5 & 19 employees
MEDIUM	Between 20 & 50 employees	Between 51 & 150 employees	Between 20 & 50 employees

Source: Secretariat to National SME Development Council Bank Negara Malaysia (2005)

Table 2.24

Summary of the approved SME definitions based on annual sales turnover

Sector Size	Primary Agriculture	Manufacturing (Including Agro- Based) & MRS	Services Sector (Including ICT)
MICRO	Less than RM200,000	Less than RM250,000	Less than RM200,000
SMALL	Between RM200,000 & Less than RM1 million	Between RM250,000 & Less than RM10 million	Between RM200,000 & Less than RM1 million
MEDIUM	Between RM1 million & RM5 million	Between RM10 million & RM25 million	Between RM1 million & RM5 million

Source: Secretariat to National SME Development Council Bank Negara Malaysia (2005)

SME is hard to define with one exact definition that can apply to the whole world's SMEs as every country has their own category of what comprised an SME (Ghobadian and Gallear, 1996; Curran and Blackburn, 2001, as cited in Hashim & Noor (2014). National SME Development Council (NSDC) first introduced the common definition of SME on 9 June 2005 but due to a lot of economic developments that the country has gone through since 2005 including price inflation, structural changes and change in business trends, the definition is being reviewed from time to time and based on the review done in 2013, a new definition of SME has been endorsed at the NSDC meeting in July 2013 and the new definition is effective beginning 1st January 2014 (SME Corp. Malaysia, 2013).

Table 2.25
New Definition of SMEs

Category	Micro	Small	Medium
Manufacturing	Sales turnover of less than RM300.00 OR employees of less than 5	Sales turnover from RM300.00 to less than RM15million OR employees from 5 to less than 75	Sales turnover from RM15 million to not exceeding RM50 million OR employees from 75 to not exceeding 200
Services and Other Sectors	Sales turnover of less than RM300.00 OR employees of less than 5	Sales turnover from RM300.00 to less than RM3 million OR employees from 5 to less than 30	Sales turnover from RM3 million to not exceeding RM20 million OR employees from 30 to not exceeding 75

Source: SME Corp. Malaysia (2013)

Previous research conducted agrees that Small Medium Enterprise proves to be important and contributed to the economic development of a country (Subhan, Mehmood & Sattar 2013; Savlovski & Robu 2011; Muhammad, Char, Yaso'a' & Hassan 2010). In Malaysia, the importance of SMEs development has long been recognized as early as the end of 1950s towards early 1960s where it has largely contributed towards the economic growth and providing employment opportunity to the society in Malaysia (Azmi, Basir, Mukhazir, & Mohamed , 2014; Gunto & Alias 2013; Bakar & Ahmad 2010; Ramasamy).

“Engine to economic growth” is what SMEs are being considered as particularly in developing countries. The impact of on economic growth SMEs does not only contributed to the economic sectors in SMEs only rather the SMEs contributed to the overall economic growth of a country and providing more job opportunities (Savlovski & Robu, 2011; Subhan, Mehmood & Sattar 2013). Subhan, Mehmood and Sattar (2013), further stated that compared to large enterprises, SMEs required more employees due to its heavy production process which sequentially resulted in the contribution of more employment prospects, able to generate more income and in the long run will reduce poverty (Subhan, Mehmood & Sattar 2013).

SMEs are Malaysian Economic backbones (Khalique et. al, 2011, as cited in Azmi, Basir, Mukhazir, & Mohamed, 2014; Hashim, 2014). According to the SME Annual Report for 2012/2013, SMEs annual growth was 6.3 percent continue to surpass the growth of overall economy which was 4.7 percent for the period of 2006 to 2012. The continues annual growth of SMEs was contributed by several factors such as strong domestic activity favorable labor market conditions and continued access to

financing. It is further reported that although SMEs show an encouraging performance on the recent years, contribution of SMEs in the advanced and other high middle income countries are much higher, above 40 percent share compared to the contribution of SMEs in Malaysia, leaving Malaysian SMEs with a lot of catching up to do. On the other hand, it is the chance of the initiative under the SME Masterplan (2012 - 2020) to let loose the unexploited potential of SMEs and enhance the overall productivity and competitiveness of SMEs (SME Annual Report, 2012/2013).

Based on the 2011 SME Census report, a total of 645,136 SMEs was recorded operating their business in Malaysia which represents 97.3 percent of total business establishments in the country. SMEs in services sector were the largest, with a total of 580,985 establishments constituting 90 percent of the total SMEs in the country followed by 37,861 or 5.9 percent SMEs in Manufacturing sector, 19,283 or 3.0 percent SMEs in Construction sector, 6,708 or 1.0 percent in Agriculture sector while the remaining 0.1 percent or 299 SMEs were in Mining and Quarrying sector. From the total number of SMEs, 77.0 percent were micro sized while the remaining 23.0 percent were small and medium establishments where 20.0 percent of it was small establishments and the rest were medium establishments.

The 2011 SME Census further recorded that 19.7 percent of the SMEs operating in the country were owned by women and the highest recorded number of women - owned establishments was in Services sector representing 91.7 percent, 7.0 percent in manufacturing sector and less than 1.0 percent of the women-owned establishments in the remaining sectors. Most of the women owned establishments operating as micro

sized establishment (88.0 percent), followed by small sized (11.3 percent) and medium sized (less than 1 percent).

The importance of women entrepreneurs are being recognized globally and it was reflected in the statistics related to women entrepreneurs (Karim & Azmi, 2008). The role of SMEs as important source for economic growth and employment has been globally acknowledged and women-owned SMEs has been known as a contributory factor to the successful achievement of SME development in their countries and as for women entrepreneurs in Malaysia, capital, networks affiliation, education, training and counseling, and usage of ICT are important factors that influence their growth (Teoh, Chong & Putra, 2008).

2.6.2 E-Commerce in Malaysia

E-commerce is presently on the rise globally and the growth is at a speedy rate (Omar & Anas, 2014; Andam, 2003). Many businesses in developing countries are implementing e-commerce in conducting their business for e commerce is the most growing technology compare to other types of technology for online business currently (Mohmed, Azizan & Jali, 2013). In a borderless economy, it is essential for businesses to apply e-commerce in order for them to survive and able to meet the challenges awaits them and simultaneously they will be able to improve their competitive advantage through the experience they acquired in the implementation and application of e-commerce (Mansor & Abidin, 2010).

E-commerce systems was accepted early in Malaysia with the introduction of e banking facilities namely ATMs or auto Teller Machines in 1981. This has made

Malaysia amongst the developed nations accepting e commerce systems early. The early and the late 1990s saw the popularity growth of tele-banking services in the country and finally on 1st of June, 2000, Bank Negara Malaysia allowed commercial banks to offer internet banking services to customers with Maybank becoming the earliest to introduce the very first Internet supported banking services (Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation, 2010).

E-commerce applications whether used for business transaction or other activities has been made possible with the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) particularly the development of internet which has provided many advantages for both business owners and consumers in their dealings (Omar & Anas , 2014). In 2014, the internet penetration in Malaysia was more than 70 percent and mobile penetration was almost 150 percent (Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission, 2014). Succeeding the internet and mobile penetration, social networking sites and smart phones coverage has expanded speedily, turning not only peoples' lifestyle but also altering the way people do business from physical to online business and making online shopping a major trend in this modern day life (Sin Chew Daily, 2014).

According to Omar and Anas (2014), Malaysia is making sure that e commerce development will be better implemented and accepted by the community in the future with the various developments programs planned by the government. To make sure that ICT sectors can be developed, the Malaysian government has allocated a large portion to guarantee that all of the tools and necessities associated with the ICT

sectors can be provided for the benefits of the societies and particularly to the people involved in e commerce (Omar & Anas, 2014).

According to BNM (2005), SMEs ability to manufacture high quality products and services at competitive prices will give them the durability to survive the tough environment nowadays. Mansor, (2004) stated that the result from studies conducted before indicated that the product, promotion and distribution technology are the weakness of SMEs in Malaysia consequently resultin gin the poor performance shown. (As cited in Mansor & Amri, 2010). Mansor and Amri (2010) further stated that e-commerce application are important to SMEs as it provides a lot of opportunities and it can boost the SMEs in few areas such as marketing, improve customer service and relationship, market new product or services as well as adding value to the existing products or services and many more (Mansor & Amri, 2010).

2.7 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

How consumers search for information and how they decide for their purchase has been changed when new technology such as the social media being introduced and manage to penetrate a lot of households. With the high increased of social media users, its interactivity and its ubiquity accessibility social media become one of the most cost effective marketing tools at the moment and companies are recommended to grab the benefit offered by this up and coming marketing channel to create an effective communication with customers (Ab Hamid. Md Akhir & Cheng, 2013).

As illustrated by Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) in the figure below, several factors that has lead a firm into getting its hand on social media is external and internal

factors. The external factors includes the rapid growth and the popularity it has gained all this while, the viral nature of social media which allows information to spread easily, the existence of competitors' on social media and in terms of costing, social media provide solutions by providing marketing platforms at an affordable cost. The internal factors include all of the strategy that is followed by the headquarters as well as the company's strategy in positioning and targeting their target audience. The external and internal factors will be the determinants whether the firms should be active in social media or which platforms suit their products best (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014).

Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) further explained that once decision is made on being active on social media, the firm has to define and implement followed by certain activities that will attract the users on the selected social media. The activities includes competitions offering customers prizes they can win by joining, communication with the customers, announcement of new products or services, providing useful information and advice to the customers. However, all of the activities should synchronize with whatever existing online or offline marketing activities the firm has. By involving in social media marketing and the activities done, some of the benefits that firms expected are customer engagement, online word of mouth, brand awareness, brand loyalty, increased sales on the products or services and the acquirement of new customers.

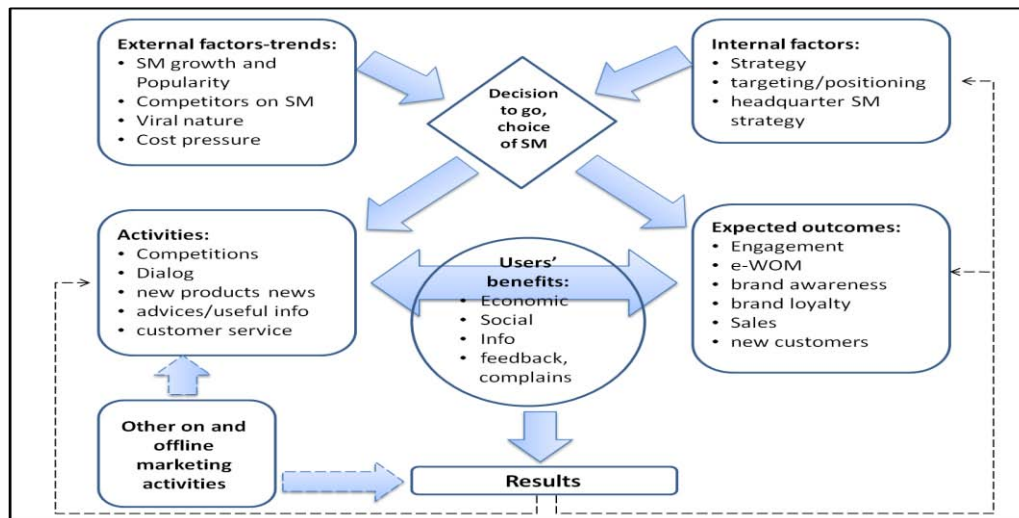


Figure 2.17

Flow chart of the social media decision making process

Source: Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014)

Marketing, apart from public communications and other office department with the same functions is how usually many organizations started using social media (Evans & McKee, 2010). Along with the growing fame of social media, it has unsurprisingly manage to caught the attention of marketers to use the technology to enable them to get a competitive edge in the market place and the eagerness of marketers to venture into social networks sites and all of the advantages that the sites provide is because of the frustration they felt on the conventional marketing channels such as Direct-to-Customers (DTC) communications and other conventional marketing method which is not as effective as how it used to be (Patnaik, 2011).

With the right implementation, social media marketing able to bring success to small businesses because with social media marketing, the opportunity for the small businesses to reach more customers are being enabled where social media will become a medium for customer to interact with the brand (WordStream, n.d). The article published in WordStream.com explains that:

“Social media marketing or SMM, is a form of internet marketing that implements various social media networks in order to achieve marketing communication and branding goals. Social media marketing primarily covers activities involving social sharing of content, videos, and images for marketing purposes”.

The benefit of social media marketing has been proven by companies who has been using it to effectively bringing in targeted audience and qualified leads where social media marketing facilitated the online existence of the company which has enabled the company to be found online through search engines and social media platforms. On the other hand, to use social media marketing successfully, creating company page alone will not be sufficient to attract the attention of online community to the company. Social media is used to its potential when valuable information are being shared consistently by marketing department thus the importance of the company to keep on being active in the social media community in order to see the result of this inbound marketing strategies. A company can only make social media as a valuable marketing resource by investing enough time and energy to develop the content to share online (Faglio, 2012).

According to Sarwar, Haque & Yasmin (2013), many studies conducted on social media as a marketing tool are based on western perspective while in Malaysia there is still inadequate number of research on this matter. Findings from their study reveal that Malaysian consumers not only use social media especially social networking sites such as Facebook, Twiter and Myspace as an interaction medium but also use it to purchase goods for they trust these social networking sites as a trustworthy source and most of them are satisfied with their online purchase. One of the reasons for them to

purchasE goods through these social networking sites is due to the promotion made through these social networking sites which managed to catch their attention and their trust (Sarwar, Haque & Yasmin, 2013).

2.8 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Apart from their involvement in household area, the involvement of women in entrepreneurship was as long as the involvement of men in entrepreneurship but with different focus where women entrepreneurs' involvement in entrepreneurship mainly to meet their basic needs (Gikonyo, Zainalaludin & Masud, 2006). Earlier business and entrepreneurship studies repeatedly presenting women as an unimportant group (Salleh & Osman, 2007).

Women's involvement in business were not very well accepted in an under developed and several traditionalist developing countries. Obstacle for women entrepreneurs in these countries comes in various ways such as finances, cultural orientation, family set up, market access and orientation, etc. Nevertheless, as the number of women entrepreneur getting bigger, they become a rising power that can't be overlooked by policy makers as the economic growth of these underdeveloped and developing countries depends on the participation of both men and women entrepreneurs (Afza & Rashid, 2009).

The topic of women entrepreneurship has attracted many researchers due to the reason that entrepreneurial venture privilege which used to be mostly given to men are now become accessible to women entrepreneurs as well as a lot of countries have

expanded the entrance of entrepreneurial ventures to women. The inspiration for women to become entrepreneurs comes from the display of numerous success stories of other women entrepreneurs and simultaneously the already successful women entrepreneurs established their own identity which separates them from male entrepreneurs creating a whole new arena as they compete for similar business prospects with the men entrepreneurs (Teoh & Chong, 2014).

Weiser, 2000 and Tufekci, 2008 (as cited in Constantinidis, 2011) stated that the number of women using online communication tools to stay connected personally or professionally are getting bigger and the probability of women using social networking sites are higher compared to men (Weiser, 2000 & Tufekci, 2008, as cited in Constantinidis, 2011). With the invention of internet and other new communication technologies, there has been change in traditional power especially in gender equality where women are now given the chance to compete with the male counterparts at the same level (Herring, 2001). Rickert & Sacharow, 2000 (as cited in Herring, 2001) also said that the internet let women to get involve in entrepreneurial activity on the same level with men (Rickert & Sacharow, 2000, as cited in Herring, 2001).

Although the study on social media platforms and their impact in opening the economic success of women entrepreneurs around the world has been broadly observed, it is not yet explored completely. Women has been transformed from a technologically challenged to a technology savvy society with the adaptation and exploitation of social media platforms which has initiated the establishment of new culture that is the modern digital entrepreneurial. Women entrepreneurs whether involved in entrepreneurship formally or informally have been seen adopting social

media platforms not only to increase the number of their follower but also as a means to communicate and to get feedback from existing or potential clients on their products and services. Women entrepreneurs around the world discovered that embracing and adapting technology in their daily lives and business ventures and also include social media as their marketing tools would give them the advantage to stay competitive compared to the women entrepreneurs who chose to ignore the advantages that new technologies and social media could offer (Ukpere, Slabbert & Ukpere, 2014).

2.9 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Effectiveness is defined by oxforddictionaries.com as:

“The degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result; success”.

Social marketing has been extensively used for the last decade but a systematic method on how to verify its effectiveness is yet to be found. Countless of techniques for research to support social marketing has been given in details by social marketing texts, but still unable to give the best view on how to assess the effectiveness of social marketing (Varcoe, 2004). According to Tapia (2010), most of the earlier studies on social media focused on explaining all of the elements that created social media whilst the study on the effectiveness shows a visible insufficiency. Although the idea of effectiveness emerges continuously in the previous study reviewed, the effectiveness of social media is not easy to be confirmed as there are no definitions or conceptual frames given. Hence, the theory of effectiveness perceived as the achievement of goal which can be determined by different dimensions (Tapia, 2010). The issue of

insufficient information on the effectiveness of social media marketing was also voiced by Pradiptarini (2010) who has stated that

“Regardless its popularity, there is still very limited information to answer some of the key issues concerning the effectiveness of social media marketing, ways to measure its return on investment, and its target market”.

However, an earlier study conducted by Murdough (2010), has suggested an iterative measurement process to measure social media marketing. The figure 2.18 below was the suggested measurement process which consist of five main phases namely the concept phase, the definition phase, the design phase, the deployment phase and finally the optimization phase (Murdough, 2010).

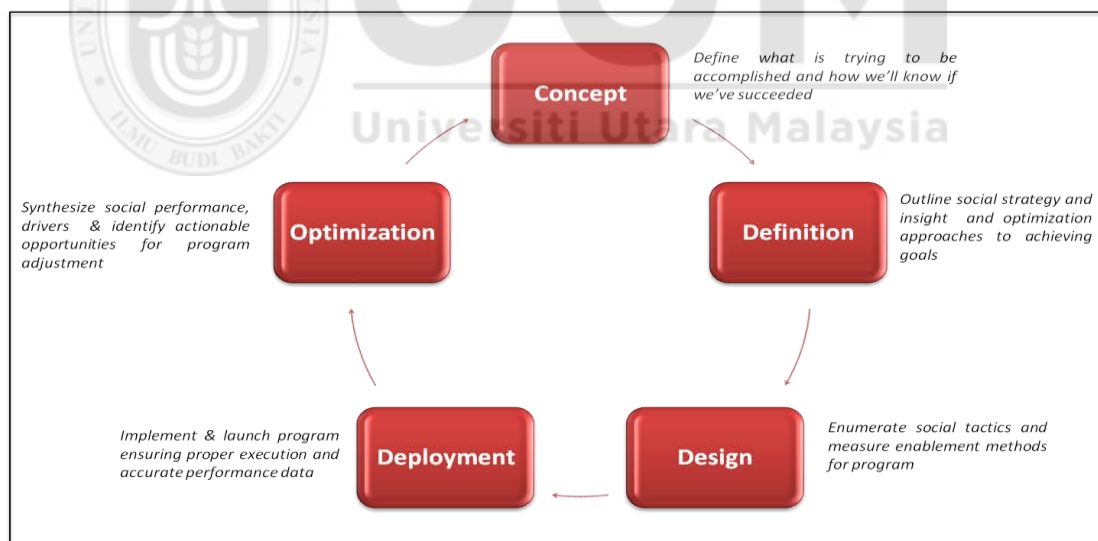


Figure 2.18
Social media measurement process
Source: Murdough (2010)

Table 2.26
Phases in Social Media Measurement Process

Phase	Measurement Process	Measurement Activities
Concept	Define what brand wanted to achieve by moving forward their relationship with their targeted audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map measurement objectives to project or business goals. • Identify specific key performance indicators (KPI) that align with objectives. • Establish performance benchmarks or targets to gauge success.
Definition	Outline how social platform could be influenced to optimized approaches in order to achieve desired goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itemize insight questions critical to understand program performance; which social media levers might have key influence over KPIs? • Illustrate the analysis approach best suited to inform optimization actions. • Determine the frequency of performance evaluation and timing of program enhancements
Design	Specify tactics and venues most appropriate for a brand's active social media presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish performance data sources and/or methodologies. • Enumerate the specific technical tracking hooks and manual interventions needed to ensure proper and complete data collection • Set up, configure, or customize performance reporting tools to ensure desired performance insight is readily available.

Table 2.26 (Continued)

Phase	Measurement Process	Measurement Activities
Deployment	Implementing and launch program focus on ensuring proper execution and accurate performance data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct QA (quality assurance) of data collection methods. • Validate performance reports are complete and accurate with expectations. • Build data infrastructure needed by aggregating multiple data sources to populate the social media performance dashboard.
Optimization	Synthesize all the work done in previous phases in the form of reporting and insight & identify actionable opportunity for program enhancement and adjustment	

Source: Murdough (2010)

2.9.1 Brand Awareness

According to Gustafon and Chabot (2007), brand awareness refers to “how aware customers and potential customers are of your business and its products”. An example of remarkably high brand awareness was the results of advertising and news report on iphone where survey results where it shows that 90% of US consumers were aware of iphone in just one week after it is launched. Successful brand awareness is another way of stating that the brand is popular and effortlessly identifiable. In order to set one brand apart from other similar products and competitors, it is important to create brand awareness where it would also be an important part that will influence customers and potential customers purchasing decision (Gustafon & Chabot, 2007).

Before online marketing exist, tracking studies and surveys are the mediums used to measure brand awareness. With the existence of online marketing, there are number of ways to measure brand awareness and in the social media case, the awareness can be tracked by the increased number of users using the application designed by or about the company. The increased number in users in turn gives the company an increased publicity to its brand. The increased publicity will enhance and strengthen the association of the brand in customers mind making brand awareness as the key social media objective (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

One of the significant factors that can increase the sales percentage of a company's product is brand awareness. With the help of social media, brands awareness can be achieve by promoting interactively and creatively in social media which can bring a huge impact moreover the promotion of a brand in social media can be delivered speedily and able to reach the targeted audience (Arora & Sharma, 2013). Agreeing with Arora and Sharma (2013), Shojaee and Azman (2013) concluded in their study that the "use of social media for the purpose of creating and enhancing brand awareness is essential and should be a part of marketers' strategies" (Shojaee & Azman, 2013). An article published in www.speakwellcommunications.com in 2010, suggested five ways to use social media to build the brand awareness namely:

i. Bring Your Brand to Your Customers

Rather than letting the customer to find the brand, the best way is to bring the brand to the places where potential customers gather. Examples of places where millions of online users gather are Twitter, Facebook, Linked In, Youtube. The strategy is to bring the brand to these places but not to

broadcast but to be a part of the community, participating and listening. By being part of the community and constantly engage the customers, brand should be integrated into the conversation that they have as natural as possible. In due time, the brand will be getting the exposure and awareness it needs.

ii. Generate Quality Content

To give a good impression and to make people remember about the brand, quality content is the key. Quality content not only provide information and educate customers it also help to build trust with them and at the same time it will give the company a reputation of a well informed and specialist within the field. Quality content will also be easily made viral by people who believed the information can be of benefit to others. Good quality content will attract people to comes back to the site and with a consistent publishing routine, you brand will soon start having followers.

iii. Be Active on Twitter

Twitter is one of the most popular networking sites to build brand awareness and people tweet almost about everything and anything which gives the chance to become a listener, ask ask questions, offer solutions to their problems, and insert the company into the conversation. Although twitter can be confusing in the beginning, people on twitter are enthusiastic to help. Therefore it comes to no surprise if one person that we follow might lead to a massive exposure of our brand. However, it is best to learn the proper twitter protocols in order to avoid being labeled as spammers and outsiders.

iv. Connect Customers, Contacts

Brand can be indirectly spread by customers when they are being connected to each other through social media platforms such comments section on blogs or Facebook which allows them to have a more lively conversation regarding the products.

v. Make Yourself Available

Social media is time consuming. To successfully use social media to create brand awareness, engagement and availability which needs time is essential. Building brand awareness on social media will only be successful with engagement and sincere availability.

2.9.2 Engagement

Many researchers agreed that the development and rapid advancement has managed to force people in the marketing field to change their game plan in order to engage consumers. They have also agreed that engagement is the most effective in developing and building connection between consumers and brands (Epps, Mulligan and Wilkos, 2009; Jakste and Kuvykaite, 2012; Rutkauskaite, 2012; Lewis, 2013; Gregorio, (n.d). The significant increase in the number of social media platforms make it possible for companies and organization to use it as a medium not only to make audience aware of their brands but also to get engage with their existing and potential consumers (Lewis, 2013).

With the speedy advancement and development of social networks and also mobile phones being used freely in most country globally, marketers are being presented with massive possibility for engaging consumers in revolutionary manners. This new

technology has enabled social marketers to influence a lot of consumers to get further connected to the right direction compared to previous method of engaging consumers (Bernhardt, Mays & Hall, 2012). The opportunity to engage consumers through social media has given the company or organization a chance to have a meaningful communication which eventually will create trust. However, failed communication will lead customers to look into outsider's opinion of the brand which sometimes does not favor the brand (Rutkauskaite, 2012).

In this present day, marketers are growingly looking for a way to 'engage with potential and existing clients due to the active nature of social media and the customers use of their power towards a brand leaving the marketers no choice but to get connected with their audience in a meaningful way which can be translated as two way interaction between customers and marketers. Engaging the customers in a discussion becomes marketers' desire and with this engagement marketers have faith that it will turn into profitable outcome (Wiegold & Pulizzi, 2010). Wiegold & Pulizzi (2010) further stated that "Engagement is creating the heightened state where a customer connects with a brand through a true experience related to shared core values. It is reciprocated by the customer and is a long term connection that must be nurtured over time" (Wiegold & Pulizzi, 2010).

Companies or organization can foster real relationship with their customers by experiencing what the customers' experience. In order for the relationship to work, engagement has to be done based on the customers' terms and ways and doing it other ways will not work and chances that customer's will walk away (Solis, n.d). Companies who manage to take full advantage of social media marketing

development and advancement and get their audience engage will have the competitive advantage compared to companies who chose to ignore this new growing medium of advertisement and marketing (Jakste and Kuvykaite, 2012). The amount of a customers' engagement in a brand is an obvious sign of their interest to what is being offered to them (Odhiambo, 2012).

Even though the word engagement used extensively by almost everybody who is involved in marketing, only a handful in actual fact looks at it in a way that will make it actually useful and valid to those involve in marketing (Chapman, 2008, McCracken, Oullier and Ramsøy, n.d) . Thus, McCracken, Oullier and Ramsøy (n.d) have given the definition of engagement as “The intensity of an individual’s connection or participation with a brand or organisation” and they further stated that based on their research they have managed to disclose the ten principles of engagement that emphasize the engagement elements and institute the factors for effective engagement as follows:

- i. Engagement is a finite resource, not an infinite commodity
- ii. Engagement requires reciprocity
- iii. Engagement is not binary
- iv. Engagement is about what we want or what we like
- v. Engagement is about what we want or what we like
- vi. Engagement decisions are post-rationalised
- vii. Engagement can be divided into ‘capture’ and ‘build’
- viii. Engagement benefits from being multilayered
- ix. Negatives always outweigh positives
- x. Engagement marries experience with expectation

Armano (2008), adapted from Rutkauskaite (2012), propose implementing 5Cs to get consumers engage with brands on social media and the 5Cs are explained below:

- i. **Content** - In order to build a community high quality content should be offered. This shows that the firm is serious and motivated; this content must be delivered to specific relevant platforms. When this is achieved, then relevant engagement will follow from the right people. If the right people viewing the content and consider it relevant and of high quality, then they are likely to engage with it, share it, and most importantly advocate it. So it means content should be focused on targeting a certain group of people.
- ii. **Context** - Understanding how to meet people where they are, creating the right experience at the right time. In general understanding how community wishes to be engaged.
- iii. **Connectivity** - Designing experiences to support micro interactions among community members.
- iv. **Continuity** - To keep long lasting and sustainable community, to provide and ongoing, valuable, and consistent user experience.
- v. **Collaboration** - The highest level of Community Involvement happens when members work together to achieve common goal and objectives.

Driving online engagement has caused augmentation in the company's investment in social media. It is well known to experts that it is not an easy task to define and measure engagement (Epps, Mulligan and Wilkos, 2009). However, Forrester Consulting (2008), and adapted by Epps, Mulligan and Wilkos, 2009 and Haven and Vittal (2008), has come with four components that makes up the engagement framework and name it as the four I's explained below:

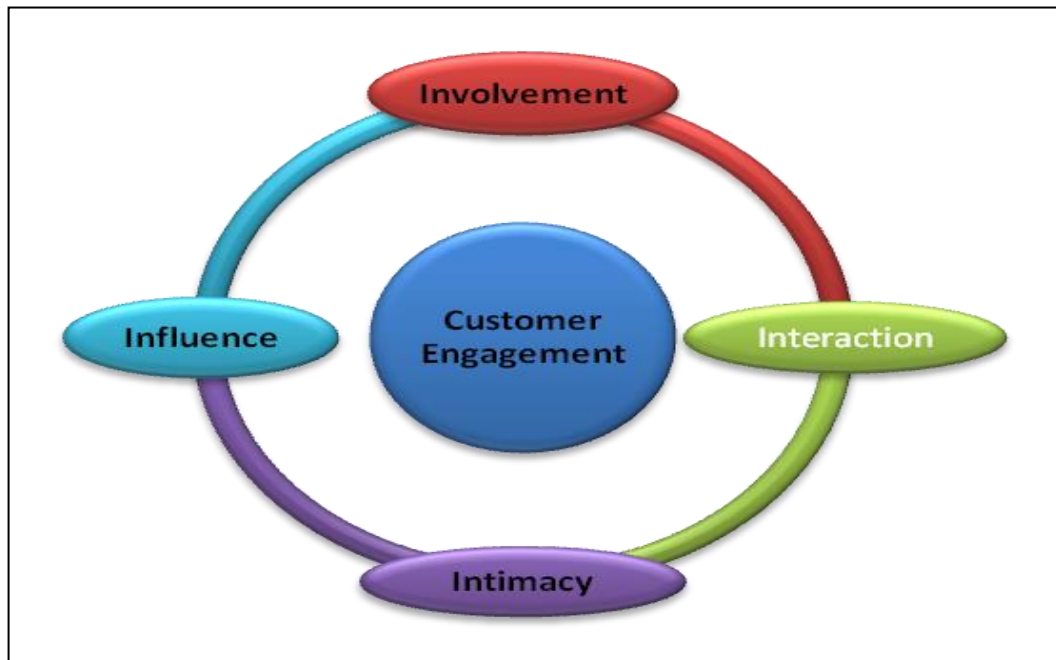


Figure 2.19

Engagement framework

Source: Haven and Vittal, (2008)

- i. **Involvement** - the presence of a person at the various brand touchpoints. Metrics include Web site visitors, time spent per page, physical store visits, impressions from mass media advertising, etc. Data sources include Web Analytics, store traffic reports, etc.
- ii. **Interaction** - the actions people take while present at those touchpoints. Metrics include click-throughs, online transactions, in-store purchases, uploaded photos or videos, etc. Data sources include e-commerce platforms, POS systems, social media platforms, etc.
- iii. **Intimacy** - the affection or aversion a person holds for a brand. Metrics include sentiment measurement in blog posts, blog comments, discussion forums, customer service call sentiment, etc. Data sources include brand monitoring services, survey responses, customer service call centers, etc.
- iv. **Influence** - the likelihood a person is to advocate on behalf of the brand. Metrics include brand awareness, loyalty, affinity, repurchases, Net Promoter,

satisfaction ratings, forwarded content, etc. Data sources include market research services, brand monitoring, customer service call centers, surveys, etc.

2.9.3 Words of Mouth (WOM)

Many of us were persuaded and influenced to purchase items, engage a certain services or even watch certain movies based on the words of friends or family members who had bought the items, used the services or watched the movie and this type of persuasive and influential process are known by marketers as word of mouth (WOM) communication. Information received or WOM communication from others especially people we know can be a very great source of information for products or services as these people normally seen as trustable. Thus WOM can be defined as “a form of communication among consumers based on their personal experience and impression on product of a product or services” (Gildin, 2003)

An aware and engaged consumers will speak their mind about a brand to others where consumers who's pleased and loyal will speak positively about the brand and other things associated with the brand such as social media application's created by the company for the brand and on the other hand disappointed consumers will spread negative words about the brand or the social media applications of the brand (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010).

As adapted from Evans (2010), a study conducted by Zenith Media in 2007 have shown that of the estimated 3.5 billion word-of-mouth conversations that occur around the world on a daily basis, about 2.3 billion of them - roughly two out of three

- make a reference to a brand, product, or service and it has also shown that compare to negative reference, more people are giving out positive reference thus proving that social media could bring major chance to a company to eventually build and improve their business (Ahlberg, 2010).

Word of Mouth Marketing Associations (WOMMA) define WOM as “The act of consumers providing information to other consumers”. WOMMA also give the definition of WOMM as “Giving people a reason to talk about your products and services, and making it easier for that conversation to take place. It is the art and science of building active, mutually beneficial consumer-to-consumer and consumer-to-marketer communications” (WOMMA, 2007). Sernovitz (2012), agree with WOMMA’s definition of WOMM by stating that “WOM is the art of creating a company that people love to talk about and making the conversation easier to take place” (Sernovitz, 2012).

WOM has long been accepted as an important and powerful form of marketing activity due to its ability in influencing and effecting consumers’ purchasing attitude and behaviours (Hodza, Papadopoulou and Pavlidou, 2012, Durukan and Bozaci, 2012, Seraj, n.d & Gildin, 2003). Research on WOM dated back to the 1960s where the main concern was the motivators and consequents of WOM (Seraj, n.d) and originally Arndt (1967) as adapted in Cheung & Thadani (2010), defined WOM as “an interpersonal non-commercial communication among acquaintances”. Since then, the research on WOM and its influence in consumers’ decision making has been entrenched (Steffes and Burgee, 2009).

Based on a study conducted by Trusov, Trusov and Pauwels (2009), they find out that gaining new customers resulted from WOM recommendations is very powerful and their study also shows that the long term elasticity signups with respect to WOM significantly bigger compared to typical advertisings elasticity (Trusov, Trusov & Pauwels, 2009). The credibility of WOM gives a high impact on the growth of sales of a company and according to a survey result on fifteen different products and services in various categories, it shows that more than 50 percent of the consumers ask stated that there are high probability for them to buy as a result from an exchange of words with others on the product or services (Keller & Fay, 2012).

The advent of the Internet has increased the ability of individuals, and potential future customers, to interpersonally connect with one another (Trusov et al., 2009, Andreassen & Streukens, 2009), thereby creating a powerful means through which product information can be rapidly disseminated and products be more cost-effectively adopted by the market (Trusov et al., 2009). Traditional WOM has evolved into electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and the growth of internet presented a fertile ground for the development of eWOM (Cheung & Thadani, 2010).

With online shopping services being upgraded and improved, eWOM becomes increasingly important where consumers now able to form their opinions and comes to a purchase decision on products or services based on suggestions and recommendations from friends on social media (Erkan and Evans, n.d.). Erkan and Evans (n.d.) concluded in their research that eWOM may possibly offer marketers a very clear chances due to the exceptional development, influence and fame of social networks (Erkan and Evans, n.d.). Looking at the advancement of internet, companies

began to recognize internet as their main mechanism for communication platform, respectively starting to leverage different marketing ways that are cheaper yet more competent at dynamically engaging with customers compared to traditional channels (Costronova & Huang, 2012).

The use of eWOM through social media enables companies to construct and boost the brand equity of their products or services which then lead to the grabbing of the attention of consumers (Sveri, Ling and Nasermodeli, 2014). With eWOM, consumers not only share their opinions to people they know but their words can spread to the whole world which makes eWOM a time saver as words can now be spread faster and easier (Allsop, Basset and Hoskins, 2007 & Gildin, 2003). Although eWOM is not always a guaranteed success, a well-planned campaign can cause “firestorm of buzz” effect which sometimes lasted for years (Ferguson, 2008).

The open nature of social media which comes with no limitations makes it the most important medium for expression of WOM thus making it possible for brands to receive both positive and negative outcomes (Chiosa, 2014). Every business needs WOM because every satisfied and happy customer can bring in a lot more new customers to the company. One of the most convincing forms of advertising is the words that come from a customer because a person is practically jeopardising their reputation whenever they make a recommendation to others (Entrepreneur Staff, n.d).

Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) provided eight strategies to good word of mouth marketing, as explained in Table 2.27.

Table 2.27

Good Words of Mouth Marketing Strategy

Strategies	Items
Encouraging communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing tools to make telling a friend easier • Creating forums and feedback tools • Working with social networks
Giving people something to talk about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information that can be shared or forwarded • Advertising, stunts, and other publicity that encourages conversation • Working with product development to build WOM elements into products • Creating user groups and fan clubs supporting independent groups that form around your product
Creating communities and connecting people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting discussions and message boards about your products • Enabling grassroots organization such as local meetings and other real-world participation
Working with influential communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding people who are likely to respond to your message • Identifying people who are able to influence your target customers • Informing these individuals about what you do and encouraging them to spread the word • Good-faith efforts to support issues and causes that are important to these individuals
Creating evangelist or advocate programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing recognition and tools to active advocates • Recruiting new advocates, teaching them about the benefits of your products, and encouraging them to talk about them
Researching and listening to customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking online and offline conversations by supporters, detractors, and neutrals • Listening and responding to both positive and negative conversations
Engaging in transparent conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging two-way conversations with interested parties • Creating blogs and other tools to share information • Participating openly on online blogs and discussions
Co-creation and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving consumers in marketing and creative (feedback on creative campaigns, allowing them to create commercials, etc.) • Letting customers 'behind the curtain' to have first access to information and content

Source: WOMMA (2007)

2.9.4 Conversion

Determining the effectiveness of social media marketing and how good it stood up against other online marketing alternative is not an easy task for people involved in marketing regardless of its booming popularity. Efficient budget allocation often unsuccessful due to the failure to measure all of the social media marketing metrics such as sales, bookings, conversion events, and so on (White Paper, 2010).

It is ordinary for beginners to believe that social media measurement is about counting the number of people looking at their social media marketing campaign. However, the most important result that should be looked forward to is the action people took after looking at the advertisement. This action known as conversion which literally can be translated as taking action such as its clicking a link, filling out a form or making purchases on the website (Avinash Kaushik, 2013).

According to most researchers and writers, majority of marketers believe conversion as one of the most important metrics for measuring the effectiveness of social media marketing (DeMers, 2014, Grimms, 2014, Marketing Maven, 2013, Drell, 2013). Conversion can be define in many ways but to the marketers, conversion is the measureable success (DeMeers, 2014). The measurement of conversion normally based on the organization's goals (Avinash Kaushik, 2013). The conversion measurement is not always about a sale (Ferrington, 2015, Drell, 2013). Conversion can be associated with a registration, a like or even a share (Ferrington, 2015, Drell, 2013). Conversion also be meant anything that are associated with profit process such as download of eBook or choosing the company's newsletter which can happen even after a visitor has become a customer (Skole, 2014).

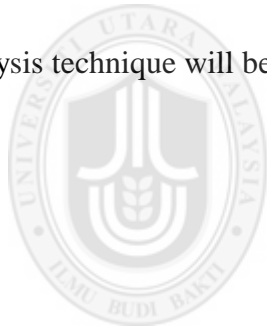
The definition in the MarketingSherpa glossary that appears in MarketingSherpa handbooks defines conversion as, “The point at which a recipient of a marketing message performs a desired action.” In other words, conversion is simply getting someone to respond to your call-to-action (Kirkpatrick, 2012). According to clickbank.com (n.d), conversion can be generally define as an encouragement for people to take certain action such as purchasing a product or signing up for an email list and it acts as a way of converting a visitor who browses the company’s site into a paying customer or lead (www.clickbank.com, n,d).

Camiade (2012) stated that conversion is the ultimate goal which is to change potential customer into customer, visitor into subscriber and the unknown visitor to a recognized one etc. Camiade (2012) further stated that different department will have their own conversion objective and these conversion objectives will supply concrete information’s for ROI assessments (Camiade, 2012). Measuring conversion result will require social media content to include a call to action such as register for a webinar, download a white paper, watch a video, etc. and by tracking these conversion metrics, not only will it give figures right away but it will also give data for comparison purpose across integrated program (Marketing Maven, 2013).

2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presents the discussion of relevant literature related to this research. The definition, concepts and theories related to this research has also been explained. Furthermore, the research's dependent variable and independent variables have also been reviewed and discussed in this chapter.

The following chapter presents the research methodology. Chapter 3 will describes in details the procedures and methodology that were used for data collection and analysis of the research. Theoretical framework, research hypothesis, research design, operational definition, research sample and population, instrumentation technique, measurement of the variables, data collection method, reliability test, and data analysis technique will be explained in the Chapter 3.



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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to examine the relationships between awareness, engagement, words of mouth, conversion and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. This chapter explains the research framework and discusses the research design, sampling procedures, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection, and methods of data analysis used to test the hypotheses.

Chapter three addresses the methodology of the research, explains the research framework and discusses the research design, operational definition, sampling procedures, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection, and methods of data analysis used to test the hypotheses.

3.2 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The research framework proposed for this study is illustrated in Figure 3.1 below.

Five variables were designed to describe the situation; which are Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing as the dependent variable whereby awareness, engagement, word of mouth and conversion as the independent variable. Based on framework developed for this research, the relationship between brand awareness, engagement, word of mouth and conversion with effective social media marketing will be examined.

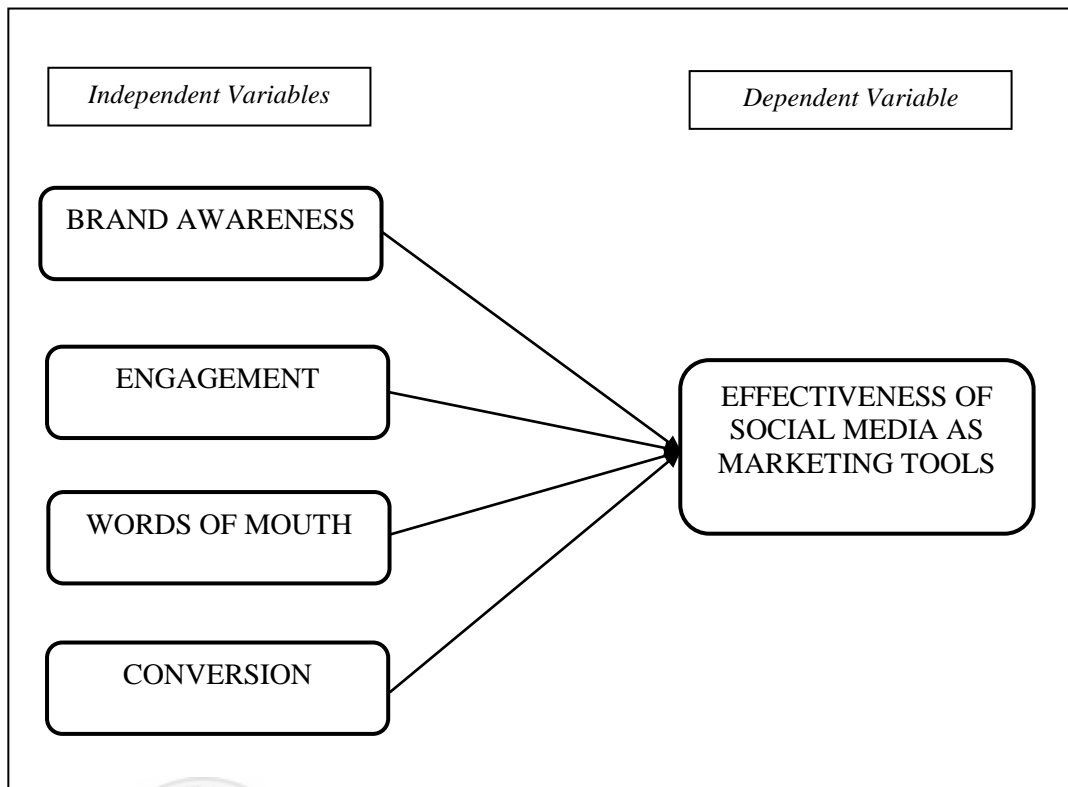


Figure 3.1
Research Framework

3.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The followings are hypotheses formulated in order to understand the relationship between the variables as well as answer the research question of the study. The hypotheses are:

- H1:** There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.
- H2:** There is a positive relationship between engagement and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.
- H3:** There is a positive relationship between words of mouth and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.

H4: There is a positive relationship between conversion and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.

3.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT

According to Zikmund et al., (2010), operational definition, which they refer to as operationalization is a measurement process of concepts by researchers which entails recognizing scales that correspond to the variance in the concept (Zikmund et al., 2010). Another definition of operational definition given by Sekaran (2003):

“Operationalizing, or operationally defining a concept to render it measurable, is done by looking at the behavioral dimensions, facets, or properties denoted by the concept. These are then translated into observable and measurable elements so as to develop an index of measurement of the concept” (Sekaran 2003).

For this study, the operational definition has been defined as follows:

3.4.1 Brand Awareness

According to online Cambridge dictionary awareness define as:

“knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience”

Thus, according to business dictionary .com, awareness in term of marketing perspective is a benchmark to evaluate the popularity of a brand, firm or product. Awareness can be measured by keeping an eye on growth, subscribers and brand

awareness (Odhiambo, 2012). Davis (n.d) in her article in blog.kissmetrics.com has suggested that to measure awareness, metrics like volume, reach, exposure, and amplification should be used (Davis, n.d).

The dynamic nature of social media encourage online connections which let company connect directly with customers causing a chain of events beginning with brand influencing customers choice followed by customers influencing other customers and these events influence repurchases which additionally influence company incomes and term organizational sustainability. In other words, a carefully planned and an accurately implemented social media marketing helps company to reduce marketing cost and at the same time boost awareness on their brand generate leads, build its customer base, improve sales and market share (Baghmar & Agarwal, 2014).

3.4.2 Engagement

According to Evans (2010) *“Engagement is central to the effective use of social technology and the creation of social business”* (Evans, 2010). Wiegold and Pulizzi (2010), define engagement as follows:

“Engagement is creating the heightened state where a customer connects with a brand through a true experience related to shared core values. It is reciprocated by the customer and is a long term connection that must be nurtured over time.”

Engagement is to measure if people responded to the company’s messages or posts and valuable content will encourages people to take action which is essential in engaging people with social media. Engagement can be measured with clicks on links

in social media posts, retweets, mentions and direct messages on Twitter, shares on Facebook and LinkedIn, comments on Facebook and LinkedIn posts, ratings on Youtube videos, comments on Blog posts (DeStefano, 2015). Davis (n.d), supported DeStefano's statement by stating that in order to measure engagement, the metrics to seek for are something like around retweets, comments, replies, and participants namely the number of participants, the frequency of participation and what forms are they participating (Davis, n.d).

3.4.3 Words of Mouth

Words of mouth, defined in the Wikipedia website as: *"the passing of information from person to person by oral communication, which could be as simple as telling someone the time of day"*. On the other hand, Words of Mouth marketing definition by businessdictionary.com is as follows: *"Oral or written recommendation by a satisfied customer to the prospective customers of a good or service. Considered to be the most effective form of promotion, it is also called word of mouth advertising which is incorrect because, by definition, advertising is a paid and non-personal communication"*.

Measuring word of mouth can be done through measurement of various metrics such as number of references to blog in other media (online/offline) number of retweets frequency of appearances in timeline of friends number of reposts/shares , number of responses to friend referral invites etc. (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). According to Durukan and Bozaci (2012), people will share both their positive and negative opinions with their friends regarding their experience with certain products on social media (Durukan and Bozaci, 2012).

3.4.4 Conversion

Conversion is regarded as the final point to be measured which determines the influence of the social media marketing efforts where it will show the number of people taking action and be a part of the company's marketing database. Conversion can be measured by looking at the number of registrations for content downloads, webinar registrations, the number of people calling based on the social media marketing campaign and the number of online sales (DeStefano, 2013). The conversion rate is considered as the most watched over metrics by each and every marketer. The theory of conversion might be interpreted in a different way based on the nature of companies business but when it comes to the definition of success, they all have it. Another important point is that conversions don't really have to be purchases or other dealing connected with trade (charlesworth, 2005).

3.4.5 Effectiveness of Social Media as Marketing Tools

According to the businessdictionary.com effectiveness defined as

"The degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved. In contrast to efficiency, effectiveness is determined without reference to costs and, whereas efficiency means "doing the thing right," effectiveness means "doing the right thing."

Promoting new or existing product or to play the role as a communication medium between companies and customers, social media has definitely become a current trend that is being implemented in the company's marketing mix (Odhiambo, 2012, Divya & Regi, 2012)

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is created to establish an overall strategy to assist the researcher in the conduct of the research that will present answer to the problems. The subsequent step after identifying the variables in the problem statement and the theoretical framework has been developed is to design the research using a method where necessary data can be collected and analysis can be done to achieve an explanation (Sekaran, 2003). According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010, research design is *“A master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information”* (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010).

For the purpose of this research, quantitative approach is used so as problems would be quantified through the generation of numerical data which can be converted into operational statistics. Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010, stated that quantitative approach is an approach used to address the objectives of a research over an observed evaluation which involve numerical measurement and analysis (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010). Information gathered using this method will be used to study the relationship between all of the independent variables namely awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion with the dependent variable which is effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.

Descriptive research also known as statistical research, will be used in this study to describe the data and the characteristic of what is being studied. The descriptive statistics gained in this study will be used to examine the frequencies, averages and other statistical calculations. Sekaran (2003), stated that a descriptive study is being carried out to determine and be able to explain the distinctiveness of each and every

variables involved in the study (Sekaran, 2003). On the other hand, according to Zikmund et al. (2010) a descriptive statistics, is a statistics “*which describe basic characteristics and summarize the data in a straightforward and understandable manner*” (Zikmund et al., 2010).

Descriptive research involves the classification of a certain phenomenon's characteristics established through exploration of correlation between two or more phenomenon. Questionnaire-based method was implemented in this study and according to Jaguli (2001), the main reason of choosing this method is because questionnaire assists respondents to have an understanding about the study easily and directly. Other than that, this type of method is very beneficial in the measurement and analysis processes of the data obtained from the respondents.

3.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

According to Sekaran (2003), “*population refers to the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate*” (Sekaran, 2003).

Another definition for population was given by businessdictionary.com. which stated that all elements, individuals, or units that meet the selection criteria for a group to be studied, and from which a representative sample is taken for detailed examination and the total of all populations is called a universe. The Sampling is the process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations will be taken from a larger population. According to Zikmund (2003), sampling is the process of using small number of items or part of a larger population to make a conclusion about the whole population. So, the samples are used in statistical testing when population

sizes are too large for the test to include all possible members or observations. A sample should represent the whole population and not reflect bias toward a specific attribute. Thus, research sampling is a significant methodology in order to run the social science research.

For the purpose of this study, the population covers the SMEs owned by women. The target population for this study is women owners or women entrepreneurs of the SMEs firms. The main reason why researcher chooses the owner of the company is because as the owner of the company, she must be alert and familiar with the overall performance and activities of her company. For sampling purpose, the researcher chose simple random sampling. According to Zikmund et al. (2010), “*Simple random sampling may be the best known type, in which every unit in the population has an equal and known chance of being selected*” (Zikmund et al., 2010).

3.7 SAMPLING METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The selected method to obtain data in this study was using a survey. The samples selected are women owner or women entrepreneurs on social media and also women owner or women entrepreneurs attending business seminars conducted in Kuala Lumpur that the researcher attended as well. Besides that, researcher also obtained the directory of women entrepreneurs of SMEs from the social media and from the website of Usahanita and also website of NAWEM (National Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Malaysia).

Based on the 2011 SME Census report, a total of 645,136 SMEs was recorded operating their business in Malaysia and 19.7 percent or about 127,000 of the SMEs

operating in the country were owned by women. The determination of sample size is based on the number of population being researched. To determine the required sample size, Krejcie and Morgan (1970), has provided a table as a guideline for sample size decisions. Based on the given table, for a population size $N = 100,000$, the sample size is $(n) = 386$. However, one of the rules of thumb for the determination of sample size proposed by Roscoe (1975) is that sample sizes larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most researcher (as cited in Sekaran, 2003). As the population in this study is over 100,000, the sample size should be over 300 samples but due to limitations faced by researcher to obtain the required samples, it has been decided that the sample size to use in the research is 150 which is still following the number of samples proposed by Roscoe (1975).

3.8 SURVEY INSTRUMENTS – QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

For the purpose of this study, the instrumentation used is questionnaire. According to Sekaran (2003), the questionnaire is efficient instruments for researcher to collect the required data provided the researcher fully recognized the measurement required for the variables of interest. Questionnaire is a set of written questions which has been predesigned to which respondents record their answer and can be distributed in various way such as personal administration, mailed to the respondents and distributed online (Sekaran, 2003).

The questionnaire designed for this survey consists of 41 questions and has been divided into sections, namely section A (8 questions), section B (2 questions), section C (6 questions), and section D to Section H (5 questions with 5 items in each questions). This questionnaire comes in bilingual, therefore for questions that require

written answer; respondents are given the choice to either answer in Bahasa Melayu or English.

In section A, questions are mainly about the demographic profiles of the respondents and the respondents company background; Section B are questions related to the respondents experience in using the internet; Section C are questions related to the use of social media as marketing tools and Section D to Section H consists of questions used to determine the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools where the first four questions were the independent variables namely awareness, engagement, word of mouth and conversion. Each dependent and independent variables has five items and were measured using a set of Likert scale. It has been designed to allow respondents to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with the carefully constructed statements.

3.8.1 Section A: Demographic Profile

The demographic profile in Section A has been divided into personal characteristics variables and professional characteristics variable. The personal characteristics include variable such as name, age, respondent's current residence, marital status and race; while the professional characteristic include the highest education level, business type that the respondents involved in and also the respondents level of involvement in the business whether full time or part time.

3.8.2 Section B: Use of Internet

In this section, 2 question were asked to look into the habit of the respondents in using the internet.

3.8.3 Section C: Use of Social Media as Marketing Tools

This section consists of 6 questions designed to gather information regarding the respondent's level of involvement and experience in using social media as marketing tools. Other than that, the respondents preferred social media for marketing are also asked to find out which social media are more favored by women entrepreneurs involved in online marketing in Malaysia.

3.8.4 Dependent Variable and Independent Variables

Section D to section H consists of 5 questions which has been developed to measure the respondent answer towards the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. A five point likert scale has been used in this section and according to Zikmund et al., (2010), likert scale which was developed by Rensis Likert, is measure of attitudes which enable respondents to rate their level of agreement on the carefully designed questions ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Zikmund et al., 2010). The 5 point Likert Scale is shown in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.1
5-point Likert Scale

No of Scale	Scale
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Several items has been identified from secondary sources and adapted to measure all the variables in this section. The measured items shown in the table 3.3 below.

Table 3.2
Variables measured

Variables	Authors
Effectiveness of social media as marketing tools	Adapted from Stelzner (2014); Social media questionnaire (surveymonkey.com)
Awareness	Adapted from Odhiambo (2012); Davis (n.d)
Engagement	Adapted from Dstefano (2015); Davis (n.d)
Words of mouth	Adapted from Durukan & Bozaci (2012); Hoffman & Fodor (2010)
Conversion	Adapted from Dstefano (2015); Heathman (2014)

3.9 DATA COLLECTION METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The selected method to obtain data in this study was using survey. The samples selected are women owner or women entrepreneurs on social media and also women owner or women entrepreneurs attending online marketing seminars, workshop for online marketing conducted in Kuala Lumpur that the researcher attended as well. Besides that, researcher also approaches women entrepreneurs from the social media and from website of USAHANITA and also NAWEM (National Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Malaysia).

A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed randomly to the respondents using two methods. The first method was by handing a total of 250 questionnaires directly over to the respondents during the seminars and the second method was by approaching the suitable respondents through online. The questionnaires has been computed on an online survey website (survey.org) and the link to the questionnaire was sent to the

respondents through online personal messaging systems and also through WhatsApp messenger. Along with the questionnaires, a cover letter was also given to the respondents so that respondents will have clear understanding on the study being conducted.

The total questionnaires returned using the first method were 110 questionnaires and the total answered questionnaires through online were 50 questionnaires making the total of completed questionnaires 150 questionnaires fit for analysis after rejecting 10 questionnaires due to its unfitness for analysis.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

The data collected from the respondents were coded and compiled using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0 software and quantitative method was exercised in this study to analyze the collected data. A number of analyses will be used as a part of the data analysis technique. Zikmund et al. (2010), *stated that “the appropriate analytical technique for data analysis will be determined by management’s information requirements, the characteristics of the research design, and the nature of the data gathered”* (Zikmund et al., 2010). The brief descriptions of the different types of analysis performed were as follows:

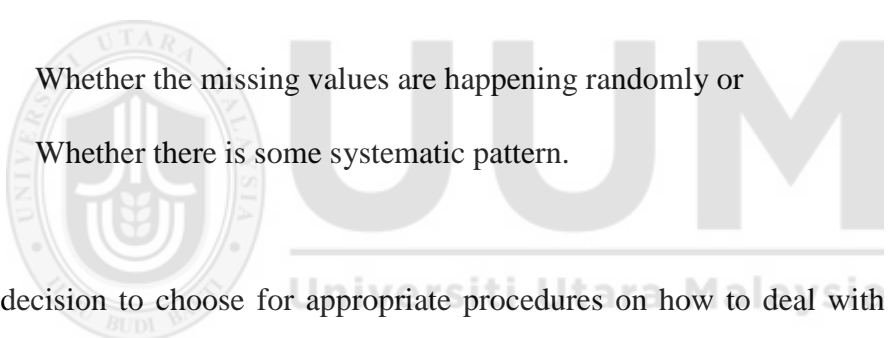
3.10.1 Data Screening

Before conducting further analysis on the data set obtained, it is important to conduct data screening to check for data errors. Mistakes could happen during the data entry process and the mistakes would affect the analysis result greatly as some analysis are very sensitive to what are known as ‘outliers’; that is, values that are well below or

well above the other scores (Pallant, 2011). Other process involved during the screening stage were identifying outliers and decide on how to deal with it and screening for normality of the data set.

3.10.2 Missing Data

Pallant (2011) point out that when a research carried out involved participation of human beings, there is always the possibility of getting incomplete data in every case. Therefore, it is essential to check the data file for any missing data and to carefully decide on how to deal with the missing data. Two considerations that should be taken into account when encountering a missing data are:

- 
- i. Whether the missing values are happening randomly or
 - ii. Whether there is some systematic pattern.

The decision to choose for appropriate procedures on how to deal with the missing values is very important as it can have a dramatic effects on the statistical analysis conducted.

3.10.3 Outliers

Some analysis result are very highly affected by outliers. To identify outliers, Pallant (2011) had suggested looking into details as below:

- i. Details on the computed histogram. Look at the tails of the distribution. Data points which sits on their own are potential outliers.

- ii. Inspecting the boxplot will also help to identify outliers. Any scores that SPSS considers are outliers appear as little circles with a number attached (this is the ID number of the case). If there are points like this, researcher must decide what to do with them.

3.10.4 Normality Test

Normality assume that the distribution of scores on the dependent variable is 'normal' (Pallant, 2011). Normality assessment can be done by obtaining the skewness and kurtosis value. Skewness refers to the symmetry of a distribution, that is, a variable whose mean is not in the centre of the distribution. Kurtosis relates to the peakedness of a distribution. When a distribution is normal, the values of skewness and kurtosis should be close to zero. For graphical method, normality can also be determined by examining the residual plots. If the assumption is met, the residuals should be normally and independently distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Normality of a data can also checked by looking at histogram, boxplot, normal Q-Q plot and also the detrended normal Q-Q plot of each variable tested.

3.10.5 Factor Analysis

A group of statistical technique or better known as factor analysis is used to analyse a large number of related variables and to explore the underlying structure of this set of variables. It is useful in reducing a large number of related variables to a smaller, more manageable, number of dimensions or components. Factor analysis can also be used to reduce a large number of related variables to a more manageable number, prior to using them in other analysis such as multiple regression or multivariate analysis of variance.

3.10.6 Reliability Analysis

Reliability test was conducted to test the reliability of the research instrument used in the research. Generally, reliability test is to determine the degree to which a test is consistent and stable in measuring what it is intended to measure. One of the aspect of reliability that can be measured is internal consistency. This is the degree to which the items that make up the variables is consistent and stable to produce the intended result when analysis is performed. The reliability test is also conducted to identify whether all items for all respective variables in the questionnaire are highly related and reliable. Internal consistency can be measured in a number of ways. The most commonly used statistic is Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Pallant (2011), stated that values range from 0 to 1 with higher values indicating greater reliability (Pallant, 2011). As cited by Pallant (2011), Nunnally (1978) recommends a minimum level of 0.7 (Pallant, 2011). Sekaran (2003), specified that the closer Alpha value to 1, it represented a high level of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = > 0.90). If the Alpha value is less than 0.6, it may be predicted that instrument used in the study had a low reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = < 0.60). If value of Alpha is more than 0.7 (Cronbach's Alpha = $0.7 < 0.9$), it indicates the instrument is good and acceptable reliability.

3.10.7 Descriptive Analysis

A descriptive analysis is also be conducted to analyse the collected data. As stated by Pallant (2011), descriptive statistics have a number of uses. These include to, describe the characteristics of the sample in the Method section of the report; check the variables for any violation of the assumptions underlying the statistical techniques that will be used to address your research questions; address specific research

questions (Pallant, 2011). The purpose of conducting descriptive analysis was to obtain the data for frequency distribution, measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion of variability. For the purpose of this study, descriptive statistic was used to describe and analyze the basic feature of the data in the study namely demographic profile, internet and social media usage pattern of the respondents.

3.10.8 Correlation Analysis

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation also known as Pearson Correlation Coefficient (PCC) is performed in this research among the variables developed in each hypothesis to determine the scope and importance of any relationships prior to performing regression analysis on the study results. To determine the scale and the direction of the relationships among variables, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used. Pearson correlation coefficients (r) can range from -1 to $+1$. The higher the positive data obtained for example. Table 3.4 below shows the coefficient scale and the relationship strength.

Table 3.3
Coefficient Scale and Relationship Strength

Coefficient Scale	Relationship Strength
0.91 – 1.00	Very strong
0.71 – 0.90	Strong
0.41 – 0.70	Moderate
0.21 – 0.40	Weak
0.01 - 0.20	Very weak

3.10.9 Regression Analysis

To confirm whether the developed hypothesis are true, the most suitable technique to use is multiple regression as it can measure the linear association between a dependent and an independent variable (Zikmund, 2003). Multiple regression is not just one technique but a family of techniques that can be used to explore the relationship between one continuous dependent variable and a number of independent variables or predictor. In other word, multiple regressions are used to learn about the relationship between several independent variables and a dependent variable.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the research design has been explained in order to give the overall picture of how the study is conducted. It provided an explanation of the population and a rationale for sample selection. This chapter also presented the operationalization of the variables, the data collection technique and types of data analysis technique used in this study. The test used to validate the collected data as well as the correlation and regression analysis used to determine the relationship between dependent variable and independent variables were described as well. The data analysis, findings will be discussed and presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis and the elaboration of the obtained results from data analysis. First, a discussion on the data collection process and procedure, and followed by description of the process involved in data cleaning and screening. Descriptive analysis and the factor analysis is discussed. The results of hypothesis tests are also analyzed, presented and summarized. The collected data are processed using the software SPSS of version 19.0.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION AND RESPONSE RATE

For the purpose of this study, data was obtained from women owned SMEs in Malaysia who has been using social media as their marketing tools for at least a few months. Online marketing seminars, online marketing workshop, Facebook business pages owned by women, NAWEM and USAHANITA's website has been used as the population sampling frame. Questionnaires has been used as the survey medium and a total of 250 questionnaires were distributed during seminars and workshop. Apart from that, women entrepreneurs were identified through their FB page and Instagram and a total of 200 respondents were approached and link of the survey was sent to them via private message. Another approached that the researcher used was by sending email to the secretary of USAHANITA and NAWEM requesting their help to distribute the link to the members of both organization.

The researcher has requested for permission to distribute questionnaires in the seminars and workshop where respondents has been informed that the completed survey should be returned to a labeled box placed at the entrance to the seminar hall. On the first seminar, 100 questionnaires were handed over to the person in charge and during recess the questionnaires were distributed. The number of returned questionnaire during the first seminar was 60 questionnaires which was the highest returned questionnaires compared to the rest. Unfortunately 7 returned questionnaires was either incomplete or completed by man, making the valid questionnaires for analysis only 53.

On the second seminar another 100 questionnaires were distributed and only 49 questionnaires returned but only 44 were fit for analysis. The 5 rejected questionnaires because respondents returned the questionnaires incomplete. On the workshop, Only 50 questionnaires were distributed because the number of participants was smaller than the seminars. 15 questionnaires were returned and fortunately all of the returned questionnaire were fit for analysis.

For the online distribution, women involved in online business were identified and contacted. A cover letter along with link to the online survey was sent to the respondents identified. The cover letter and a link to the online survey was also emailed to the secretary of USAHANITA and NAWEM. First, only 14 responded and after first friendly reminder, another 18 responded. Looking at the very low response, the researcher decided to send second friendly reminder which resulted in another 18 responds received making the total of 50 women entrepreneurs responding to the link

sent. At the end, a total of 150 questionnaires were identified as fit to be used for analysis.

4.3 DATA SCREENING

4.3.1 Missing data

To identify any missing data on data file, a frequency test and has been carried out repeatedly involving each variables in the data set. The result for this frequency test shows that there were no missing values and all of the variables from each sections has been completed by the respondents.

4.3.2 Outliers

The next process carried out on the data screening phase is conducting test to detect the existence of outliers. The technical analysis conducted to detect outliers is descriptive statistics. To detect the existence of outlier, Pallant (2011) suggested looking at the tails of the distribution in **histogram**. Any data points sitting on its own, out in the extremes means that there is a possibility outliers exist in the data. An inspection at the **boxplot** will also show if there is outliers in data. Scores which considered as outliers appear as little circle with a number representing the case ID attached. Scores are considered as outliers if they extend more than 1.5 box-lengths from the edge of the box. Extreme scores pointed out with asterisk, * are scores that extend more than 3 box lengths from the edge of the box. Based on test results of the outliers test, no outliers were detected on any of the variables tested.

4.3.3 Normality test

An assessment of the normality of data is a necessity for many statistical tests because normal data is a fundamental assumption in parametric testing. The test conducted would be able to determine whether the population data is normally distributed or not. Graphically, normality of a data can be proven by graphical histograms and normal probability plots that were applied. Dependent variable and independent variable namely effectiveness of social media as marketing tools, awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion has been assessed for normality. The result of the normality test shows that none of the variables violate the assumptions of normality (see appendix). As stated by Cooper and Schindler (2003), when data are approximately normally distributed and do not violate the assumption of normality severely, a parametric test can be used as statistical analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

Numerically, the normality of a data can be assessed by looking at the skewness and kurtosis values which were also provided as part of the output, giving information about the distribution of scores for the two groups, dependent and independent variables. Hair et al., (2006), stated that values of skewness that are outside the range of +1 to -1 suggest a considerably skewed distribution. As for kurtosis, George and Mallery (2006) stated that kurtosis which is the test to show the peakedness or flatness of a data distribution is considered normal if it's within the +1 to -1 limit. The skewness and kurtosis value for all of the variables in this study has shown that they are within the +1 to -1 limit.

All these variables were found not to violate the assumption of normality. Sample results of the normality tests are displayed in the Appendix. Therefore, as suggested by Cooper and Schindler (2003) when data are approximately normally distributed and do not violate the assumption of normality severely, a parametric test can be used as statistical analysis (see appendix).

4.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis examines the interrelationships among a large number of variables and then attempts to explain them in terms of their common underlying dimensions. It permits researcher to condense a large set of variables or scale items down to a smaller, more manageable number of dimensions or factors. This technique is often used when developing scales and measures, to identify the underlying structure (Pallant, 2011). According to Tabachnick & Fidell (2013), two statistical measures generated by IBM SPSS to help assess the factorability of the data are Bartlett's test of sphericity (Bartlett 1954), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (Kaiser 1970, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant ($p < .05$) for the factor analysis to be considered appropriate. The KMO index ranges from 0 to 1, with .6 suggested as the minimum value for a good factor analysis (cited by Pallant, 2011). Another suggestion for factor analysis value was given by Comrey and Lee (1992), who stated that any loading that exceeds 0.71 is measured excellent, 0.63 as "very good", 0.55 as "good", 0.45 as "fair", and 0.32 as "poor" (cited by Tabachnick & Fidell, 2011). In this study factor analysis has been conducted on all items that makes up the dependent variable and the independent variables.

4.4.1 Effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

Factor analysis has been conducted on each items which makes up the dependent variable, the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test result was given in table 4.1 while table 4.2 below shows the factor loading for all of the items in the dependent variable. The KMO result that will be used to determine the "measure of sampling adequacy" value was at 0.795, exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and Barlett's test of sphericity (Barlett, 1954) significant value is 0.000.

Table 4.1

KMO and Bartlett's Test Effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.795
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	235.643
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 4.2

Factor Analysis of Effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

Items	Factor loading
(EF2)Performance of our products/services are much better after using social media as our marketing tool compared to before we use social media	.834
(EF4)We feel that we should use social media marketing more in our marketing campaign	.808
(EF3)We would recommend other organizations to use social media as their marketing tool	.751
(EF1)Social media is an effective tools for marketing	.701
(EF5)Not enough time & resources as well as insufficient knowledge on how to use social media marketing are among the reasons why we don't optimize the use of social media as marketing tool	.658
Eigenvalue	2.836
Variance (%)	56.723

4.4.2 Brand Awareness

Factor analysis has also been conducted in each items of the independent variables. The first component for the independent variable is awareness. There are 5 items that makes up this component. The KMO and Bartlett's test result was given in table 4.3 while table 4.4 below shows the factor loading for all of the items of the independent variable. The KMO test result was 0.838, exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and Barlett's test of sphericity (Barlett, 1954) significant value is 0.000.

Table 4.3
KMO and Bartlett's Test Awareness

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.838
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	240.240
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 4.4
Factor Analysis of Awareness

Items	Factor loading
(A2)Our brand/products/services is being searched more frequently on social media	.810
(A5)Social media helped us to market our brand/products/services	.777
(A3)The number of followers, likes on our brand/products/services is growing	.775
(A1)SM is effective for brand/products/services awareness	.772
(A4)We received a lot of views, tweets, unique visits, return visits & likes on our post of brand/products/services on social media	.693
Eigenvalue	2.938
Variance (%)	58.761

4.4.3 Engagement

Factor analysis has also been conducted in each items of the independent variables. The second component for the independent variable is engagement. There are 5 items that makes up this component. The KMO and Bartlett's test result was given in table 4.5 while table 4.6 below shows the factor loading for all of the items of the independent variable. The KMO test result was 0.796, exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and Barlett's test of sphericity (Barlett, 1954) significant value is 0.000.

Table 4.5
KMO and Bartlett's Test Engagement

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.796
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	301.348
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 4.6
Factor Analysis of Engagement

Items	Factor loading
(E3)The number of our loyal and repeat customer increased	.832
(E2)People clicks on the links of our products or services that we posted on our social media sites	.828
(E4)Interactions with customers and responds towards their query can be done faster and easier	.802
(E1)People like, comment and share our post on social media	.719
(E5)We can built good relationship with customers thus increase the trust on our brand/products	.713
Eigenvalue	3.046
Variance (%)	60.930

4.4.4 Words of mouth

Factor analysis has also been conducted in each items of the independent variables. The third component for the independent variable is words of mouth. There are 5 items that makes up this component. The KMO and Bartlett's test result was given in table 4.7 while table 4.8 below shows the factor loading for all of the items of the independent variable. The KMO test result was 0.740 exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and Barlett's test of sphericity (Barlett, 1954) significant value is 0.000.

Table 4.7
KMO and Bartlett's Test Words of mouth

KMO and Bartlett's Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.740
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		224.298
	df		10
	Sig.		.000

Table 4.8
Factor Analysis of Words of mouth

Items	Factor loading
(W5)People recognize our brand or products from others testimony/review	.772
(W2)Our customers & prospects share their opinions & experience about our products/services with their friends & acquaintances	.764
(W3)People purchased our products/services based on others recommendation/testimony	.762
(W4)Our sales are effected by customers's positive/negative review/experience	.720
(W1)Our customers talk about our product/services with their friends & acquaintances online/offline	.681
Eigenvalue	2.743
Variance (%)	54.863

4.4.5 Conversion

Factor analysis has also been conducted in each items of the independent variables. The fourth and final component for the independent variable is conversion. There are 5 items that makes up this component. The KMO and Bartlett's test result was given in table 4.9 while table 4.10 below shows the factor loading for all of the items of the independent variable. The KMO test result was 0.812 exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and Barlett's test of sphericity (Barlett, 1954) significant value is 0.000.

Table 4.9
KMO and Bartlett's Test Conversion

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.812
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	233.328
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 4.10
Factor Analysis of Conversion

Items	Factor loading
(C2)With social media marketing, persuading visitor to take action such as making purchase, filling up forms etc. becomes easier.	.799
(C4)Social media helped to increase our customer and online sales	.787
(C3)People responded very well to the coupons or deal that we offer	.771
(C5)With the database that we collected on our social media marketing campaign enables us to re target our existing customer at a much lower marketing cost.	.726
(C1)Our social media marketing able to convert prospects into customer	.707
Eigenvalue	2.879
Variance (%)	57.580

4.5 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Reliability test is used to measure the goodness of instruments to be use in the actual field. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), reliability is a measuring instrument that measures the consistency of an instrument. The reliability of the instrument used in this study was tested using the Cronbach's Alpha. Table 4.11 shows the reliability result of this study.

Table 4.11

Summary of the reliability result of the study variables

Variable	No of Items	Reliability Cronbachs' Alpha
Effectiveness of social media as marketing tools	5	.807
Awareness	5	.823
Engagement	5	.838
Words of mouth	5	.794
Conversion	5	.815

De vellis (2012) stated that the ideal Cronbach's alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 (as cited by Pallant, 2011). Therefore, based on the above table, the value of Cronbach's Alpha are above 0.7 with engagement showing the highest value at .838 and words of mouth showing the lowest value at 0.794. This shows that that this data has higher reliability of internal consistency (Sekaran, 2003).

4.6 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The purpose of conducting descriptive analysis for this study is to analyze the basic feature of the data in the study namely demographic profile, internet and social media usage pattern of the respondents.

4.6.1 Demographic profile of the Respondents

From the 150 respondents, 66 respondents which represent 44 percent of the total respondents were in the group age of 31 to 40, followed by respondents in the group age 21 to 30 with the difference of only 1 respondent compared to respondents in group age 31 to 40 which were 65 respondents (43.3 percent), 12 respondents (8 percent) were in the group age 41 to 50, 5 respondents (3.3 percent) were in the group age 51 to 60 and the least number of respondents comes from the group age 20 or younger with the total number of 2 respondents (1.3 percent) . Details of the respondents by age are shown in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12
Respondents by age

Age group	Frequency	Percent %
20 or younger	2	1.3
21 – 30	65	43.3
31 – 40	66	44.0
41 – 50	12	8.0
51 – 60	5	3.3

In terms of respondent's residency, almost 50 percent of the respondents reside in Selangor with the total number of 72 respondents (48 percent), the second highest number are respondents who reside in Kuala Lumpur with the total number of 20 respondents (13.3 percent), followed by respondents who reside in Johor with 16 respondents (10.7 percent). The rest of the respondents are those who reside in Melaka with 9 respondents (6 percent), Putrajaya and Pahang shared the same number of respondent which were 8 respondents each (5.3 percent), Perak and Negeri Sembilan also shared the same number of respondents with 6 respondents each (4 percent), Kedah with 3 respondents (2 percent) and finally Perlis with only 1 respondent (0.7 percent). Details are shown in Table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13
Respondent's residence

State	Frequency	Percent %
Selangor	72	48.0
Kuala Lumpur	20	13.3
Johor	16	10.7
Melaka	9	6.0
Putrajaya	8	5.3
Pahang	8	5.3
Negeri Sembilan	6	4.0
Perak	6	4.0
Kedah	3	2.0
Perlis	1	0.7

The majority of the respondents which were 101(67.3 percent) stated their marital status as married while 43 respondents (28.7 percent) stated their status as single and as for the rest of the respondents, 4 (2.7 percent) were widower and 2 (1.3 percent) were divorced. Details of the marital status are shown in Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14
Respondent's marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percent %
Single	43	28.7
Married	101	67.3
Divorced	4	2.7
Widower	2	1.3

In terms of respondents race, majority of the respondents are Malays or 147 (98%) of the total respondents, 3 (1.3%) are Indians and only 1 (1.6%) are Chinese. Details are shown in Table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15
Respondent's Race

Race	Frequency	Percent %
Malay	147	98.0
Indian	2	1.3
Chinese	1	0.7

One hundred and twenty nine or 90 percent of the respondents were university graduates where 116 (77.3 percent) are in the Diploma-Degree holder group and 13 (8.7 percent) are in the Master – PHD holder group. Nineteen (12.7 percent) of the respondents are those who either completed their Primary or Secondary education and the remaining 2 respondents (1.3 percent) claimed that they had no formal education completed. Table 4.16 shows the detail of the respondent’s education level.

Table 4.16
Respondents Education Level

Education level	Frequency	Percent %
Diploma - Degree	116	77.3
Master - PHD	13	8.7
Primary – Secondary	19	12.7
No schooling completed	2	1.3

Respondents in this study involved in various type of business but the type of business that most respondents involved in were fashion with the highest number (36 respondents, 24.0 percent), followed by health products (17 respondents, 11.3 percent) and services (15 respondents, 10 percent). Bakery and education both with 7 respondents involved (4.7 percent), health and trading with 6 respondents each (4.0 percent), beauty products and food with 5 respondents each (3.3 percent), catering and construction with 3 respondents each (2.0 percent), door gift, hotel & inn, manufacturing, property and textile with 2 respondents each (1.3 percent). Fourteen respondents involved in automotive, baby products, beverages, communication, crafting, fast food, financial adviser, franchise, health, home decor, homestay,

printing, web design & services and wedding & event planner with 1 respondents (0.7 percent) in each business type. Sixteen respondents (10.7 percent) has not specified of business that their company involved in. Details of the respondents' business type shown in Table 4.17

Table 4.17
Type of business

Business type	Frequency	Percent %
Fashion	36	24.0
Health products	17	11.3
Unspecified	16	10.7
Services	15	10.0
Bakery	7	4.7
Education	7	4.7
Health & beauty products	6	4.0
Trading	6	4.0
Beauty products	5	3.3
Food	5	3.3
Catering	3	2.0
Construction	3	2.0
Door gift	2	1.3
Hotel & inn	2	1.3
Manufacturing	2	1.3
Property	2	1.3
Textile	2	1.3
Automotive	1	0.7
Baby products	1	0.7
Beverages	1	0.7
Communication	1	0.7
Crafting	1	0.7
Fast food	1	0.7
Financial adviser	1	0.7
Franchise	1	0.7
Health	1	0.7
Home deco	1	0.7
Homestay	1	0.7
Printing	1	0.7
Web Design & Services	1	0.7
Wedding & Event Planner	1	0.7

Ninety one respondents (60.7 percent) are involved in business in a full time basis while the rest of the respondents (59 respondents, 39.3 percent) are doing business as their other source of income apart from their existing job. Table 4.18 shows the respondents level of involvement in business.

Table 4.18
Involvement level

Involvement	Frequency	Percent
Full time	91	60.7
Part time	59	39.3

4.6.2 How and where respondents access Internet

To find out how the respondents access internet, respondents has been requested to record the medium that they used to access internet. The result shows that 26 respondents (17.3 percent) access internet using only home/office broadband only and 39 respondents (26.0 percent) recorded that they access internet via mobile data using their gadget only. More than half of the respondents which were 85 respondents (56.7 percent) recorded that they used both medium to access internet. Details are shown in Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19
How respondents access Internet

Medium	Frequency	Percent %
home/office broadband	26	17.3
gadget mobile data	39	26.0
Both	85	56.7

In term of places where respondents access Internet, 17 respondents (11.3 percent) claimed that they access internet from home only, 8 respondents (5.3 percent) claimed they access Internet from office only, and 18 respondents (12 percent) claimed that they access Internet from any other places but not from home and office. Two respondents (1.3 percent) claimed that they access Internet from both home and office only, Fifty two respondents (34.7 percent) claimed that they access internet from home and any places but not from the office, Seven respondents (4,7 percent) claimed that they do not access Internet at home but the access from office and any other places and the remaining 46 respondents (30,7 percent) claimed that they access Internet everywhere including home and office. Details of respondent's places to access Internet are given in Table 4.20

Table 4.20
Where respondents access Internet

Access From	Frequency	Percent %
Home only	17	11.3
Office only	8	5.3
Any place only	18	12.0
Home and office	2	1.3
Home and any place	52	34.7
Office and any place	7	4.7
Home, Office and any place	46	30.7

4.6.3 Use of social media as marketing tools

4.6.3.1 Experience with social media marketing

From the descriptive analysis done on respondents experience with social media marketing, it has been found that the majority of the respondents which were 96 respondents (64.0 percent) are those who has been using social media marketing for a few years, 34 respondents (22.7 percent) are those who had just started using social media marketing and 20 respondents (13.3 percent) are respondents who had few months experience with social media marketing. For respondents who were just getting started, their period of using social media marketing were between 1 to 6 months while respondents who stated that they have a few months experience with social media marketing were respondents who has been using social media marketing for more than 6 months but less than a year. On the other hand, 96 respondents who stated that their company has been using social media marketing for a few years divided into few groups. Thirty three respondents (22.0 percent) used social media marketing for the period of 1 to 2 years, Thirty eight respondents (25.3 percent) have been using social media marketing for the period of 3 to 4 years, Ten respondents (6.7 percent) used social media marketing for the period of 5-6 years and Fifteen respondents (10.0 percent) are respondents with the most experience in social media marketing with more than 6 years of experience in media marketing. Details are given in Table 4.21 and Table 4.22.

Table 4.21
Experience with social media marketing

Experience with SMM	Frequency	Percent
Just getting started	34	22.7
Been doing this for few months	20	13.3
Been doing this for few years	96	64.0

Table 4.22
Period of using social media marketing in months

Period of using SM (months)	Frequency	Percent
1 - 6 months	34	22.7
7 - 12 months	20	13.3
1 - 2 years	33	22.0
3 - 4 years	38	25.3
5 - 6 years	10	6.7
more than 6 years	15	10.0

The time that organization spent in using social media marketing has also been analyzed and the result shows that 53 respondents (35.3 percent) spent 1 to 5 hours in a week, 35 respondents (23.3 percent) spent 6 to 10 hours a week, 25 respondents (16.7 percent) spent 11 to 15 hours a week, 12 respondents (8.0 percent) spent 16 to 20 hour a week and 25 respondents (16.7 percent) spent more than 20 hours a week. Table 4.22 shows the detail of the time spent in a week.

Table 4.23
Time spent using social media marketing

Period of using SM (hours)	Frequency	Percent
1-5 hours	53	35.3
6-10 hours	35	23.3
11-15 hours	25	16.7
16-20 hours	12	8.0
more than 20 hours	25	16.7

4.6.3.2 Social media sites used and preferred

Facebook comes in as entrepreneurs number one choice as their social media marketing tools where almost all of the respondents except for two (148 respondents, 98.7 percent) choose Facebook as their marketing platform together with other social media sites. Instagram becomes respondents second most chosen social media sites with 109 respondents (72.7 percent) and Blogs which used to be one of the most popular choice for entrepreneurs in Malaysia is becoming less favored with only 29 (19.3 percent) respondents still using it as one of their marketing platform. A small number of respondents, 16 respondents (10.7 percent) also used Twitter as one of their social media marketing tools. The two least favored social media sites are LinkedIn with 7 respondents (4.7 percent) and Pinterest which were chosen by only 5 respondents (3.3 percent). As for preferred social media sites, Facebook and Instagram are still the respondents' top choice as their marketing tools with 129 (86.0 percent) of 150 respondents choose Facebook and 85 (56.7 percent) from the total respondents has chosen Instagram. YouTube becomes respondents' third most preferred social media sites with 17 (11.3 percent) out of 150 respondents followed by Blogs where 14 (9.3 percent) out of 150 respondents chose it as their preferred social media sites as marketing tools. Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest becomes respondents' least preferred social media sites as marketing tools. Five respondents preferred Twitter, three respondents preferred LinkedIn and only one respondents preferred Pinterest.

4.6.3.3 Purpose of using Social media

Respondents were also asked of their organization's purpose for using social media as their marketing tools and respondents answer in sequence were: (1) to advertise

products or services (141 respondents), (2) to engage in conversation with customers (100 respondents), (3) to gain feedback from customers (95 respondents), (4) to increase brand awareness (88 respondents), (5) to offer promotional items for example coupons or gift vouchers (76 respondents) and finally (6) for business to business purposes for example LinkedIn.

4.7 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlation analysis is a useful and powerful technique for exploring the relationship among variables. Correlation analysis was performed in this study to determine if there were any relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Correlation does not involve cause and effect but only shows how satisfactory the relationships are (Zickmund, 2003).

Table 4.24
The Correlation results among variables

Variables	DV	IV1	IV2	IV3	IV4
DV- Effectiveness of SM as marketing tools	1				
IV1-Awareness	0.459**	1			
IV2-Engagement	0.330**	0.504**	1		
IV3-Words of mouth	0.459**	0.521**	0.575**	1	
IV4-Conversion	0.552**	0.536**	0.517**	0.551**	1

**Correlation is significant at the level 0.01 (2-tailed)

The correlation analysis result shown in table 4.24 shows that Awareness is significantly correlated with Effectiveness of social media as marketing tools of (0.459**, $p < .000$). This indicates that awareness can be an important determinant of effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. This result suggests that awareness influences the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. A significant correlation was also found between engagement and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools of (0.330**, $p < .000$). This means that Engagement is an important determinant of effectiveness of social media as marketing tools and also suggested that engagement influences the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.

Words of mouth has also been found to have significant correlation with effectiveness of social media as marketing tools of (0.459**, $p < .000$) which means words of mouth is an important determinant to the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.

The final correlation test was conducted between conversion and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools where a significant correlation between conversion and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools has been found (0.552**, $p < .000$). This shows that conversion is an important determinant of effectiveness of social media as marketing tools and this also suggested that conversion influences the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. Based on the result above, four independent variables, namely Awareness, Engagement, Words of mouth and Conversion has a significant correlation with the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. Correlation analysis result on the four independent variable also

shows that each independent variable is significantly correlated with each other. Details are given in the table 4.29 above.

4.8 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

According to Zikmund, (2003), to confirm whether the developed hypotheses are true, the most suitable technique to use is multiple regression by measuring the linear association between a dependent and an independent variable (Zikmund, 2003). Multiple regressions was carried out to identify the independent variables as well as the contribution of these dimensions; brand awareness, engagement, social words of mouth and conversion in predicting effectiveness of social media as marketing tools as a dependent variable. The finding of the multiple regressions based on statistical assessment is shown in Table 4.25 below. Based on detail presented in the Coefficients a table (table 4.25) below it indicates that the model as a whole is significant ((F, 20.560) $p < 0.001$).

Table 4.25
Coefficients a

Independent Variable	Beta	t	Sig.
Brand awareness	.459	6.278	.000
Engagement	.330	4.253	.000
Words of mouth	.459	6.287	.000
Conversion	.552	8.047	.000

Dependent Variable: EFFECTIVENESS

Based on the result shown in Table 4.25, it indicates that there are significant relationship between and brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion on effectiveness of social media as marketing tools ($\beta = .459$, $p = .000$, β

= .330, $p = 4.253$, $\beta = .459$, $p = .000$, $\beta = .552$, $p = .000$). Table 4.26 shows the summary of the hypothesis result.

Table 4.26
Hypothesis results summary

Hypothesis	Result
H1 There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools.	Accepted
H2 There is a positive relationship between engagement and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools	Accepted
H3 There is a positive relationship between words of mouth and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools	Accepted
H4 There is a positive relationship between conversion and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools	Accepted

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed data collection and response rate, data screening process, factor analysis performed on each variables, reliability of the variables involved, descriptive analysis performed to obtain respondents demographic characteristic, correlation analysis to explore the relationship among variables and finally multiple regression analysis performed to confirm whether the hypothesis developed are accepted or rejected. Chapter Five will further discuss the findings theoretical implications, suggestion for future studies, limitations of the research and also present conclusion of the study

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Four, the results of the study were presented. This chapter summarizes the study objectives and presents a discussion of the findings, conclusions reached as a result of the study, theoretical and practical contribution, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

5.2 RECAPITULATION OF THE STUDY

The main intention of this study is to investigate the relationship between brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion on effectiveness of social media as marketing tools and to identify which is the most influencing determinant factor on effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. The data was collected from women entrepreneur in Malaysia particularly women entrepreneurs involved in online marketing. A total of four hundred and fifty (450) questionnaires were distributed and 162 were returned (36%). After a thorough check on the returned questionnaires, it turn out that only 150 (33.33%) were usable for analysis.

This study also attempts to answer the following specific objectives:

- i. *To investigate the relationship of awareness and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- ii. *To investigate the relationship of engagement and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*

- iii. *To investigate the relationship of word of mouth and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool*
- iv. *To investigate the relationship of conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tool.*

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS RESULTS

The majority of the respondents, 66 respondents (44.0 percent) were between the ages of 31 to 40 years. This followed closely by respondents who were between the ages of 21 to 30 years, 65 respondents (43.3 percent) and 21 respondents (8.0 percent) who were in the range of 41 to 50 years old. Only Two or 1.3 percent of the respondents were 20 years or below. From the results, it can be established that vast majority of the respondents are between 40 years and below. This explains the fact that a new generation or the younger generation of women are venturing into businesses, taking full advantage of economic conditions in the country and it is a contradictory to the research findings of Mansor, (2005) which stated that compared to women at the age of 30 years old and below, the number of women venturing in Malaysian SMEs aged between 40-49 years old are larger showing that fresh graduates are not keen to get involve or starting their career path in business (Mansor, 2005). This was supported by O'Neil and Bilimoris (2005) who indicated that women normally went through career phases where transactions to self-employment may occur (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005).

Almost 70 percent or 67.3 percent to be precise (101 respondents) of the total respondents stated their marital status as married and 43 (28.7 percent) stated their marital status as single. Only a handful of the respondents were either divorced or

widower where 4 respondents (2.7 percent) stated that they are divorced and 2 respondents (1.3 percent) stated that they are widower. The results shows that more married women are venturing into business this might be due to the flexibility and the freedom gained by being self-employed. This was supported by Chotkan (2009) who stated that the growth in the number of women owned-business are relatively explained by the flexibility in the career life of a women by choosing to be self-employed. Being self-employed also provide the women with freedom to choose their specific work atmosphere in terms of working hours, type of work, work from home or work place closer to home and the people they want to have business dealing with (Chotkan, 2009).

One hundred and twenty nine or 86.0 percent of the respondents are university graduates where 116 (77.3 percent) are diploma or degree holder and 13 (8.7 percent) are master or PHD holder. Nineteen respondents (12.7 percent) reported that they have either completed their primary or secondary education and only two (1.3 percent) of the respondents reported that they did not complete their formal education. This shows that the new generation of women entrepreneurs are well educated and with better academic qualifications. Women with no education and experience and less likely to venture into business compared to educated and experienced women (Kavita et al., 2008). This also in accordance with the study by Still and Walker (2005) who found that 62 percent of women business owners in Australia are either an undergraduate degree holder or had post graduate qualification (Still & Walker, 2005). More than half or 60.7 percent of the respondents worked full time in the business, while the reminder of the respondents operate their business in part-time basis. These women entrepreneurs involved in various business activity but business

activity with the most respondents involved in is fashion industry with 36 respondents or 24.0 percent reported their business type as fashion.

Nowadays internet can be accessed through countless ways and 39 respondents (26.0 percent) recorded that they accessed internet through their gadget using mobile data and 26 respondents recorded that they accessed internet through broadband either at home or at the office while a large number of respondents, 85 respondents (56.7 percent) recorded that they accessed internet using both medium that is broadband at home or office and also through their gadget. This is in accordance with the report by Malaysian Digital Associations (M) in 2016 which stated that 47% Malaysians access Internet from their mobile and an average of 5.1 hours a day of their time was spent on the Internet with 2.8 hours of it was spent on social networks. It also reported that a total of 44, 509,884 mobile subscriptions or 144.8% mobile penetration recorded.

For the respondents' experience with social media marketing, it has been found that more than half of the respondents or 96 respondents (64.0 percent) are those who has more experience with social media marketing in the span of 1 year to more than 6 years. 34 respondents (22.7 percent) recorded that they have been using social media as their marketing tools between 7 months to less than a year while the remaining 20 respondents (13.3 percent) are those who had just started using social media as their marketing tools with the usage period between one to six months. This indicates that women entrepreneurs in Malaysia realized the importance of social media marketing to ensure the success of their business. This is also in line with the suggestion given by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who described the online business as 'the way forward' encouraged Malaysian entrepreneurs especially women

entrepreneurs to embrace the online business and not just being reliant on the local market (Yunus, 2016).

The period of time spent by respondents on social media varies, ranging from between one hour to five hours to more than 20 hours a week. Most of the respondents (53 respondents, 35.3 percent) claimed that they spend between one to five hours a week on social media for their marketing purposes and 35 respondents or 223.3 percent claimed that they spend between six to ten hours a week for their marketing activity on social media. An equal number of respondents, 25 respondents or 16.7 percent claimed that they spend eleven to fifteen hours a week and more than twenty hours a week respectively. A small number of respondents, 12 respondents (8.0 percent) claimed that they are on social media for their marketing activity for a period between sixteen to twenty hours a week. Facebook and Instagram are the respondents' two most chosen and favored social media sites as marketing platforms with Pinterest becomes the less chosen and favored by respondents'. The Malaysian Digital Association (mda) on 2016 affirmed this by stating that 41 percent of more than 18 Million active social media users are active Facebook users. Another report by Facebook South East team stated that Instagram which is also owned by Facebook is becoming a fast social media platform with 6.5 Million people are on Instagram (Leng, 2016).

In terms of purpose for using social media, respondents are asked to state their purpose of using social media as their marketing tools. Respondents are allowed to pick more than one answer. The results shows that almost all respondents, 141 respondents recorded that they used social media as a tools to advertise their product

or services, 100 respondents used social media to engage in conversation with their customers, 95 respondents used social media to gain feedback from their customers, 88 respondents recorded that social media is used to increase brand awareness, 76 respondents stated that they use social media offer promotional items for example coupons or gift vouchers and finally 37 respondents used social media for business to business purposes. As included in Malaysian Digital Association 2016 report, a survey conducted by Econsultancy State of Social Media in Malaysia (2015), reveals that more than 80 percent of the respondents recorded their main purpose of using social media is to increase brand awareness or to enhance their reputation. Almost 50 percent of the respondents recorded that they use social media to engage with customers or to retain customers comes in second with almost. This is incongruous with the study result on respondents' purpose for using social media as their marketing tools. In other words, majority of the respondents' in this study are more concern with making sales rather than enhancing their existence in the social media arena thus the large number of recorded respondents answer in 'to advertise their product or services'.

5.4 HYPOTHESIS TEST RESULTS

5.4.1 H1: Brand awareness and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

The result of the hypothesis test shows that awareness has a significant relationship with effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. According to Kokemuller (n.d), as the internet and digital technology getting more advanced and so does the importance of brand awareness. The ability to make people aware of the presence of a product or services benefits the business. In other words, instituting strong reputation

for a good products and services, integrity in the business practices and community participation are especially critical to lasting business success (Kokemuller, n.d). In the long run, effective brand awareness is another way of affirming that the brand is popular and effortlessly identifiable. In order to set one brand apart from other similar products and competitors, it is important to create brand awareness (Gustafon & Chabot, 2007). One of the significant factors that can increase the sales percentage of a company's product is brand awareness (Arora & Sharma, 2013). A very experienced businesswoman among the participants in Hassan, S., Shiratuddin, N., Hashim, N. L., Salam, A., Nur, S., & Sajat, M. S. (2012) study emphasized that social media can be used wisely to create brand awareness and trust which in turns will increase sales (Hassan, S., Shiratuddin, N., Hashim, N. L., Salam, A., Nur, S., & Sajat, M. S., 2012).

5.4.2 H2: Engagement and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

The second hypothesis tested is the relationship of engagement and effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. The result shows that engagement has a significant relationship with effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. This means that women entrepreneurs in Malaysia does find engagement as a predictor to the effectiveness of their social media marketing activities. The findings of this study is in accordance with the previous study by Lewis, (2013), who stated that the significant increase in the number of social media platforms make it possible for companies and organization to use it as a medium not only to make audience aware of their brands but also to get engage with their existing and potential consumers (Lewis, 2013). Previous researcher have agreed that engagement is the most effective in developing and building connection between consumers and brands (Epps, Mulligan and Wilkos,

2009; Jakste and Kuvykaite, 2012; Rutkauskaite, 2012; Lewis, 2013; digitalmarketingphilippines.com, n.d).

5.4.3 H3: Words of mouth (WOM) and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

The result on Hypothesis three shows that it has significant relationship with the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. It means that words of mouth is an important predictor to the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. Hoffman and Fodor, 2010, stated that words of mouth is the next step after consumer are aware and engage where they are ready to converse their opinion to other consumers Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). According to Gildin (2003), it is common knowledge that people tend to listen to others whom they trusted and they become easily persuaded to purchase, subscribe certain services and even watch certain movies (Gildin, 2003). Gildin (2003), further stated that many companies who were previously relying heavily on advertising as the way to promote their products or services are now finally recognizing WOM as an effective and influential type of communication in the market at the moment which can help selling the companies' product or services. As adapted from Evans (2010), a study conducted by Zenith Media in 2007 reveals that more people are giving out positive reference thus proving that social media could bring major chance to a company to eventually build and improve their business (Evans, 2010). For small businesses, WOM marketing is an essential element that can help these small businesses not only in their growth but also in ensuring their survivability in the beginning of their operation where they are hardly any budget for marketing activity (Lake, 2016).

5.4.4 H4: Conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools

The final hypothesis tested is relationship between conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. The result of the test shows that conversion has significant relationship with the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. It means that respondents of this study consider conversion as an important predictor to the success of their marketing activity using social media. This in line with the statement made by Kaushik (2013) who stated that the most important result that should be looked forward to, is the action people took after looking at the advertisement and the action known as conversion (Kaushik, 2013). According to most researchers and writers, majority of marketers believe conversion as one of the most important metrics for measuring the effectiveness of social media marketing (DeMers, 2014, Grimms, 2014, Marketing Maven, 2013, Drell, 2013). In the end, main focus of social media marketing is conversion which means how well consumers' involvements on the social media sites affect their buying decisions (Pradiptarini, 2011).

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher faced a number of limitations in this study. First limitations limitation of this study is the considerably low response rate. Although the response rate obtained in this study was similar to rates obtained in other studies (Lubatkin et al, 2006), its low response rate may have a negative impact on both the size and quality of the sample. The second limitations is the use of questionnaire as data collection instrument. As with other research that uses questionnaire as the instrument to collect data, there may be a problem of social desirability. Some respondents may have the

tendency to exaggerate or provide responses deemed to be desirable by others, instead of giving honest responses. Another limitation is that the research focuses only on women owned SMEs in Malaysia and not all SMEs owner in Malaysia. The sample cannot be accurately described as a truly representative sample, and therefore the generalizability of the findings is limited.

Despite the limitations faced by researcher, the study nevertheless is an original attempt to examine the variables that influenced the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools to women owned SMEs in Malaysia. The findings of this study disclosed that positive relationship is present between awareness, words of mouth, conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools and a negative relationship is present between engagement and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools. These findings have important implication to the literature, policy makers and the women owner of the SMEs.

5.6 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF STUDY

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between four independent variable namely brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth and conversion with the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools which is the dependent variable. This research is about understanding the women SMEs entrepreneurs in Malaysia and the usage of social media as a marketing tools. The study will benefits not only by women entrepreneurs in Malaysia but it can also be benefited by women entrepreneurs from other countries as well as man entrepreneurs in strategizing their future strategic business plan.

Understanding the social media marketing is not only important for women entrepreneurs but to every entrepreneurs who wish to have a sustainable and success business. The evolution of social media marketing creates ample opportunity especially to women entrepreneurs as it will enable them to have more flexibility and freedom where they can excel in their business without having to neglect their family.

The managerial implication of this study is that the finding of this study will be beneficial in understanding the social media marketing landscape so women entrepreneurs can focus on their marketing activity based on their marketing niche. The desired consumers will be better targeted thus minimizing the marketing cost that they have to invest. It is vital to integrate social media in the marketing activity in order to survive and sustained in the market. The growth of social media marketing in Malaysia shows the number of women entrepreneurs also growing. Therefore this study also suggest that women entrepreneurs should make investment in learning and really understand the social media marketing by attending classes organized by trusted online marketing gurus. Having proper knowledge will benefit the women entrepreneurs by differentiating them from their competitors which will ensure the success of their business.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study had provided only a small portion of idea regarding relationship between the independent variables namely brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth, conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools as the dependent variable where the sample involved only women owned SMEs. Therefore, it would be beneficial for future research to consider the following suggestions:

- i. Expand the study by including SMEs owned by man to investigate effectiveness of social media as marketing tools in Malaysia. This kind of investigation would help explain the comparison among the aspects of the effectiveness of social media as marketing tools across all gender in Malaysia;
- ii. Investigate the role and impact of social media marketing in purchasing behavior among online shoppers in Malaysia and how this behavior does differs between male and female online shoppers;
- iii. One of the independent variable conversion, are found to have higher significant relationship with the dependent variable. A more in-depth investigation should be carried out to find out how entrepreneurs can use social media to increase their conversion rate.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between brand awareness, engagement, words of mouth, conversion and the effectiveness of social media as marketing for women owned SMEs in Malaysia. Based on the regression, all independent variable except for one shows significant relationship with the dependent variable. Hence, women owned SMEs in Malaysia can use these results to better understand the social media marketing landscape in Malaysia in order to be success in their business and to ensure their long term existence in the market.

In addition, the findings of this study can also help them in planning the strategic marketing plan for their company to better target the suitable consumers for their products or services and to place their products and services in the right niche. The

beauty of social media marketing is that entrepreneurs can target their desired consumer and placed their business in the right niche. The effects of targeting the wrong consumers and wrong niche placement will resulted in massive lost in their advertising cost. Social media marketing progressed in a fast phase tempo thus the importance of women entrepreneurs to better equipped their organization with the right knowledge of social media marketing.

Therefore, this study not only supports the theoretical frameworks of the study, but also provides a foundation through the identification of factors that positively and significantly impact directly and indirectly the effectiveness of social media a marketing tools, and gives a women owned small and medium firm a way to develop competitive advantage in this highly dynamic business environment.



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APPENDIX 1
QUESTIONNAIRE



UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS MARKETING TOOLS: THE
CASE OF WOMEN-OWNED SMEs IN MALAYSIA**

Dear Ms. / Madam,

This questionnaire is design to discover the Effectiveness of Social Media as Marketing Tools for Women Owned SMEs in Malaysia. This questionnaire consist of 8 sections namely Section A for demographic questions, Section B for the use Internet, Section C for the use of social media as marketing tools and finally Section D to Section H for the Dependent variable and independent variables questions. **PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS.**

This questionnaire comes in bilingual so for questions that requires written answer; respondents are free to either answer in Bahasa Melayu or English. Your answer to this questionnaire will be very valuable, as it will allow me to ensure the data collection in supporting my work and served to my research requirement. All information provided is strictly **CONFIDENTIAL** and will be used solely for research purpose.

It is hope that you will response as honestly and spontaneously as possible. I really appreciate your time and participation in this survey. For further enquiries please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
TATI MANSUR
810262 - Master of Science Management
UUMKL
H/P: 019-3896561

**** IN CASE YOU DID NOT MANAGE TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY TODAY,
PLEASE LOG IN HERE → <https://eSurv.org?u=SMMeffectiveness>
TO PARTICIPATE ONLINE.**

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS
SEKSYEN A: SOALAN DEMOGRAFIK

1. Please state your name (*Sila nyatakan nama anda*)

2. What is your age? (*Umur*)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 or younger (<i>20 atau kurang</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 41 - 50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21 - 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 51 - 60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31 - 40 | <input type="checkbox"/> 61 or older (<i>61 atau lebih</i>) |

3. In which State do you currently reside? (*Di negeri manakah anda tinggal sekarang?*)

4. Please state your marital status (*Sila nyatakan status perkahwinan anda*)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not Married (<i>Bujang</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced (<i>Bercerai</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married (<i>Berkahwin</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Widower (<i>Balu</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Separated (<i>Tinggal Berasingan</i>) | |

5. Please state your race (*Sila nyatakan bangsa anda*)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malay (<i>Melayu</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian (<i>India</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese (<i>Cina</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify (<i>Lain-lain, sila nyatakan</i>) |

6. What is your level of Education? (*Apakah taraf pendidikan anda?*)

- ☐ No schooling completed (*Tidak menamatkan persekolahan*)
- ☐ Primary – Secondary level (*Sekolah rendah - sekolah menengah*)
- ☐ Diploma – Degree graduate (*Graduan Diploma - Degree*)
- ☐ Master - PHD graduate (*Graduan Master - PHD*)

7. Please state the type of business that your company involved in eg: Catering/Bakery/Fashion/Beauty Products/Health Products/Services etc. *(Sila nyatakan jenis perniagaan yang syarikat anda ceburi cth: Katering/Bakery/Fesyen/Produk Kecantikan/Produk Kesihatan/Perkhidmatan dll).* _____
8. What is your level of involvement? *(Apakah tahap penglibatan anda?)*
- ☐ Full time *(Sepenuh masa)* ☐ Part time *(Sambilan)*

SECTION B: USE OF INTERNET
SEKSYEN B: PENGGUNAAN INTERNET

1. How do you access the Internet? (You may choose more than one *(Bagaimanakah anda mengakses Internet?(Anda boleh memilih lebih dari satu)*)
- ☐ Home/Office Broadband *(Jalur lebar di rumah / di pejabat)*
☐ Gadget Mobile data *(Broadband) (Data/jalur lebar di peranti)*
2. Where do you normally access the internet? You may choose more than one *(Dimanakah anda biasanya mengakses Internet? (Anda boleh memilih lebih dari satu))*
- ☐ Home *(Rumah)*
☐ Work place *(Office) (Tempat kerja (Pejabat))*
☐ Any place via mobile devices *(Dari mana mana sahaja dengan menggunakan peranti bergerak)*

SECTION C: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS MARKETING TOOLS
SEKSYEN C: PENGGUNAAN MEDIA SOSIAL SEBAGAI ALAT UNTUK PEMASARAN

1. Please state your experience with social media marketing *(Sila nyatakan pengalaman anda dengan pemasaran media sosial)*
- ☐ Just getting started *(Baru bermula)*
☐ Been doing this for a few months *(Telah melakukannya beberapa bulan)*
☐ Been doing this for a few years *(Telah melakukannya beberapa tahun)*

2. How long has your organization been using social media for? (*Sudah berapa lamakah syarikat anda menggunakan media sosial?*)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 6 months (<i>1 - 6 bulan</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - 4 years (<i>3 - 4 tahun</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 - 12 months (<i>7 - 12 bulan</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 6 years (<i>5 - 6 tahun</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 2 years (<i>1 - 2 tahun</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 6 years (<i>lebih dari 6</i>) |

3. How many hours does your organization spend using social media for marketing in a week? (*Dalam seminggu, berapa lamakah masa yang diambil oleh syarikat anda dalam menggunakan media sosial untuk pemasaran?*)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 hours (<i>1-5 jam</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 hours (<i>11 – 15 jam</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 hours (<i>lebih 20 jam</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 hours (<i>6-10 jam</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 hours (<i>16 – 20 jam</i>) | |

4. Which social media websites does your organisation use? (Select as many choices as you like) (*Laman sesawang media sosial yang manakah syarikat anda gunakan? (Pilih sebanyak mana yang anda suka)*)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youtube | <input type="checkbox"/> Blogs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pinterest | |

5. Which is your preferred social media website? (*Laman media sosial yang manakah yang lebih anda pilih?*)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youtube | <input type="checkbox"/> Blogs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pinterest | |

6. For what purpose/s does your organisation use social media? (Select as many choices as you like) (*Untuk tujuan apakah syarikat anda menggunakan media sosial? (Pilih sebanyak yang anda suka)*)

- ☐ To advertise products/services (*Untuk mengiklankan produk atau perkhidmatan*)
- ☐ To gain feedback from customers (*Untuk mendapatkan maklum balas dari pelanggan*)
- ☐ To engage in conversation) with customers (*Untuk berkomunikasi dengan pelanggan*)
- ☐ To offer promotional items e.g. coupons/gift vouchers (*Untuk menawarkan item item promosi spt. kupon/baucar hadiah kepada pelanggan*)

- ☐ For business to business purposes e.g. LinkedIn (*Untuk tujuan B2B spt. LinkedIn*)
- ☐ To increase brand awareness (*Untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan pengguna terhadap brand*)

SECTION D-H: DEPENDENT VARIABLE AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

SEKSYEN D-H: PEMBOLEH UBAH BERSANDAR DAN PEMBOLEH-PEMBOLEH UBAH BEBAS

Question D to H, Please tick (✓) the most appropriate answer to each question based on the scale below. (*Soalan D -H, Sila tandakan (✓) jawapan yang paling sesuai untuk setiap soalan berdasarkan skala di bawah*)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree (<i>Sangat tidak bersetuju</i>)	Disagree (<i>Tidak Setuju</i>)	Neither Disagree/Agree	Agree (<i>Bersetuju</i>)	Strongly Agree (<i>Sangat Bersetuju</i>)

D. AWARENESS

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Social media is effective for brand/products/services awareness (<i>Media sosial efektif untuk pengetahuan/kesedaran terhadap jenama/produk/ perkhidmatan</i>)					
2. Our brand/products/services is being searched more frequently on social media (<i>Jenama/produk/perkhidmatan yang kami tawarkan mendapat carian lebih kerap di media sosial</i>)					
3. The number of followers, likes on our brand/products/services is growing (<i>Jumlah 'followers', 'like' ke atas brand/produk/perkhidmatan kami semakin meningkat</i>)					
4. We received a lot of views, tweets, unique visits, return visits & likes on our post of brand/products/services on social media (<i>Kami menerima banyak 'views', 'tweets', 'unique' 'visits', 'return visits' & 'likes' keatas 'post' kami di media sosial</i>)					
5. Social media helped us to market our brand/products/services (<i>Media sosial membantu kami memasarkann jenama/produk/perkhimatan yang kami tawarkan</i>)					

E. ENGAGEMENT

	1	2	3	4	5
1. People like, comment and share our post on social media (Orang ramai "like". "comment" dan "share" pos kami di media sosial)					
2. People clicks on the links of our products or services that we posted on our social media sites (Orang 'click' ke atas 'link' untuk produk atau perkhidmatan kami yang kami pos di laman media sosial kami)					
3. The number of our loyal and repeat customer increased (Pelanggan setia dan pelanggan yang membeli semula dengan kami semakin bertambah)					
4. Interactions with customers and responds towards their query can be done faster and easier (Interaksi dengan pelanggan dan respond terhadap kemusykilan pelanggan dapat dilakukan dengan cepat dan mudah)					
5. We can built good relationship with customers thus increase the trust on our brand/products (Kami dapat membina hubungan yang baik dengan pelanggan dan seterusnya meningkatkan tahap kepercayaan pelanggan terhadap jenama/produk kami)					

F. WORDS OF MOUTH

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Our customers talk about our product/services with their friends & acquaintances online/offline (Pelanggan kami bercerita tentang produk kami kepada rakan-rakan & kenalan mereka secara					
2. Our customers & prospects share their opinions & experience about our products/services with their friends & acquaintances (Para pelanggan dan para peospek berkongsi pendapat dan pengalaman mereka tentang produk kami kepada rakan-rakan & kenalan mereka)					
3. People purchased our products/services based on others recommendation/testimony. (Pelanggan membeli produk atau perkhidmatan kami berdasarkan cadangan/saranan/testimony orang lain)					
4. Our sales are effected by customers's positive/negative review/experience(Jualan kami dipengaruhi oleh ulasan/pengalaman					

positive/negatif pengguna)					
5. People recognize our brand or products from others testimony/review. (Brand/produk kami di kenali dari testimoni/review pengguna)					

G. CONVERSION

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Our social media marketing able to convert prospects into customer (Pemasaran media sosial mampu menukarkan prospek menjadi pelanggan)					
2. With social media marketing, persuading visitor to take action such as making purchase, filling up forms etc. becomes easier. (Dengan pemasaran menggunakan media sosial, usaha meyakinkan pelanggan untuk membuat pembelian, mengisi borang online dll. menjadi lebih mudah)					
3. People responded very well to the coupons or deal that we offer. (Tindak balas orang ramai terhadap kupun atau tawaran yang kami berikan adalah sangat baik)					
4. Social media helped to increase our customer and online sales (Media sosial telah membantu meningkatkan pelanggan dan juga jualan atas talian kami)					
5. With the database that we collected on our social media marketing campaign enables us to re target our existing customer at a much lower marketing cost. (Dengan database pelanggan yang berjaya dikumpul semasa menjalankan kempen pemasaran secara online membolehkan kami mensasarkan semula pelanggan sedia ada dengan kos pemasaran yang lebih rendah)					

H. EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS MARKETING TOOLS

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Social media is an effective tools for marketing (Media sosial adalah alat pemasaran yang efektif)					
2. Performance of our products/services are much better after using social media as our marketing tool compared to before we use social media (Prestasi produk/servis yang kami)					

tawarkan adalah sangat baik selepas menggunakan social media sebagai alat pemasaran berbanding sebelum menggunakannya)					
3. We would recommend other organizations to use social media as their marketing tool (Kami akan mengesyorkan syarikat lain untuk menggunakan media sosial sebagai alat pemasaran mereka)					
4. We feel that we should use social media marketing more in our marketing campaign (Syarikat patut lebihkan penggunaan media sosial dalam kempen-kempen pemasaran syarikat kami)					
5. Not enough time & resources as well as insufficient knowledge on how to use social media marketing are among the reasons why we don't optimize the use of social media as marketing tool (Tidak cukup masa & sumber spt. staff, peralatan, kewangan dll. juga kekurangan pengetahuan yang mencukupi berkenaan pemasaran media sosial adalah antara penyebab kenapa kami tidak dapat mengoptimalkan penggunaan media sosial sebagai alat pemasaran)					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION