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IMPROVING BRAND AWARENESS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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Executive summary

This research has been conducted for the company Santa Fe Amsterdam in order to gain more brand awareness through the use of social media. Santa Fe Relocation is a multi-location company that helps with the relocation of expats worldwide. Santa Fe Relocation provides destination services, moving services, and immigration services to these expats. For the purpose of this thesis, the focus has been laid on the office located in the Netherlands, also known as Santa Fe Amsterdam. Even though the company provides its services to the expats, Santa Fe Amsterdam's main customers are corporations that hire the expats from abroad. The corporations fund the relocation of the expats they hire. In recent years, the Netherlands has seen a significant increase in expats, meaning the demand for relocation companies has risen. In 2014, there were approximately 300 relocation companies. In 2019, this number has risen to 590 (Trompert, S., 2019). For this reason, it is hard for Santa Fe Amsterdam to stand out. Therefore, the company has requested a research on how they can gain more brand awareness. Since brand awareness can be best achieved through the use of social media (Neti, S., 2011), this thesis focuses particularly on social media as a medium to create brand awareness. In order to help answer the research question, the following three sub-questions had been developed:

1. What are the characteristics of strong brands?
2. What are the steps to improve brand awareness?
3. Which social media platforms are most popular and influential as a branding tool?

The answers to these sub-questions subsequently provided an answer to the central research question: **"How can Santa Fe Amsterdam improve its brand awareness through the use of social media?"**. In order to answer the research questions, the author conducted qualitative and quantitative research in order to gather primary data. Qualitative research has been conducted in the form of structured interviews with three Santa Fe Amsterdam employees. Quantitative research has been conducted in the form of an anonymous questionnaire which was distributed online. In answering the sub-questions, it has become apparent that Santa Fe Amsterdam lacks characteristics that make a brand strong. Additionally, Santa Fe Amsterdam as a local entity of Santa Fe worldwide does not have presence on social media. This means that the company is neglecting a medium that provides a lot of opportunities to increase brand awareness (Neti, S., 2011). Lastly, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are the most popular and actively used social media platforms (Clement, J., 2020). Looking at the research conducted, it has become clear that Santa Fe Amsterdam cannot improve its brand awareness online unless they create presence on social media. Furthermore, Santa Fe Amsterdam's brand awareness could also be improved by enhancing aspects that have nothing to do with social media, such as improving the quality of the services provided.

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1. Introduction

1.1 General introduction

Nowadays, there are many brands that offer the same products and services. Subsequently, companies have to generate a liking for their brands in the minds of the customers. When a customer wants to buy a product or service, the first brand that pops into their mind has the highest brand awareness in that product or service category (Macdonald, E.K., Sharp, B.M., 2000). Keller (1993) describes brand awareness as the ability of consumers to recognise or identify a brand. The author states that a high level of brand recognition can influence the product or service choice of the consumer in an environment where multiple brands are displayed. According to Keller (1993), brand awareness is highly important for companies for three reasons:

1. It is of importance that when consumers think of a product or service category, they should think about your brand first. By raising brand awareness, this increases the probability of the brand being included in the consideration set. The brands that are included in the consumers' consideration set, receive serious consideration of being purchased.

2. Brand awareness can influence decisions about brands in the consideration set, even if the consumer has no other brand associations. For example, it has been shown that consumers follow a decision rule which means that they only buy well-known and strong brands. In decision settings that require low involvement, a minimal level of brand awareness may be satisfactory for product or service choice, even without the presence of a well-formed attitude. Otherwise said, if a brand has some level of awareness in the consumer's mind, it is likely that the consumer will buy the brand just because they know it.

3. Brand awareness influences the consumer decision-making process by altering the strength and formation of brand associations in the brand image. An important aspect for creating brand image is that a brand node has been entrenched in the consumer's memory. The nature of the brand node may influence how effortlessly information can become connected to the brand in the consumer's memory (Keller, K.L., 1993).

As one can see above, a high level of brand awareness can, amongst others, affect the consumers' purchasing decisions. Consequently, this leads to a higher market share and better evaluations of the brand's quality (Dodds, W.B., Grewal, D., Monroe, K.B., 1991).

Today, one of the most important tasks for companies is to create and enhance its brand awareness. Enhancing brand awareness has a significant role in today's marketing environment. Powerful brand awareness can develop a competitive advantage for a company which also enhances the reputation and credibility of a company (Islam, M., Latif, W., Noor, I., 2014). Developing profits is

one of the leading goals for companies, which can be achieved by growing sales. Having strong brand awareness results in having a good reputation and credibility, which in turn helps the company to begin to exist in potential consumers' consideration set. Consequently, this can lead to more sales and subsequently to more profit. If a product, service, company or brand does not have recognition, potential consumers do not have information on how and where to meet their needs. For that reason, one can argue that brand awareness is very critical from a business' point of view. Without brand awareness, a company will not generate profit, which is their main goal (Dodds, M., Swayne, L.E., 2011).

There are several marketing strategies designed for improving brand awareness, some examples include sponsoring, event and/or sports marketing, advertising through traditional media such as the newspaper, television, and radio, etc. However, a global study produced by Weber Shandwick and Forbes Insights shows that more than 50% of brand reputation is a result from online sociability. Meaning that a brand gains a lot of awareness by being active on social media platforms (Weber Shandwick, 2011). In recent years, social media platforms have become the go-to tool for making your brand known. Research shows that social media platforms operate as an extension of a company's own website. These platforms are powerful tools for generating sales, driving traffic to the brand's website, customer engagement and conversions. Therefore, they are effective tools for building brand awareness (Barreda, A.A., Bilgihan, A., Nusair, K., Okumus, F., 2015).

Additionally, social media is perceived as a dynamic instrument in everyday life. Social media are constantly searching and sharing a lot of information (Hinton, S., Hjorth, L., 2013). Back in the day, social media was mostly used in order to share content of one's private life. However, recently, social media are becoming a critical instrument for corporations that are interested in producing economic benefits with the use of creative communication and better public engagement. Due to the fact that social media platforms are easily accessible, it is possible for companies to reach a wider scope of customers than they have ever had before (Haenlein, M., Kaplan, A.M., 2010). The fast-moving development of social media and its worldwide popularity across companies as well as individuals began to draw researchers', practitioners' and scholars' attention (Dabrowski, D., Schivinski, B., 2015).

Since brand awareness is an important objective for corporations, and since social media is an effective and dynamic medium, one can argue that using social media in order to build brand awareness can be seen as one of the most effective strategies for corporations to achieve that. This will be investigated on the company Santa Fe Relocation Services, which will be called Santa Fe from this point forward.

1.1.1 Introduction to Santa Fe Relocation Services

Santa Fe helps its customers relocate from one place to another, whether the relocation is in the same country or to another country. Santa Fe's customers are predominantly corporations that hire employees from abroad and who need help with relocating these employees. Santa Fe's core competence is to provide services to these companies and their employees that are relocating and settling-in in a new place (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020). Santa Fe has offices in 47 countries which are spread out over the six continents (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020). In general, the company offers the following services: relocation and destination services, visa and immigration services, moving services, and consulting services. Below one can find an overview of what these services include.

Relocation and destination services
The relocation and destination services include an area orientation, otherwise known as a "look-see visit" or a "preview trip". On this trip, the employee gains more perspective of the new location in which they can get an idea for home and school searches. Once the employees are confident about where they would like to live, Santa Fe offers home search and real estate services. The company helps the employee with finding temporary housing, finding a suitable home, tenancy management and property management. Once the employees are in the destination countries, the company offers settling-in assistance. This includes aiding the employees with their registration, getting a bank account, finding a doctor and a dentist practice, etc. The services mentioned above are the most common services used (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020).

Visa and immigration services
Relocating employees from one country to another often brings along immigration aspects. Therefore, Santa Fe offers the following services in order to make the immigration process of the employee as easy as possible: visa and immigration consulting, assistance with obtaining business visas, residence permits and work permits, consular services, re-entry permits, notarisation of documents, locally required registration, and translations (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020).

Moving services
Santa Fe offers several moving services. First of all, the company offers domestic move assistance. This includes a pre-move consultation, in-home survey, professional packing service, transportations and delivery and full unpacking service. Additionally, clients can also choose add-ons such as storage, shipment protection, pet relocation, etc. (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020) Santa Fe can also assist in international moves. This includes a pre-move consultation, in-home survey, packing services, transport via air, sea or road, customs clearance and delivery and unpacking.

All the services that are included in the domestic move assistance, are also included in the international move assistance. As with the domestic move assistance, one can choose to include several add-ons, including vehicle shipping or car rental/purchase, pet relocation, shipment protection, storage, etc. (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020). In addition, Santa Fe can also provide storage solutions to customers. If one is in between homes, the company can offer short-term storage facilities (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020).

Consulting service

Santa Fe offers relocation and consulting services to corporations and their employees. These services include global assignee management, assignment administration, programme planning, supply chain management, financial management and global mobility consulting (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020).

Santa Fe's mission is to provide exceptional relocation experiences for its customers. The company says to be very focused on their customers' success and relocation experience. Santa Fe's vision is for all of their customers to be able to completely live the experience of their relocation. The company intends to achieve their mission and vision by following their core values, which include people, drive, quality and integrity (Santa Fe Relocation, 2020).

Santa Fe has elevated its position into a world-leading moving and relocation services provider with offices in 47 countries across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and North America. Santa Fe in the Netherlands, from now on called Santa Fe Amsterdam, is categorised under Santa Fe Europe. The main focus of this thesis will be on Santa Fe Amsterdam.

1.2 Problem definition

Today, more and more companies are interested in hiring knowledge migrants to fulfil certain positions. However, relocating an employee from abroad to the Netherlands brings along a considerable process. Therefore, most corporations hire a relocation company that helps the employees relocate to the Netherlands. Since there is an increase in corporations hiring knowledge workers from abroad, there is an increase in demand for relocation companies as well. This consequently means that there is an increase in competition for the relocation companies in the Netherlands. According to RTL Z, the amount of companies that provide services to expats in the Netherlands has increased rapidly in the past years. In 2014, there were approximately 300 expat companies. In 2019, this number has risen to around 590 expat companies (Trompert, S., 2019). As a result, it is becoming more difficult for Santa Fe Amsterdam to stand out.

In an interview with the manager ▮▮▮▮▮▮, at Santa Fe Amsterdam, various matters were discussed that could be done better by the company. First, the services of Santa Fe Amsterdam were discussed and how they could be improved. However, after elaborating on this, one concluded that only slight improvements had to be made and this would not result in Santa Fe Amsterdam standing out in the Dutch relocation market as it would be more internally focussed. Next, the author and ▮▮▮▮▮▮ discussed about how Santa Fe Amsterdam could improve its website and with that increasing the search engine optimisation. However, after further discussing this, one noted that Santa Fe Amsterdam already had been working on this and developed a search engine optimisation strategy already. This means that the thesis would not be of any use to Santa Fe Amsterdam. Later, it was argued that Santa Fe Amsterdam had to be more visible and well-known in order to stand out on the Dutch relocation market. In order to increase the company's visibility, it was discussed that Santa Fe Amsterdam's brand awareness should be increased in order to become more well-known on the relocation market. Additionally, it was also discussed that social media is a tool that can give a company a lot of awareness online. Therefore, as there are many ways to increase brand awareness, the company suggested that the focus should be on increasing brand awareness with the use of social media ▮▮▮▮▮▮., personal communication, January 15, 2020).

Considering the information mentioned above, the following central research question has been developed:

"How can Santa Fe Amsterdam improve its brand awareness through the use of social media?"

In order to help answer the central research question, the following sub-questions have been formed:
1. What are the characteristics of strong brands?
2. What are the steps to improve brand awareness?
3. Which social media platforms are most popular and influential as a branding tool?

1.3 Purpose

The aim of this thesis is to determine the effectiveness of social media as an instrument for building a company's brand awareness. The thesis is intended as a study based on the literature written by several researchers on topics such as branding, brand awareness, social media and other relating concepts. Additionally, it will also be discussed which social media platforms should be considered in order for Santa Fe Amsterdam to support a new way of information sharing to innovate and adjust their promotional and communication methods.

1.4 Limitations

A few limitations might arise during the conduction of this research. First of all, an online questionnaire was conducted in order to collect primary data. This method allows only a small portion of the online population to participate in the questionnaire because the distribution of the questionnaire got confined to certain social media platforms. Secondly, due to a limited timeframe, only a limited number of respondents were able to answer the questionnaire, meaning that the sample size might not represent the general population's opinion. Furthermore, the aim of this thesis is to research how Santa Fe Amsterdam can improve its brand awareness with the use of social media, however, there might be other aspects, besides social media, that could be improved in order to gain more brand awareness. Lastly, due to Covid-19, it was difficult to find suitable subjects to interview. Therefore, three employees of Santa Fe Amsterdam were interviewed, even though actual customers of Santa Fe Amsterdam would provide greater results for the purpose of this research.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Branding

Branding is one of the most important elements of business strategy. Branding is not a recently discovered concept, however, one might still find it difficult to comprehend. It can be considered a difficult concept because many people consider branding as an advertising function only. Additionally, many business authors and managers think of branding as the management of product or service image. Although this is included in branding, it is merely a small part of it (Holt, D.B., n.d.). According to Holt (n.d.) branding can be seen from different perspectives:

- Branding should be a strategic point of view instead of a chosen set of activities
- Branding does not only consist of images, it is the path to creating customer value
- Branding is an important aspect of generating and sustaining competitive advantage
- Brands should be acknowledged as cultures circulating in society
- In order for brands to be successful, brand strategies must address the four particular elements of brand value
- Brand strategies should be integrated into the marketing mix

According to Sammut-Bonnici (2015): *"A brand can be defined as a set of tangible and intangible attributes designed to create awareness and identity, and to build the reputation of a product, service, person, place, or organization."* Branding, on the other hand, can be described as a long-term strategy and is comprised of a wide range of activities varying from product or service innovation to marketing communications. The purpose of branding strategies are to design brands that differ from their competitors and consequently decreasing the amount of alternatives on the market (Sammut-Bonnici, T., 2015).

In order to gain a better understanding of branding, Kotler's (2016) 6-step branding conceptual model will be introduced and briefly discussed. The model can be found below in figure 2.1.
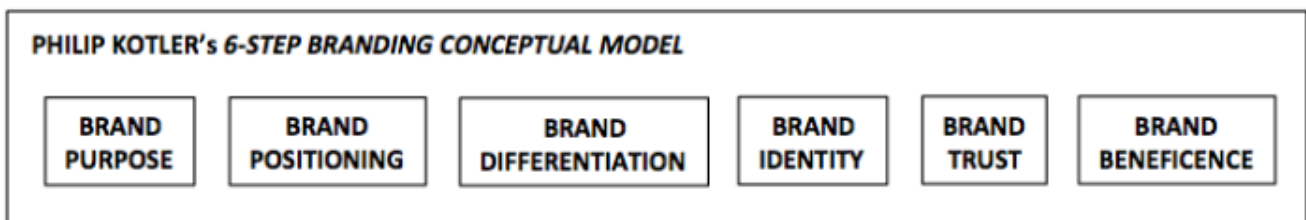

Figure 2. 1 Philip Kotler's 6-step Branding Conceptual Model. Reprinted from "Branding: From Purpose to Beneficence" by Kotler, P., 2016 (https://www.marketingjournal.org/brand-purpose-to-beneficence-philip-kotler/). Copyright 2016-19 by The Marketing Journal

Kotler (2016) states that the 6-step branding conceptual model is highly relevant for marketing in the ever evolving digital and social media of today. Kotler adds that the conceptual model is not just referring to generic brand building that are used by most companies, instead it is completely reconsidering the branding process. Usually, when building a brand, most companies start with developing their brand identity, such as the name and the logo, however, Kotler states that companies should start with developing the brand's purpose. The brand's purpose represents the existence of the brand and what it stands for. Once a company has developed a purpose and identified that there might be more companies with that brand purpose, they should then develop their positioning and differentiation strategies (Kotler, P., 2016). According to Kotler (1997) positioning can be described as the valued place the brand takes in consumers' minds. Differentiation, on the other hand, exists when a certain brand's products or services are preferred over those of the competitors (Dawes, J., Sharp, B., 2001). Positioning and differentiation can aid companies to better get their brand purposes across, and, additionally, to improve the brand image. Subsequently, the following step focuses on the development of the brand identity (Kotler, P., 2016). According to Dovaliené and Janonis (2007), brand identity contains everything that makes a brand significant and unique. After the brand identity is developed, a company should focus on gaining brand trust. In order to influence a consumer's perception of the brand, a company needs credibility. Companies can build brand trust by delivering the promise that they make to the consumers. The final step of the model is brand beneficence, meaning whether or not a brand cares and acts responsibly. A brand should mean well for its consumers and society (Kotler, P., 2016).

2.2 Brand equity

In order to completely understand the concept of brand awareness, it is important to fully understand the concept of brand equity. Additionally, brand awareness is among the brand equity factors created by Aaker and Biel. Aaker was one of the first marketers that came up with the term equity and defined it as the complete value that a brand represents, not just monetary value. The concept of brand equity was established in the 1980s and has been an interesting concept for business strategists and marketing managers ever since (Aaker, D., Biel, A., 1993).

As reported by Aaker and Biel (1993) brand equity can be viewed from different perspectives, namely the corporate's perspective, the managerial perspective and the consumer's perspective. From the corporate's perspective, brand equity is *"the future discounted value of the profit stream that can be attributed to the price premium or enhanced loyalty generated by the brand name"* (Aaker, D., Biel, A., 1993). From the managerial perspective, brand equity is seen as a notion that includes five dimensions, which are: brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and other proprietary brand assets. And, lastly, from the consumer's perspective, brand

equity can be seen as the additional value to the product or service through association with the brand name (Aaker, D., Biel, A., 1993).

Differently, Armstrong and Kotler (2015) define brand equity as: *"the differential effect that knowing the brand name has on customer response to the product or its marketing."* It is a way to measure a brand's ability to catch consumer loyalty and preference. One knows that a brand has positive brand equity when consumers respond more approvingly to it than to a general or an un-branded variant of the product or service. On the other hand, a brand has negative brand equity when consumers respond less enthusiastically to it than to a generic or un-branded variant. High brand equity gives a company many advantages. A brand with a high level of power enjoys a high level of brand awareness and loyalty among its consumers (Armstrong, G., Kotler, P., 2015).

Today, marketing communication is substantially different than a few years ago. A lot has changed in regards to technology and the Internet and it still is changing. At the same time, branding has become an important aspect for companies and their marketing process. Nowadays, it is crucial to comprehend how corporations have to build themselves at first, and then how they should be handled in the marketing communications situation of today. Recently, intangible value brought by brands has become extremely important, and with it the concept of brand equity (Keller, K.L., 2009).

Otherwise said, brand equity includes the recognition a brand obtains, which is gained over a period of time. When positive brand equity is developed by a corporation, it usually notices a rise in profits. The rise in profits is a consequence of the increased probability of buying the product or service by consumers. The consumers are more familiar with the brand, product or company. As the awareness of the brand rises, merchants often attempt to get the consumers into a increased level of commitment. The merchants try to position the products or services in a manner that consumers respond more favourably towards them instead of other products or services in the same category (Dodds, M., Swayne, L.E., 2011).

2.2.1 Customer-based brand equity

Marketing communications can aid in successful branding and creating positive brand equity in many ways. In order to gain understanding of the various ways of marketing communications to build a powerful brand, Keller (2009) created a brand equity model called the customer-based brand equity model which is shown in figure 2.2. In the model, Keller (2009) argues that brand equity is greatly driven by the familiarity of the brand that is supposed to be created in the mind of the consumer by using various marketing strategies. The author defines customer-based brand

equity as *"the differential effect that consumer knowledge about the brand has on their response to marketing for that brand"* (Keller, K.L., 1993). Customer-based brand equity occurs when potential customers are acquainted with a brand and have powerful, rare and positive brand associations. As mentioned earlier, a company has positive customer-based brand equity when consumers are responding more favourably to products or services from that brand than to other general or un-branded products or services in that category (Keller, K.L. 1993). Brand knowledge, an aspect of customer-based brand equity, does not solely include details about the brands, but additionally includes all the images, thoughts, feelings, perceptions and experiences that might be connected to the brand. The earlier mentioned aspects can be seen as a set of associations to the brand in the consumer's mind (Keller, K.L., 2009). Brand knowledge includes two important aspects, which are brand image and brand awareness. Brand image can be explained as the attitude towards a brand in the consumer's mind and the preference for one which are considered by several brand associations in the mind of the consumer. If the associations are rare, powerful and preferred they will be an important aspect in the consumer's decision-making process. Brand awareness, on the other hand, is linked to the power of brand fragments in the minds of customers, these fragments are echoed by the customers' ability of recalling and recognising the particular brand in different situations (Keller, K.L., 2009).

2.2.2 The customer-based brand equity model

Previously, elaboration was given on how brand equity might aid a corporation in becoming stronger and more prosperous. As having positive brand equity results in many benefits, corporations are stimulated to create it. However, gaining positive brand equity sometimes brings along a lengthy and difficult process. The customer-based brand equity model was developed in order to better understand the characteristics of a strong brand and how to establish it. The model aids in understanding what brand equity is, together with how to build, manage and measuring it (Keller, K.L., 2001). Since the creation of the model in 2001, Keller elaborated it to give a better understanding on how brands should be created in regards to consumer knowledge structures (Keller, K.L., 2009). One can find the updated model in figure 2.2 below.
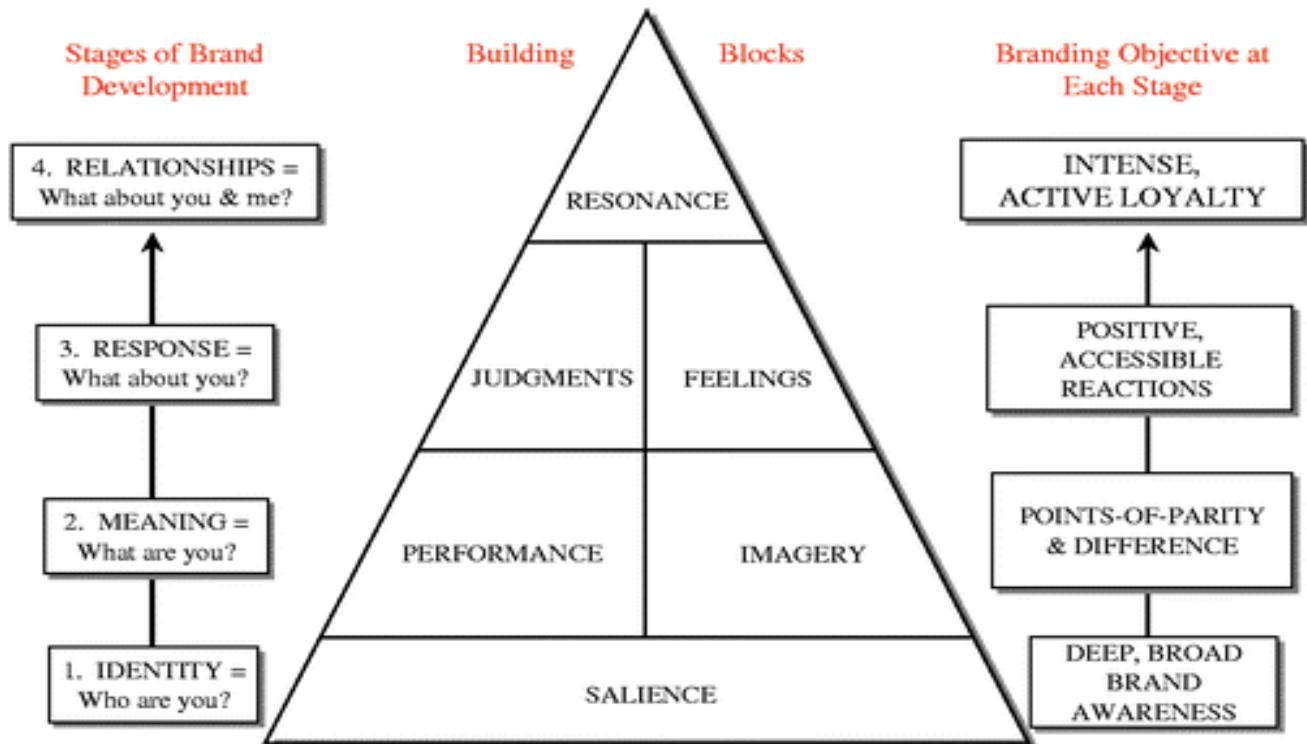
Figure 2. 2 The customer-based brand equity model. Reprinted from "Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment" by Keller, K.L., 2009, Journal of Marketing Communications, 15, p. 144. Copyright 2009 by Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

The process of establishing a strong brand is split up in four stages, it is of significance to note that every stage is dependent on successful achievement of the former stage. As one can see in figure 2.2 above, there are several steps in order to create a strong brand. The steps are described below:

1. To establish brand identification with consumers and association of the brand in the consumers' minds with a distinct consumer need or product class.

2. To ensure the completeness of brand meaning in consumers' minds by cleverly linking a host of intangible and tangible associations to the brand.

3. To draw out the appropriate consumer responses in regards to brand-related feelings and judgment.

4. To change the brand response in order to establish an active and deep loyalty relationship between the brand and the consumers (Keller, K.L., 2009).

The abovementioned stages of the customer-based brand equity model are paired with four important questions which are asked by consumers about the brand. The first question refers to brand identity: Who are you? Before a company can gain brand identity, it should first establish brand salience with its consumers. Brand salience can be described as how effortlessly and frequently customers think about the brand in various purchasing situations (Keller, K.L., 2009). Brand salience is linked to certain factors of brand awareness. Establishing brand awareness

includes ensuring that consumers understand the product or service category in which the brand is competing. Additionally, there have to be clear links to various other products or services that are being sold under the brand name. Creating brand awareness additionally means guaranteeing that consumers understand which of their needs the brand is designed to please through these products and services (Keller, K.L., 2001). The two key criteria of brand awareness are depth and breadth. Depth of brand awareness meaning how effortlessly consumers can recognise or recall a brand, and breadth of brand awareness meaning the scope of consumption and purchase situations in which the brand comes to memory. A brand that has high brand salience also obtains deep and broad brand awareness, meaning that consumers often purchase enough and think of the brand in various situations in which the brand can be consumed. However, often it is not only the depth of brand awareness that is important, the breadth of brand awareness is just as important. Otherwise said, it is very critical where and when consumers think of a brand as well as how frequently and how effortlessly they think of the brand. This is because many brands and products are often forgotten in some situations. By increasing the brand salience, the consumption can be increased together with its sales volume (Keller, K.L., 2001).

The second question refers to brand meaning: What are you? Brand salience solely is not sufficient in building brand equity. The meaning of a brand is also an important aspect for consumers. Establishing brand meaning includes creating a brand image. Brand image can be described as what typifies the brand and what it stands for in the consumers' minds. Brand meaning consists of two large categories of brand associations that live in the minds of the consumers, which are related to performance and imagery. The associations can be created directly from a consumer's personal experiences with the brand, or the associations can be created indirectly by advertisements, via word-of-mouth, etc. (Keller, K.L., 2001).

The first brand association is brand performance. Brand performance can be described as how well a product or service meets the consumers' functional needs. The product or service is closely linked to brand equity because it is the first influence that the consumers encounter with the brand, what they hear about it, and what the company tells the consumers about it. A product or service should be delivered and designed so that it completely satisfies the needs of the consumers, because this can highly influence the marketing success of a brand. In order to develop high brand loyalty and resonance, it is highly important that the product or service does not solely meet the expectations of the consumers, but it should exceed them. Regarding brand performance, this is the way the product or service aspires to meet the functional needs of the consumers. In other words, brand performance regards to the intrinsic properties of the brand concerning product or service characteristics (Keller, K.L., 2001).

The second brand association of brand meaning is brand imagery. Brand imagery concerns the extrinsic properties of the product or service, which includes the way how the brand tries to meet the consumers' social or psychological needs. One can explain brand imagery as how consumers think about a brand instead of what they think that the brand does. Brand imagery is more focused on the intangible features of a brand. Various intangibles can be connected to a brand, however, four types can be distinguished:

1. User profiles – The type of consumer or organisation that utilises the brand

2. Purchase and usage situations – The conditions in which the particular brand could be purchased and utilised

3. Personality and values – Brands can adopt personality traits and values like people. Examples of such personality traits and values are excitement, sincerity, sophistication, etc.

4. History, heritage and experiences – Brands can develop associations with their past and with particular important events in the history of the brand (Keller, K.L., 2001).

The brand associations can be characterised into three crucial dimensions, which are strength, uniqueness and favourability. When the three dimensions have successful results, it might aid in producing positive brand responses (Keller, K.L., 2001).

The third question refers to brand responses: What about you? Brand responses can be described as how do consumers react to the brand (Keller, K.L., 2001). As one can see in figure 2.2, brand response is split up between brand judgments and brand feelings. Meaning that brand responses can be diversified relying on whether they come from the head or the heart. Brand judgments concentrates on the consumers' personal evaluations and opinions about the particular brand. Generally, consumers form all kinds of judgments in regards to a brand, however, in order to establish a strong brand, four kinds of judgments are especially important:

1. Brand quality – The perceived quality of the brand by consumers

2. Brand credibility – To which extent the brand is perceived as credible depending on three dimensions: perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and likability

3. Brand consideration – The chance that consumers will really include the brand in their collection of brand they may actually purchase or use.

4. Brand superiority – To which extent the consumers perceive the brand as one of a kind and superior to other brands (Keller, K.L., 2001).

Brand feelings, on the other hand, can be described as the consumers' emotional reactions towards the brand. These feelings towards the brand can range from mild to intense, positive or negative. Keller (2001) has distinguished six significant types of feelings that aid in building the brand:

1. Warmth – To which extent does the brand make the consumers experience a feeling of peacefulness.
2. Fun – Consumers can feel playful, amused, light-hearted, etc. about a brand
3. Excitement – To which extent does the brand make the consumers feel energised.
4. Security – When the brand generates a feeling of self-assurance, comfort and safety in the consumer
5. Social approval – When the brand makes the consumers feel positive about themselves. Meaning that consumers are feeling that other people are positive about their appearance, behaviour, etc.
6. Self-respect – When the brand gives the consumers a sense of accomplishment, pride or fulfilment (Keller, K.L., 2001).

Despite the fact that many types of brand responses are possible, from both the heart and the head, it is highly important that these responses are positive. Also, it is critical that these responses are accessible and should be coming to the consumers mind whenever they think about the brand (Keller, K.L., 2001).

Lastly, the fourth question refers to brand relationships: What about you & me? The final step concentrates on the relationship and level of identification that the consumers have with the brand. In other words, brand resonance can be described as the nature of the relationship consumers have with the brand. Brand resonance is distinguished by the intensity of the psychological connection between the consumers and brand. Brand resonance can be categorised into four classifications:

1. Behavioural loyalty – Repeat purchasing by consumers and the amount of category they attributed to the brand.
2. Attitudinal attachment – Behavioural loyalty solely is not enough for brand resonance to happen. In order to build resonance, consumers must have a strong personal attachment to the brand as well. The brand must become special to the consumers.
3. Sense of community – Identification with a community makes consumers feel affinity with other consumers related to the brand.
4. Active engagement – This occurs when consumers are willing to devote time, money, energy, or other resources into the brand that go further than purchasing or consuming the brand (Keller, K.L., 2001).

Brand relationships can be classified into two dimensions: activity and intensity. Activity regards to how often consumers purchase and utilise the brand, together with other activities that are not connected to the consumption and purchase. On the other hand, intensity regards to the attitudinal attachment and strength of the sense of community (Keller, K.L., 2001).

All the steps mentioned earlier are in order, one step has to be achieved before being able to go to the following step. Therefore, brand meaning cannot be accomplished without a proper identity in the consumers' minds first. The same goes for responses, brand responses cannot be established without having an appropriate brand meaning. And lastly, brand relationships cannot be established without achieving positive brand responses from the consumers first (Kotler, K.L., 2001).

The customer-based brand equity model pyramid created by Keller accentuates a brand's duality. In figure 2.2, on the left side one can see the rational side of building a strong brand, the four steps that have been described previously. The right side of the model represents the emotional side of building a strong brand. In order for a company to build strong brand equity, they have to reach the top of pyramid, which is brand resonance. However, a company can only achieve this level if all the other building blocks are built accordingly. As one can see in figure 2.2, the six building blocks include: salience, performance, imagery, judgments, feelings and resonance (Keller, K.L., 2009).

Brand resonance demonstrates the passionate psychological bond that the brand has with its consumers. Moreover, it also demonstrates the level of activity that happens due to this loyalty. Some service and product categories are able to gain more resonance than others, which is due to the high level of activities and interest. An example of brands with high brand resonance include Apple, Harley-Davidson, eBay, etc. (Keller, K.L., 2009).

2.3 Brand awareness

Primarily, companies aim to develop profits, this is achieved by rising sales. Companies want to attract new consumers daily and encourage them to make repetitive purchases. However, for this to happen, consumers need to be aware of the brand. Brand awareness can be described as how aware are customers, as well as potential customers, of a particular company, brand and its products and or services (Chabot, B., Gustafson, T., 2007). An example of a product that has exceptionally high brand awareness is the iPhone. According to surveys, approximately 90% of the American consumers were familiar with the product only a week after Apple released it. Apple achieved this result by news reports and, most effectively, by advertising. Otherwise said, having brand

awareness essentially implies that a brand is easily recognisable, well-known, or even famous under consumers. In order for a company to differentiate its brand and the products or services from the competition, it is highly crucial to create brand awareness (Chabot, B., Gustafson, T., 2007). If consumers are not aware of a brand, they will not have the information on how to satisfy their needs. For this reason, it can be concluded that brand awareness is a very important aspect for companies as they would not generate profit without it (Dodds, M., Swayne, L.E., 2011).

According to Tarigan and Tritama (2016) brand awareness is the ability of potential consumers to acknowledge and recall that a linkage is present between a brand and a particular product or service class. However, this link does not have to be significant. Brand awareness includes a wide range from a feeling of uncertainty that a brand has been recognised before to the belief that the brand is the only one in the product or service class (Aaker, D.A., 1991). One can see this range of brand awareness levels in figure 2.3 below.

Figure 2. 3 The awareness pyramid. Reprinted from Managing Brand Equity (P. 62), by D.A. Aaker, 1991, The Free Press. Copyright 1991 by David A. Aaker

As one can see the pyramid is divided into four phases of awareness, which are: unaware of brand, brand recognition, brand recall, and top of mind. The lowest level of brand awareness is brand recognition which is based on an aided recall test. The aided recall test can be described as a group of certain brand names from a certain product group is shown to consumers and they point out the recognised brands. Aided recall is particularly of importance when a consumer chooses a brand during the process of purchase. The next level of brand awareness is brand recall, also known as unaided recall. The recall is unaided because, unlike in the brand recognition level, the consumer is not aided by having certain brand names in the product group provided. Unaided recall is significantly more difficult than aided recall and is linked with a stronger position of the brand.

Lastly, the highest level of brand awareness is top of mind. The first brand that is mentioned by a consumer in an unaided recall test has climbed up to the top of the awareness pyramid as their brand was the first brand to pop into the consumer's mind (Aaker, D.A., 1991).

Recognition aids a brand in various ways. A company must develop a brand that is recognisable in order to establish effective communication with its consumers. Without recognition, consumers will have a hard time connecting the brand to different attributes, as well as being able to connect it to a particular product or service category. Additionally, recognition gives the brand a feeling of familiarity, which is a feeling that gives consumers the confidence of taking a risk, even if this means that their needs might not be satisfied. Familiarity is usually enough for consumers when deciding which brand they want to buy, especially in regards to the low-involvement products like everyday goods. Brand awareness may also work as a sign of existence. If consumers are aware of a brand because of its wide distribution or aggressive marketing, they would, possibly, conclude that the brand stems from a successful corporation. And since the corporation is successful, other consumers must be utilising their products or services too. These kind of feelings and thoughts toward a brand can make consumers feel safe about a purchase, especially if they are in need of a certain product or service for the first time (Aaker, D.A., 1991).

2.3.1 Achieving brand awareness

If a company wants to achieve brand awareness, it should engage two responsibilities, which are obtaining brand name identity together with linking it to the product or service group. This is especially important when a brand is completely new on the market. According to Aaker (1991), the following factors are crucial in achieving brand awareness:

- Be different, memorable: nowadays, many products and services appear similar to consumers and companies are choosing the same communication approaches, which makes it difficult for the company to stand out. For that reason, it is important for a brand to differentiate its products and services, however, the company does have to keep in mind that having a clear link between the brand and the product group is of significant importance. Aaker (1991) gives a perfect example of why this is important: "Putting a car on top of an isolated mountain, for example, may be memorable but the audience may have trouble recalling which car was placed on the mountain top."

- Involve a slogan or jingle: once companies use a slogan or jingle, there may be a more secure linkage since it gives a visual characteristic of the brand. According to Aaker (1991) research has shown that a "catchy" jingle is of significant importance in explaining why some novel products and services obtained higher levels of recall than other products.

- Symbol exposure: having a well-known symbol can help a company achieve and maintain brand awareness because a visual illustration is easy to remember and to recall.

- Publicity: advertising can help a company with creating awareness since it is an effective way to obtain exposure.

- Event sponsorship: usually, companies sponsor in order to establish or maintain brand awareness. Most companies sponsor large events because they generate exposure from many viewers.

- Consider brand extensions: when companies put their names or logo's on other products, they gain brand recall (Aaker, D.A., 1991). Take for example the brand Colgate. Colgate originally focussed on producing toothpaste, however, one needs a toothbrush in order to use toothpaste. Hence, Colgate started to produce toothbrushes as well which increased its brand recall (Chi, C., 2019).

- Using cues: brand awareness can be gained by the use of cues of the product group, the brand or both. A cue that is especially useful is packaging, because that is the first thing a consumer sees when buying a product.

- Recall requires repetition: building recognition is considerably more easy than building recall. As Aaker (1991) mentions: "It is a bit like the fact that we recognise the face but cannot recall the name." In order to build recall of a brand, it requires many repetitions or a significant learning experience. While brand recognition is usually achieved after being exposed a few times.

- The recall bonus: by achieving and maintaining a significant top-of-mind awareness by a high level of exposure does not only create brand awareness, it also creates brand salience which can hinder the recall of competitive brands (Aaker, D.A., 1991).

As mentioned above, developing and maintain recall is harder than developing recognition. The link from the product or service class to the brand must be stronger and the name of the brand needs to be more prominent. If a company does not continue to keep the development of the brand going, the brand's recall will in the course of time disappear. Therefore, it is of high importance that companies remind its consumers of their brand and continue to repeat their message so that they can prevent their consumers fading away from them (Aaker, D.A., 1991).

2.4 Branding through social media

Because of the social media development and popularity, many companies became interested in it. The number of people that are present on social media and the continuing growth created a new model for branding activities for businesses (Feng, C., Gao, Q., 2016). A survey done by InSites

Consulting with approximately 9.000 participants from 35 different countries, shows that 50% of the social media users have some kind of link to one or more brands. Additionally, 42% of the users confirmed that they have had a conversation with a brand through social media. Other social media users, namely 36%, admitted to have posted content about a brand or a company. Moreover, the research done by InSites Consulting shows that over 1 billion people worldwide use social media platforms, which makes up more than 70% of the Internet population. Looking only at Europe, 98% of Europeans are familiar with social media. While 73% of Europeans obtain at least a profile on one social media platform, 50% of them are solely active on one platform, which is mainly Facebook (Eenhuizen, M., Van Belleghem, S., Veris, E., 2011).

Because there are so many different social media platforms, companies have the chance to reach a tremendous amount of people from across the world. The results from the survey done by InSites Consulting show that Europeans generally join 1.9 social platforms per person, Americans generally join 2.1 social platforms per person, for Brazilians this number is 3.1, and Indians join even 3.9 social platforms, on average per person (Eenhuizen, M., Van Belleghem, S., Veris, E., 2011).

Figure 2.4 illustrated later in the thesis shows that Facebook has the most active users out of all the social media platforms. As of April 2020, the platform has almost 2.5 billion active users. In Europe alone, in the first quarter of 2020, the number of daily active users of Facebook reached 305 million (Johnson, J., 2020). This shows that Facebook has huge potential for brands to use as a marketing tool as it can reach a large audience across the world. Additionally, every 60 seconds, 400 new users sign up, 317.000 statuses are updated, 147.000 photos are uploaded, and 54.000 links are shared (Omnicore, 2020). These numbers show that Facebook users are constantly growing and are very active and engaged. However, since more and more companies are using Facebook for branding purposes, it is hard for one company's advertisement to stand out. Therefore, companies should post creative content in order to keep the audience interested in their brand (Lawler, K.S., 2020).

Looking at the numbers mentioned above, one can conclude that social media is highly beneficial for companies to use for branding purposes. By companies having a profile on social media platforms, it provides an information point for customers that is updated frequently. Simultaneously, the company gains brand exposure. The ability to have conversations directly with consumers on social media results in a more intimate consumer-brand relationship. Additionally, the quality of consumer communication improves. Lastly, the interactive communication between

the company and the consumer allows for less misunderstanding regarding the brand (Feng, C., Gao, Q., 2016).

Not only do companies benefit from the use of social media, consumers benefit from this as well. By interacting with a company through social media, they attain value before and after they have purchased a product or service. Not only do consumers become more satisfied and loyal, but they also gain relationship benefits after interacting with the brand online (Moustakas, E., 2015).

2.5 Social media

Social media is comprised of two words, which are "social" and "media". The social component refers to the interaction occurring between human beings which, together, form a group or community. On the other hand, media implies the practice of communicating ideas or information through publications or channels. Therefore, one can say that the concept of social media refers to communication and publication platforms which are developed and maintained by individuals' interactions using a specific tool. In easier terms, social media are media for social interactions which is possible through easily accessible publishing techniques. Social media are using web-based technologies to turn basic communication into immersive dialogues (Neti, S., 2011).

According to Oxford's Dictionary, social media are defined as: *"The online and mobile technologies or platforms people use to interact and share content, including social networking sites, social bookmarking and social news sites, geosocial networking sites, blogs, online forums, file-sharing and media-sharing sites, social gaming sites, social commerce sites, virtual worlds, and wikis"* (Chandler, D., Munday, R., 2016). Otherwise, Haenlein and Kaplan (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."*

2.5.1 Social media's role in marketing

The attractiveness of social media is continuously evolving. Today, social media is not only used by individuals, but is increasingly becoming a significant part in the business environment. From a corporate's viewpoint, marketing's most important function is to provide the current and potential customers with information about the company itself and about its products and services. Social media can be a very effective tool for attaining that goal (Neti, S., 2011). In order to give one a clear overview on how important social media is in marketing, several roles of social media in marketing are elaborated below:

- As mentioned earlier, social media can help a company with creating an identity for itself and its products or services.
- Social media aids in generating relationships with individuals that otherwise might have no knowledge of the products or services or of what the company represents.
- Due to social media, a company can be perceived as more real to consumers. If consumers share the same personality with the company, a bond can be created between them.
- Social media can aid companies in associating themselves with their peers that might serve the same target market.
- Social media can be used to communicate with individuals and provide the engagement that they are looking for (Neti, S., 2011).

There are many advantages of using social media by companies. Below one can find why companies should consider social media marketing according to Neti (2011):

- Size: many people use social media networks. In the first quarter of 2020, Facebook alone had over 2.6 billion active users worldwide (Clement, J., 2020). This shows how powerful social media are and that the potential audience you can draw is huge. However, companies should note that these large audiences also bear risks and can be dangerous. In the event of something negative happening, the news spreads quickly and can affect a company's reputation (Neti, S., 2011).
- Transparency: social media offers people the ability to write reviews. Hence, individuals who are familiar with the brand or have purchased their product or service can review their experience with the company and leave a positive or negative review. These reviews are authentic and cannot be controlled by the company. Such word-of-mouth advertisement can give a company a lot of credibility or, on the other hand, a lot of hinder. In addition, by finding reviews written by individuals, consumers can relate to the individuals and trust their experience because it is not written by the company itself. Meaning that a company cannot fake its authenticity (Neti, S., 2011).
- Reach: using social media can aid in globalising a brand faster. The possibility of reaching potential consumers from across the world by using social media is a major benefit for companies. Adding to the fact that using social media is quick, convenient and usually free of charge makes social media a powerful medium that can be used to reach new markets and eventually create a global brand (Neti, S., 2011).
- Boost website traffic: social media are considered to be the simplest and quickest way of redirecting traffic to a company's website. By simply placing the company's official

webpage link on its social media profile, the individuals that visit the company's social media will most likely also visit the website. (Neti, S., 2011).

- Branding: social media is said to be a clever way of building a brand. Social media platforms are among the most powerful and fastest means of branding. Big brands such as Coca Cola and Burger King have powerfully utilised social media platforms in order to support themselves (Neti, S., 2011).

The number of companies that have used social media for business purposes has increased rapidly in recent years. Hence, social media strategies are becoming more refined and diversified. Nowadays, it is assumed that companies cannot thrive on the market without being present on social media since there are a large amount of companies that do use social media to market their product. Therefore, one can conclude that companies cannot allow themselves to not be present on social media as their possibilities could be substantially limited. Nowadays, a great extent of enterprises use social media, whether it be giants like McDonalds or local small enterprises. Social media visibility and interactions are a must for businesses. However, it takes time, effort and experience to be successful in this field. Every company's goal is to achieve survival on the market and social media is giving new chances to establish this goal (Neti, S., 2011).

2.6 Social media marketing

The social media marketing concept aims to use social media to persuade potential customers that the company and its products or services are valuable. One can note that social media marketing is marketing through the use of blogs, social networks, online communities, etc. However, presence only on a social network cannot be defined as social media marketing. This form of marketing is a dynamic, methodical and strategic process with the intent to build a company's reputation, influence and brand amidst possible viewers, clients, supporters or readers in online communities (Neti, S., 2011).

2.6.1 The most favoured social networks

Statista provides free statistics and studies that are analysed from a tremendous amount of sources around the world (Clement, J., 2020). To fully understand how powerful social media can be nowadays, below one can find a statistic in figure 2.4 containing the world's most favoured social networks and how many active users it has.

Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2020, ranked by number of active users

(in millions)
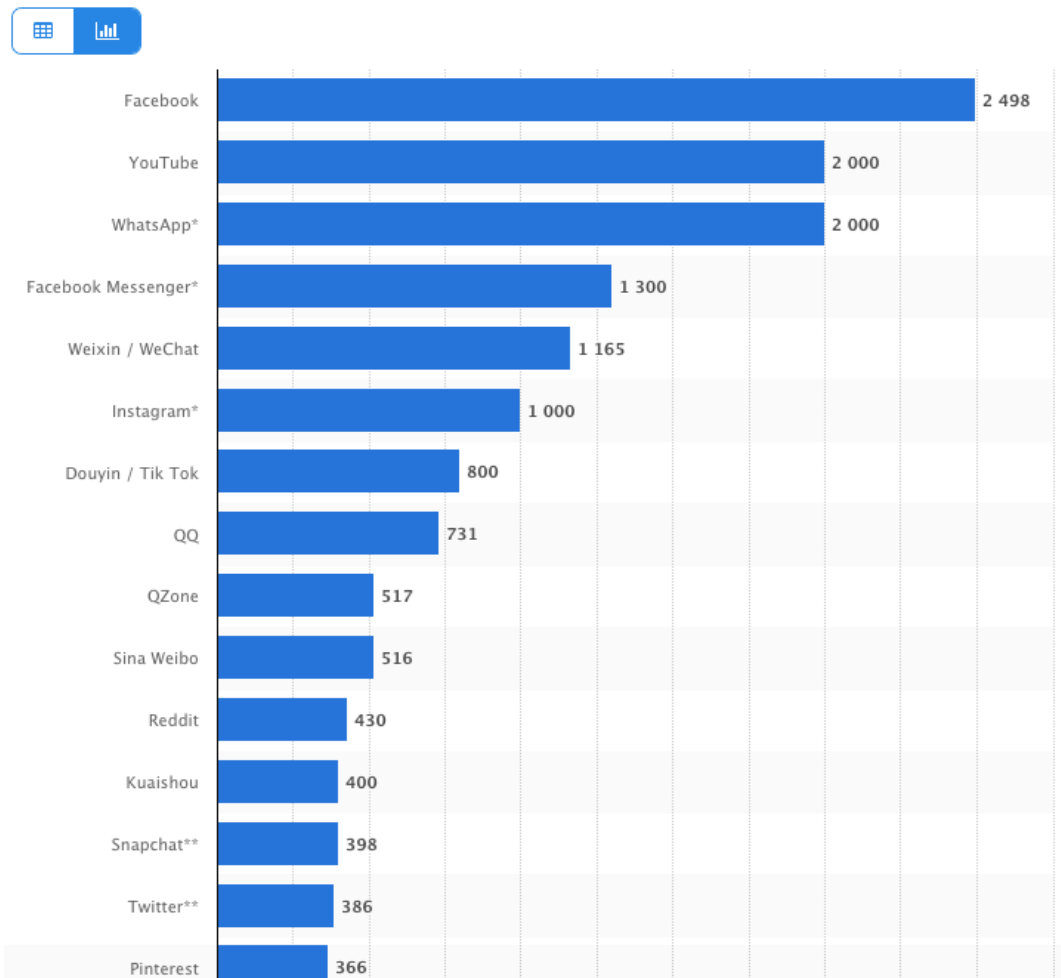
Figure 2. 4 Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2020, ranked by number of active users. Reprinted from "Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2020, ranked by number of active users" by Statista, 2020 (https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/#professional) Copyright 2020 by Statista

As one can see, as of April 2020, the most used social network is Facebook with a number of almost 2,5 billion active users, followed by YouTube and WhatsApp with 2 billion active users. According to Hinton and Hjorth (2013) consumer purchasing behaviour is, without a doubt, highly influenced by the content posted on social media. These days, the platforms of social media have gained the lead in business practices so that they can gain recognition and profitability. In order to support this, the following quotes gathered from several studies is worth looking at:

- "a whopping 81 percent of respondents admitted that recommendations and posts from family and friends directly impacted on their buying decision, while 78 percent of people said that social media posts of companies influence their buying decisions." (Ahmed, M., 2015).

- "Facebook accounts for 50% of total social referrals and 64% of total social revenue." (Smith, C., 2015).
- "84% of millennials say user-generated content from strangers has at least some influence on what they buy." (Pemberton, C., 2016).
- "78% of respondents said the posts by companies they follow on social media impact their purchases." (Olenski, S., 2012).
- "Facebook now influences 52 per cent of consumers' online and off-line purchases, up from 36 per cent in 2014" (McCarthy, J., 2015).

Abovementioned quotes show that social media influences individuals in a positive manner towards companies that are present on social media.

There are three main benefits of social media marketing. Firstly, social media marketing provides a company with several platforms where they can present the firm's products or services to possible clients. In addition, these platforms also provide suggestions, recommendations and complaints from the customer which gives the company an insight. Secondly, social media marketing enables the marketers to find diverse influencers and peers which can result in finding a spokesperson for the brand that can aid in growing the brand. Lastly, social media marketing is usually very low, or non-existent, in costs since most of the social media platforms are free of charge (Neti, S., 2011).

In addition, Neti (2011) states that social media marketing can further help with the following:
- Rise in sales
- Rise in traffic and subscribers
- Decline of marketing costs
- Better result in search engine rankings
- Creating exposure for companies
- Generating new partnerships
- Generating qualified leads as a result of better lead generation efforts.

These days, organisations are increasingly investing in social media marketing, as it might aid in connecting with existing and potential customers. Communication with consumers aids corporations in understanding their needs better. Consequently, the company can improve a product or service in order to coordinate with the consumers' needs. Social media marketing is the most ideal approach to learn about the weaknesses of a product or service and what the expectations are of the consumer (Neti, S., 2011).

Social media is becoming an important aspect in the life of consumers (Haenlein, M., Kaplan, A.M., 2010). Taking into account that all powerful content shared by companies and brands are having an apparent influence on all the stages in the consumer decision-making process, including how information is collected, awareness of the brand, what kind of information is wanted, recommendations and communication after the purchase process. In addition, reviews, whether it be positive or negative, after purchase can influence the opinions and attitude of the audience towards the product or service, brand, or enterprise (Faulds, D.J., Mangold, W.G., 2009).

2.6.2 Strategies for social media marketing

If a company wants to engage in social media marketing, it is important to better understand why it is compatible for the company, how it can support the company and how to apply the strategy in order to generate benefits. Nowadays, sales are not the sole primary goal of a company. Customer satisfaction is also crucial in this day and age. Hence, contact with customers is important because a company can learn from them. Because of social media, companies can identify customers and hear their opinions about the brand and the products or services. Consequently, the company receives feedback from the consumers and with that, they can upgrade or innovate their products or services (Neti, S., 2011).

Companies have to be aware of the fact that social media marketing cannot be considered as a mass advertising strategy. But social media marketing might aid in identifying peers and advertise to that particular crowd. Additionally, social media marketing might help in identifying influencers as well. These influencers can, eventually, guide a group into buying the products or services from the company (Neti, S., 2011).

If a company wants to engage in social media marketing activities, it is important to generate content that can attract the consumer's attention. These days, many people multitask. For example, a person could be watching a YouTube video and at the same time be scrolling through their Facebook feed. Hence, social media marketing needs to be compelling so that the consumers will not get diverted from the content that has been created and posted by the company. Therefore, a company has to create advertisements that stand out and are innovative so that the consumer's attention will be completely focused on that advertisement alone (Neti, S., 2011).

Additionally, social media marketing can aid a company with increasing customer loyalty. Increasing customer loyalty can be achieved through support services on social media. Having satisfied customers can result in a positive influence on customer retention (Neti, S., 2011). Also, social media can generate a lot of electronic word-of-mouth , also known as E-WOM,

advertisement. E-WOM can be very powerful in order to promote a brand and create brand awareness. For example, if an individual has a strong liking towards a brand or a product or service, social media lets the individual communicate and forward his thoughts to a few people, and eventually worldwide (Bin Azman, A., Shojaee, S., 2013).

2.6.3 Social media marketing strategy for multi-country companies

When a company has business operations in multiple countries, it is important to extend the digital footprint to guarantee that a company can connect to its target audience. Depending on the size of the company's team, they must decide whether a global account or several local accounts work better. If a company is present in multiple countries with time differences, different languages, and cultural nuances to take into account, it is more favourable to have multiple leads handling social media accounts. For example, the brand Nike has established global and local social media management. The company has a global Instagram account and several city-specific accounts, such as Los Angeles and Hong Kong. Having several social media accounts for each channel in every market is not necessary. To take Nike as an example again, they have a global page on YouTube and Facebook and city-specific pages for Hong Kong only (Nomdarkham, J., 2020).

When having a multi-country company, it is important to create local social media approaches around a company's brand message. Some details of your brand, such as the brand name or colours, may not resonate in every country as is anticipated. This can be due to colloquialisms, politics or other controversial factors. Additionally, a company should research cultural celebrations and local events and determine whether or not a marketing effort should be made in order to resonate with the locals (Nomdarkham, J., 2020).

Depending on the campaign goal, a company has to establish whether a worldwide focus or a local focus would work better in order to reach the audience. Targeting is an important aspects when a company campaigns in multiple countries (Nomdarkham, J., 2020).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research approach

The aim of this research is to determine the effectiveness of social media as an instrument for building a company's brand awareness. In order to determine this, the author used the deductive research approach. When using the deductive approach, researchers find existing theories and models from which they deduct hypotheses. Subsequently, these hypotheses are tested through empirical analysis (Arbnor, I., Bjerke, B., 2009). The deductive approach was the most efficient approach for this thesis since it gave the author a thorough insight into important concepts and information already discussed in previous literature. Additionally, the author used the mixed-method approach, meaning that both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. The mixed-method approach has been chosen because it increases the reliability and validity of this research (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016).

3.2 Data collection

Data collection is the process of collecting and measuring information in a defined systemic way that allows one to answer specified research question and evaluate results. Data collection is considered to be one of the most important aspects of conducting research. It begins with establishing what type of data is required (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016). As mentioned earlier, for the purpose of this thesis, both qualitative and quantitative data has been collected meaning that the author applied the mixed-method approach. Additionally, both primary and secondary data was needed. Further elaboration will be given below.

3.2.1 Qualitative data

Qualitative data is often expressed in words. Usually, such data catches emotions, feelings, or subjective approaches of something. Qualitative methods include interviews, focus groups and group discussions (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016). In order to fully comprehend Santa Fe Amsterdam's situation, interviews were carried out. The author has chosen to do interviews because, according to journalist Deborah Talbot, it offers an in-depth exploration of the interviewees' understandings, feelings and thoughts and gives a thorough insight into the company's situation (Talbot, D., 2015). The questions for the interview have been developed with the use of an operationalisation table which can be found in table 1 below. The operationalisation table is an efficient tool for developing interview questions as it forces one to implement the theory collected and formulate in-depth questions. For the interviews, three employees of Santa Fe Amsterdam were selected. They were interviewed because they each hold a position in different teams and the author wanted to gain

views from every team about the branding situation of Santa Fe Amsterdam via social media. The author decided to have structured interviews with the interviewees since it gives clear results of the situation at Santa Fe Amsterdam. The interviews were carried out in person and took approximately 30 minutes.

	Characteristics of a strong brand	Sub-division of characteristics	Examples	Questions for interview
How can Santa Fe Amsterdam improve its brand awareness through the use of social media?	Quality	Good customer service	Personalised service, complaints desk, return policies	1. What do you think of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service? 2. Do you think that Santa Fe Amsterdam delivers the service they promise? Why/why not?
		Reliability	Good performance on the service promised	
	Credibility	Customer feedback	Reviews, Trustpilot	3. Do you feel Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation? 4. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam offer customers to leave reviews? 5. Is the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services consistent? Why/Why not? 6. What achievements does Santa Fe Amsterdam have and are they showcased?
		Consistency	High quality goods or services, company's story	
		Showcase achievements	Awards, accreditations, associations	
	Customer loyalty	Repeat purchasers	Private persons, companies	7. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam put in the effort to create customer loyalty? 8. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam have many repeat purchases from private persons? Why/why not? 9. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam engage existing customers to continue buying services from them?
		Customer retention	Companies, potential customers	

Uniqueness	High quality service	Quick response, go the extra mile, show interest in customer	10. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself from competitors? 11. Do you think the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam can be considered high quality? Why/why not? 12. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam innovate itself?	
	Business model	Exceptional work methods		
	Innovativeness	The use of new media techniques, changes to service processes		
Exposure	Social media	Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter	13. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam use social media? If so, on which channels? If not, why not? 14. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam focus on branding, and creating brand awareness, on social media? I.e. by posting different, creative or educational content, by posting achievements, etc. 15. How many times per week does Santa Fe Amsterdam post new content on its social media page(s)? 16. Do you think Santa Fe Amsterdam is active enough on social media? Why/why not? 17. Besides social media, how does Santa Fe Amsterdam establish brand exposure?	
	Sponsoring	Sports event, product or service sponsoring		
	Holding events	Workshops, party, networking		

Table 1 Operationalisation table

3.2.2 Quantitative data

Quantitative data is expressed in numbers. Quantitative data collection is done via a systematic standardised approach and uses methods such as questionnaires (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016). The author developed a questionnaire in order to collect large data in a short period of time. The questions were developed by the author together with ███████████ who is part of the sales team at Santa Fe Amsterdam. Firstly, we decided on what information was required. Secondly, the target respondents were defined which were social media users. Thirdly, it was decided on how the target respondents should be reached. It was decided that the respondents were going to be reached online, via social media platforms. Lastly, the question wording was developed and the questions were ordered in a logical order. The questions were either multiple-choice questions or Likert-type questions.

As mentioned above, the targeted population for this research are social media users. However, social media is used by individuals from all over the world. Since the research is conducted for Santa Fe Amsterdam in the Netherlands, the sampling frame has been limited to social media users in the Netherlands. Additionally, many social media users are not active. Since non-active social media users are not relevant for the purpose of this thesis, the sampling frame has been limited to active social media users. In less words, the sampling frame includes individuals that reside in the Netherlands and who are active social media users. According to Statista, approximately 65 percent of the 17 million people in the Netherlands claim to be active social media users (Statista Research Department, 2020). This means that approximately 11 million people in the Netherlands are active social media users. Due to the limited timeframe, the author and ███████████ have decided that the questionnaire should at least have 100 respondents.

3.2.3 Primary data

Primary data is data that is obtained from first-hand experience. Primary data has not yet been released out into the world and, therefore, is considered to be more impartial, reliable and accurate. People have not modified or altered primary data, for this reason the value of primary data is greater than that of secondary data. Sources of primary data include experiments, questionnaires, surveys, interviews, observations, etc. (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016). For this research, the author has chosen to collect primary data with the use of interviews and a questionnaire. Primary data is collected because the data contains information specifically about the research problem of the study. Additionally, the data's quality collected via primary research cannot be questioned and, therefore, shows an accurate portrayal of the situation (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016).

3.2.4 Secondary data

 Secondary data is data that has been collected from a source that has already been written and available for public use. Sources of secondary data include books, articles, journals, newspapers, etc. (Kabir, S.M.S., 2016). For the purpose of this research, secondary data has been collected in order to form the theoretical framework in the previous chapter, as well as to support the analysis in chapter 5 of this thesis. Sources that were used included books, articles and journals regarding branding and social media. These secondary sources were retrieved online via Google Scholar, via the THUAS library (both the online and physical library), and via Santa Fe Amsterdam's website and publications. All of the secondary data has been collected in order to aid the author in answering the thesis' research questions.

3.3 Data analysis procedure

As mentioned previously, in order to collect primary data, the author has carried out interviews with three employees of Santa Fe Amsterdam. Additionally, the author has created a questionnaire to be distributed to approximately 100 respondents. This means that both primary quantitative data and primary qualitative data has been collected. For the interviews, the author got familiar with the data collected and highlighted all the similarities in answers in order to use for the results. For the questionnaire, the author used graphs and charts in order to find out the most important results.

4. Results

4.1 Primary data results

This chapter contains the primary data gathered from the interviews with Santa Fe Amsterdam employees and the questionnaire, which has been created in order to answer the research questions. One can find the interview questions in appendix 1, and the transcript of the three interviews can be found in appendix 2. Additionally, one can refer to appendix 3 in order to view the questionnaire and the results of the whole questionnaire are displayed in appendix 4.

4.1.1 Interview with ▮▮▮▮▮▮

In the interview with ▮▮▮▮▮▮, who is part of the move team at Santa Fe Amsterdam, she stated that Santa Fe Amsterdam has a good level of customer service. However, not every Santa Fe office worldwide applies the same service level, meaning that it could improve once better cooperation between the Santa Fe offices is established. Additionally, the services that are promised are delivered 75% of the time. This is because it is unclear if the scope of the services are always clear for the employee moving countries. The companies, which are Santa Fe Amsterdam's main customers, are aware of the inclusions, exclusions and conditions of the services. However, it is not always clear if this is properly communicated to the employee ▮▮▮▮▮▮., personal communication, December 21, 2020).

Santa Fe Amsterdam offers customers, both private and corporate, to leave reviews by sending out a CSAT score, which stands for Customer Satisfaction Score, after the service is complete. Additionally, the company also sends out Trustpilot review requests ▮▮▮▮▮▮., personal communication, December 21, 2020).. Trustpilot is a tool that helps companies and consumers with honest feedback about the product or service experience (Trustpilot Support Center, n.d.). When asked if the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services is consistent, ▮▮▮▮▮▮ answered that the services are consistent on high traffic lanes, meaning that they know how to anticipate and what to expect. However, again, when different Santa Fe offices are involved, the quality of the service may change. Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation due to the very dedicated and passionate people working there. Additionally, Santa Fe Amsterdam's credibility is shown through their achievements which are displayed on the company website and on different social media platforms, such as LinkedIn (▮▮▮▮▮▮ personal communication, December 21, 2020).

As mentioned earlier, many of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customers are corporations. Santa Fe Amsterdam works closely with the managers of these corporations in order to create customer loyalty. Weekly or monthly review meetings are scheduled in order to improve and maintain a

good relationship with these corporate clients. As it was mentioned earlier in the report, some of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customers are private clients and they usually only make use of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services once. When asked if there are many repeat purchases from private clients, ███████ responded that she does not have the exact numbers but she often sees that private clients had a pleasant experience. However, the services offered by the company are usually a one-time purchase due to most private clients staying in the Netherlands for a significant period of time. Therefore, the company does not see many repeat purchases from private clients (████████ █., personal communication, December 21, 2020)..

Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself by having offices worldwide and, therefore, having local knowledge. Additionally the company provides a complete service which includes immigration services, destination services, and moving services. In order to be innovative, Santa Fe Amsterdam develops new services which can be offered to corporate clients, both new and existing ones (█ ████████., personal communication, December 21, 2020)..

The Santa Fe Amsterdam office itself does not use social media. All the social media pages are managed by the Santa Fe head office in London. The head office uses Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. Occasionally, the employees of Santa Fe Amsterdam share some content on their personal LinkedIn account. This means that Santa Fe Amsterdam does not focus on creating brand awareness at all on social media. ████████ added that perhaps the head office in London does, but she is not aware of it. Additionally, ████████ said that she believes that the head office posts new content approximately 3 times a week on average. Other than using social media to establish brand exposure, Santa Fe Amsterdam are occasionally present at events (████████., personal communication, December 21, 2020).

4.1.2 Interview with ████████

In the interview with ████████, who is part of the destination services team, also known as DSP, he stated that the employees at Santa Fe Amsterdam are devoted to their work and clients. However, the customer service level may deteriorate when the workload is high. When there is a lack of time, the promises cannot always be delivered. According ████████, Santa Fe Amsterdam can be considered a credible organisation because, among other reasons, the company is present on review platforms (████████., personal communication, December 20, 2020).

Santa Fe Amsterdam offers customers leave reviews via CSATs and Trustpilot. CSAT reviews are more for internal feedback, but Trustpilot is accessible for everyone. When asked if Santa Fe Amsterdam's services are consistent, ████████ stated that every employee is trained the same

way in regards to delivering the services. However, depending on the workload, inconsistency can occur when there is more time to spend on one service than on the other. Even though, there sometimes are some inconsistencies in delivering the services, Santa Fe Amsterdam has been awarded for best destination service provider of 2019. This achievement can be viewed on the social media pages (███████., personal communication, December 20, 2020).

In order to create customer loyalty, the account management team at Santa Fe Amsterdam keeps in touch with the HR stakeholders and have regular review meetings. The need for creating customer loyalty with the expats is of less importance because the company's main customers are corporations. Simultaneously, this means that there are not many repeat purchases from private clients. In order to keep the existing corporate clients interested in buying Santa Fe Amsterdam's services, the account management team keep regular and year-end review meetings with the corporations. Additionally, the clients are updated through the newsletter and they are proactively asked if all their needs are met. Santa Fe Amsterdam's differentiation is shown through their slogan: "We make it easy". The company wants to portray itself as a one-stop shop, meaning that all the services are provided by Santa Fe Amsterdam, which is usually not the case at competitors. When asked how Santa Fe Amsterdam innovates itself, ███████ stated that the Santa Fe management board has a global strategy outlined for the coming years where many innovations are planned to be made (███████ personal communication, December 20, 2020).

Santa Fe Amsterdam is not present on social media. The Santa Fe social media pages are managed by the headquarters in London. They are active on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. Therefore, Santa Fe Amsterdam does not focus on creating brand awareness via social media. The headquarters in London posts new content approximately every one or two days. According to ██ ███████, Santa Fe Amsterdam should create a presence on social media for its Dutch customers. Besided social media, Santa Fe Amsterdam creates brand exposure by being present at networking events and international conferences (███████., personal communication, December 20, 2020).

4.1.3 Interview with ███████

In the interview with ███████, who is part of the sales team, she stated that Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service is acceptable, however there is room for improvement. The workload is too high which makes it difficult to fully commit to the assignees. This also affects the quality of the service promised. However, the company can still be considered credible because of the opportunity of leaving reviews and because of their membership with several associations such as FIDI. Customers are able to leave reviews through Trustpilot and CSATs, as mentioned

previously. When asked if ███████████ feels if the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services is consistent, she answered that it is, in general. However, every consultant at the company practices a unique working style, but in the end the same service is provided to the customer (███ ███████████ personal communication, December 19, 2020).

Santa Fe Amsterdam has gained several achievements. In 2019, the company won awards for best moving company and best relocation company of the year. These awards are showcased on social media, such as LinkedIn (███████████., personal communication, December 19, 2020).

According to ███████████, Santa Fe Amsterdam creates customer loyalty by giving discount on the service fees. Additionally, every year around Christmas time, the company sends out presents to the corporate clients in order to show appreciation. In regards to private clients, ███████ ██████ mentioned that they do not receive many repeat purchases from them. Their main focus also lays with corporate clients and keeping them satisfied. The company keeps the existing corporate clients engaged by offering discount on services and having frequent meetings to solve any issues, if necessary (███████████., personal communication, December 19, 2020).

Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself by providing the complete package, so that assignees only have to deal with Santa Fe as a contact person. The competitors often hire external parties to offer certain services. The company innovated itself by applying a new system which makes the relocation process easier for the assignees and corporate clients. However, Santa Fe Amsterdam also still uses the old system which makes that the employees at the company have to double work (███████████., personal communication, December 19, 2020).

According to ███████████, Santa Fe Amsterdam does not have its own social media pages. The marketing department in London, the head office, takes care of all social media aspects. The only way Santa Fe Amsterdam focuses on creating brand awareness on social media is by using the content created by the head office and sharing it on personal social media accounts. ███████ ██████ stated that the head office in London only posts new content approximately once a month. In order to establish brand exposure, other than via social media, Santa Fe Amsterdam does networking events and sponsoring (███████████., personal communication, December 19, 2020).

4.1.4 Questionnaire results

The questionnaire, which was open for respondents from 14 December 2020 until 20 December 2020, had a total of 100 participants. Of the 100 participants, 80 of them were female, 18 were

male, and 2 participants would rather not say. Regarding the age group, 45 respondents were between the age of 19 and 24, followed by 28 respondents being 45 years or older. 15 respondents were between the age of 25 and 34, and 10 respondents between the age of 35 and 44. Lastly, only 2 respondents were 18 years old or younger.

As you can see in figure 4.1 below, when asked which social media platforms the respondents actively use, 76% of the respondents claimed they actively use Facebook. Both Instagram and YouTube came in on the second place with 66% of the respondents claiming they actively use the platforms. Lastly, 48% claims to actively use Snapchat.

3. Which social media platforms do you actively use?

■ Responses
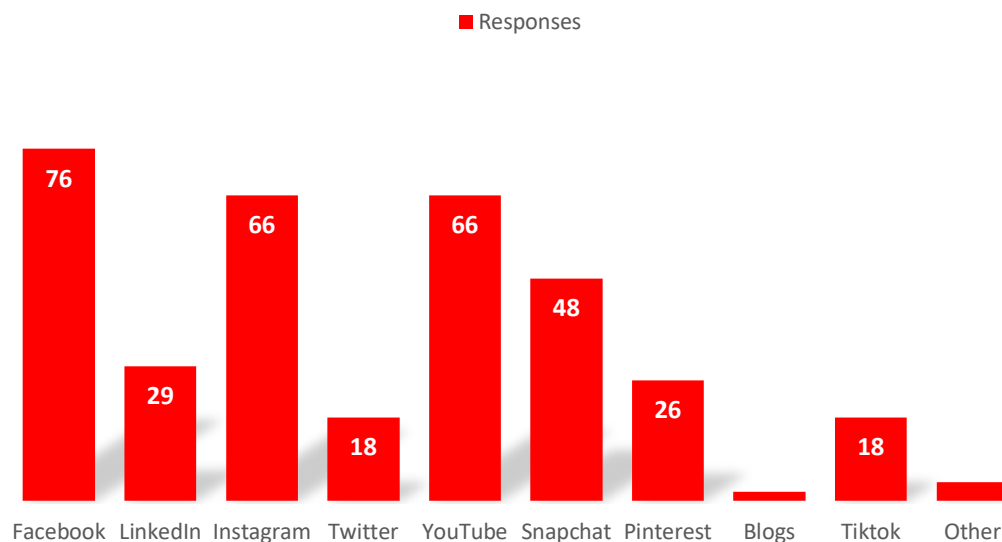
Figure 4. 1 Most actively used social media platforms by respondents

When asked why the respondents use social media platforms, the most popular reason, with 74%, was to find entertaining, educational or interesting content. The second most popular reason was in order to stay in touch with family or friends, with 70%. 67% of the respondents claim to use social media platforms in order to keep up with news and events. Lastly, for 53% of the respondents sharing photos and/or videos is one of the reasons for using social media platforms. One can find these results in figure 4.2 below.

4. Why do you use social media platforms?
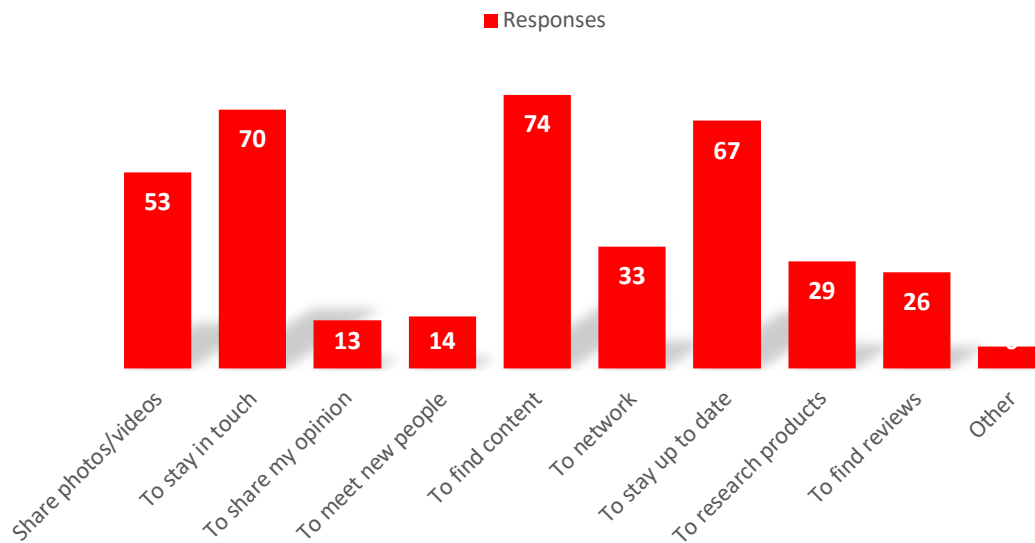

Figure 4. 3 Reasons for using social media platforms

Consequently, participants of the questionnaire were asked if they have ever been interested in a product, service or brand after seeing it on social media. Most respondents, 70 to be exact, responded with yes, 11 respondents answered no, and 19 respondents were not sure and answered maybe.

Question 6 and 7 of the questionnaire were about the content shared by companies or brands. When asked what content shared by companies or brands would be the most appealing, 82 respondents claim to be most attracted by photos. The second most appealing content are videos, according to 51 respondents. Lastly, 43 respondents find customer or follower reviews to be appealing content. Additionally, when asked what type of messages or content would draw the respondents attention the most, 56 claim that tips and tricks or advice would draw their attention. Followed by knowledge or experience sharing, according to 51% of the respondents. Also, 41 of the respondents are drawn by messages or content that project similarities to their lifestyle.

As one can see in figure 4.3 below, the participants were asked how likely they were to recommend a company or brand found on social media to others on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 being unlikely and 5 being very likely. 44% respondent rated 3 on the scale, meaning that they are neutral. Followed by 31% of the respondents rating 4 on the scale, meaning that they are likely to.

**8. How likely are you to recommend a company/brand
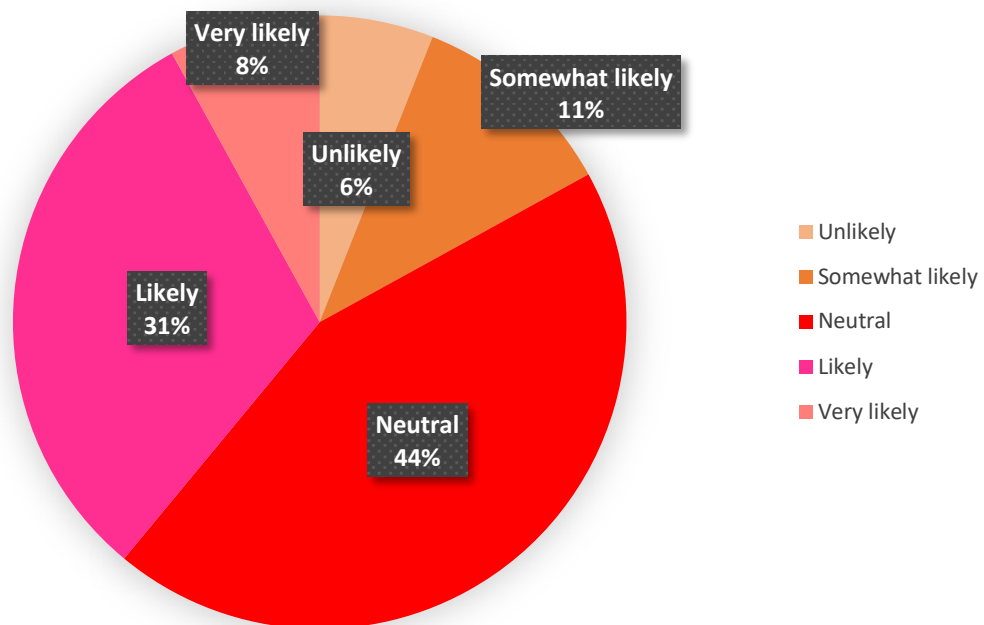that you found on social media to others?**

Figure 4. 5 Likeliness of recommending a company or brand to someone else

Question 9 to 14 were referring to how important certain aspects were to respondents when following or liking a company or brand on social media. The importance was measured on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not important to 5 being very important. When asked how important it is that the company or brand responds to comments and messages fast, 41% of the respondents rated it at 4, meaning they find it important. 20% rated it at 5, meaning they find it very important. Next, the respondents were asked how important it is the page is posting details about the products or services. 47% rated it at 4 on a scale of 1 to 5, meaning they find it important. 26 respondents find posting details very important. Then, they were asked how important it is that the page is posting appealing content. 39% of the respondents rated the importance at 4, meaning they find it important. 29% of the respondents claimed that appealing content is very important for them. Question 12 asked the respondents how important it is that the page is actively posting new content. 39 of the respondents rated it at 4 out of 5, meaning they find it important. 29 of the respondents are neutral about the importance of activity. Whereas 25% finds it very important. Next, when asked how important it is that the page is posting promotional advertisements and sales, 31% of the respondents rated it at 3, meaning that they are neutral. However, 28% rated the importance at 4, meaning they think it is important for companies or brands to post promotions and sales. Lastly, when asked how important it is that the page is offering lotteries or competitions to win a product or service, 34 respondents rated it at 3, meaning that they are neutral. Interestingly, 25% of the respondents finds it somewhat important, and 19% finds it not important at all.

Questions 15 to 19 of the questionnaire were about how important certain aspects are for the respondents' buying decisions. Again, the importance was rated on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not important, and 5 being very important. When asked how important comments or posts from other social media users are for their buying decisions, 41% of the respondents rated it a 4, meaning they find it important. 23% claimed they were neutral. After, the respondents were asked how important social media advertisements were for their buying decisions. 26% of the respondents rated the importance at 2, which translates to somewhat important. Another 26% were neutral. And, interestingly, only 7% claims to find it very important. Next, question 18 asked respondents how important recommendations from family or friends were for their buying decisions. 34 respondents said to find it important. 30% of the respondents find it very important. Lastly, when asked if reviews from other purchasers are important for the respondents buying decisions, 38% rated it at, which translates to important. 29% on the other hand, are neutral towards the importance of reviews.

The next 5 questions of the questionnaire were about active presence from the brand or company on social media and what effect this may have. The Likert-scale was used for these questions as well. The respondents were able to rate on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being completely disagree to 5 being completely agree. When asked if active presence on social media can make a brand or company more reliable, 39% of the respondents rated it at 4, meaning they somewhat agree. 35% were neutral. Approximately the same response was given when asked if it makes them more credible. 37% of the respondents were neutral and 32% somewhat agreed. When asked if active presence can make a brand or company more attractive, 50% of the respondents rated it at 4, meaning that they somewhat agreed. 23% of the respondents were neutral. Question 23 asked the respondents if active presence makes the brand or company more desirable. 35% of the respondents rated it at 3, meaning neutral, and another 35% rated it at 4, meaning they somewhat agree. Lastly, when asked if active presence can make a brand or company more memorable on social media, 36% of the respondents somewhat agreed. 30% of the respondents were neutral.

As one can see in figure 4.4 below, this question of the questionnaire asked respondents if they have purchased a product or service without doing research about it on social media in the last month. 46% of the respondents said yes, 42% of the respondents said no, and 12% of the respondents claim they don't remember.

25. In the last month, have you purchased a product/service without doing research about it on social media?
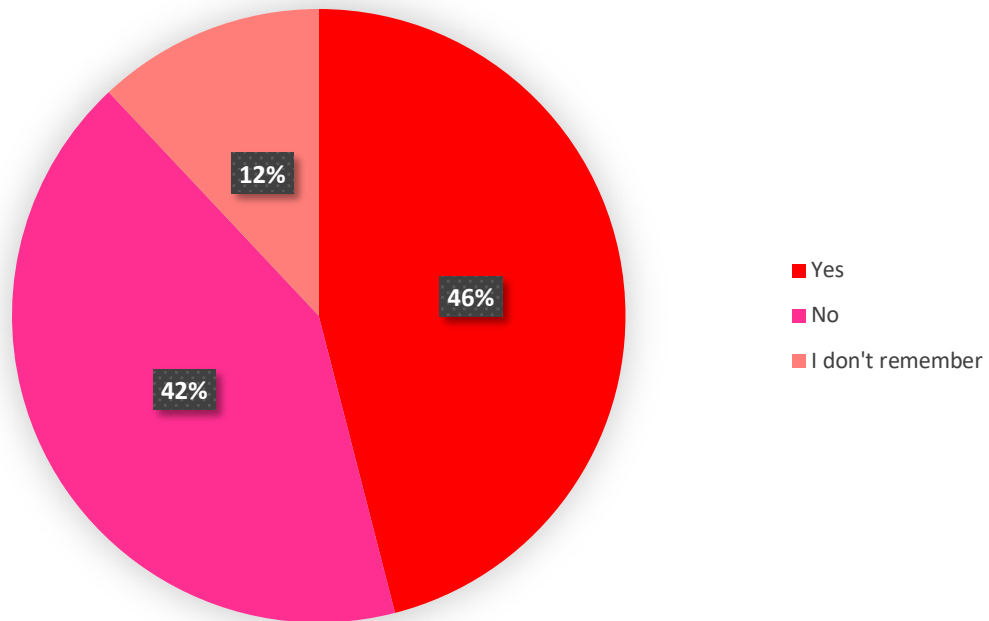
Figure 4. 7 Amount of respondents doing research on social media before purchasing a product or service

Finally, the respondents were asked if they recognised the brand that is Santa Fe Relocation. An image of the brand was shown in the questionnaire. 82% of the respondents did not recognise the brand, 18% of the respondents claimed they did recognise it.

The results shown above were, according to the author, the most important results for the sake of this research. In order to view the exact and complete results of the questionnaire, one can refer to appendix 4.

5. Analysis

5.1 Santa Fe Amsterdam's position on the customer-based brand equity model

5.1.1 Brand identity

As one can see in chapter 4.1.4, Santa Fe Amsterdam has little to no brand awareness amongst social media users. Only 18 respondents out of 100 recognised the brand in some sort of an aided recall test. The question was a form of an aided recall test because Santa Fe Amsterdam's logo was portrayed with the question in order to aid the respondents in recalling the brand. When looking at the first stage of brand development on Keller's (2009) customer-based brand equity model in chapter 2.2.2, one can argue that Santa Fe Amsterdam has not established much brand salience with social media users. This can, partially, be the case due to Santa Fe Amsterdam not having social media presence in the Netherlands, as ▬▬▬▬▬, ▬▬▬▬ and ▬▬▬▬ mentioned in the interviews.

5.1.2 Brand meaning

Since Santa Fe Amsterdam is not present on social media, it is hard for the company to establish brand meaning, which is the second stage of brand development on the customer-based brand equity model. As described in chapter 2.2.2, brand meaning consists of two categories of brand associations in the consumers' minds, which are brand performance and brand imagery. According to the interviews conducted with three Santa Fe Amsterdam's employees, the needs of the company's customers are not always met due to being understaffed, high workload, and unclarity of the service scope. In order to establish good brand performance, and simultaneously, create high brand loyalty and resonance, it is important that the service does not only meet the consumers' expectations, but it should actually exceed their expectation. Since Santa Fe Amsterdam occasionally has trouble to simply meet the expectations of its customers, one can argue that the company rarely exceeds the customers' expectations. Regarding brand image, only a small percentage of the questionnaire respondents recognised Santa Fe Amsterdam. As mentioned earlier, this can be a consequence of the company's lack of presence on social media.

5.1.3 Brand responses

As one can see in chapter 2.2.2, the third stage of brand development in the customer-based brand equity model focuses on brand responses. Brand responses can be divided between brand judgments and brand feelings. According to Keller (2001), brand quality and brand credibility are important judgments. In the interviews, the interviewees were asked about what they felt about the

quality of the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam and its credibility. The general outcome revealed that the quality of the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam are sufficient. However, due to high workload and inconsistency of work methods among the employees at Santa Fe Amsterdam, but also between the Santa Fe offices, the quality of the services is not as high as it could be. Since the employees of Santa Fe Amsterdam already mention flaws of the service quality, one can argue that the customers agree or are even more critical towards the quality of the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam. Regarding the company's credibility, the interviewees mentioned that Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation because of its achievements and awards, the ability of customers to leave reviews, and because of the passionate and dedicated people that work for the organisation. According to Keller (2001), credibility can be established through trustworthiness, among others. Santa Fe Amsterdam's achievements and awards establish trustworthiness for the company.

5.1.4 Brand relationships

Santa Fe Amsterdam does not have many repeat purchases from private clients. However, since the company's main customers are corporate clients, their focus lies more on them. Santa Fe Amsterdam engages their existing corporate clients to continue buying their services by having weekly or monthly review meetings with the HR stakeholders at the corporations. Additionally, the account management team stays in close contact with the clients to ensure all their needs are met and offer occasional discounts. Also, every year Santa Fe Amsterdam provides its clients with presents during the Christmas period in order to show appreciation. Many of Santa Fe Amsterdam's corporate clients renew their contracts every year. According to Keller (2001), behavioural loyalty, established by repeat purchasing by customers, is a classification of brand resonance. However, so are attitudinal attachment, sense of community and active engagement. Santa Fe Amsterdam currently mainly focuses on behavioural loyalty.

As mentioned previously in chapter 2.2.2, one stage has to be completed before being able to go to the following step. Additionally, one can see that the customer-based brand equity model created by Keller (2009) shows the characteristics of a strong brand. It also shows what Santa Fe Amsterdam should do in order to improve its brand awareness.

5.2 Improving brand awareness through social media

As mentioned in chapter 2.4, using social media for branding purposes can be very beneficial for companies. The brand gains more exposure and the consumer-brand relationship improves which, consequently, leads to customer loyalty (Feng, C., Gao, Q., 2016).

5.2.1 Santa Fe Amsterdam's efforts of increasing brand awareness

According to ██████████, Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself by being a "one-stop shop", meaning that the company offers all the services needed, including destination services, moving services, and immigration services. Santa Fe Amsterdam does not have to hire another organisation to provide certain services. Additionally, since Santa Fe has offices all over the world, the company is able to provide local knowledge to its customers. As mentioned in chapter 2.3.1, according to Aaker (1991), being different is a crucial factor in achieving brand awareness because many products and services appear similar to consumers.

Another important factor for achieving brand awareness is using a slogan or jingle, it gives a visual characteristic to a brand (Aaker, D.A., 1991). ██████████ mentioned in the interview that Santa Fe Amsterdam's slogan is "We make it easy", which can be considered an attractive slogan to the company's potential and existing customers.

The Santa Fe Amsterdam symbol is a red horse. The organisation has chosen a horse in order to represent speed, drive, agility and movement and these factors are a symbol of how the company does business. Additionally, globally, a horse gives a sign of quality, integrity and strength (MarketScreener, 2017). As one can see in chapter 2.3.1, a well-known symbol can aid a company in achieving and maintaining brand awareness, as a visual illustration is easy to remember (Aaker, D.A., 1991).

According to the interviewees, Santa Fe Amsterdam occasionally attends events and does sponsoring in order gain some publicity. For example, the organisation sponsored Katia Vlachos' book called "A Great Move". The partnership was established because it could benefit and support relocating expats worldwide (LID, 2018). According to Aaker (1991), publicity and sponsorship are two effective ways of achieving brand awareness.

However, since the office in Amsterdam does not have its own social media pages, it is hard for the company to use the abovementioned factors to achieve brand awareness online. If every office of the Santa Fe organisation would have their own social media pages, more potential customers could be reached.

5.2.2 Advantages of using social media

As mentioned previously, results of question 26 of the questionnaire shows that only 18% of the respondents recognised Santa Fe Amsterdam. This means that the company is on the lowest level of the Awareness Pyramid developed by Aaker (1991), which is unaware of brand. Santa Fe Amsterdam can climb on the Awareness Pyramid by creating more awareness via social media. According to Neti (2011), social media marketing brings along many advantages:

- o Size: there are many users of social media networks worldwide, which means that a company can draw a large potential audience (Neti, S., 2011). According to the interviewees, Santa Fe as a worldwide organisation does have social media pages. However, these pages are operated solely by the marketing department at Santa Fe London, meaning that one marketing department is responsible for every Santa Fe office in the world. If Santa Fe Amsterdam itself were to be present on social media, they could more easily develop social media marketing strategies that would fit their customers. As someone moving from Italy to Australia, for example, is not relevant for the Santa Fe Amsterdam office.

- o Transparency: According to Neti (2011), social media offers customers to leave reviews. Such word-of-mouth gives a company credibility. As mentioned by the interviewees, Santa Fe Amsterdam offers customers to leave reviews via CSATs or Trustpilot.

- o Reach: The use of social media can help in globalising a brand faster (Neti, 2011). Santa Fe London is in charge of the social media networks. However, if every single Santa Fe office in the world would have their own social media pages, the reach of potential customers will increase.

- o Boost website traffic: Social media effectively aids in redirecting traffic to a company's website (Neti, 2011). As is the case for the social media pages, the company has one general website. However, the website offers customers to select a local office (Santa Fe Relocation, n.d.). Therefore, there is no need for different websites for different offices.

- o Branding: According to Neti (2011), social media is a good tool for building a brand. Since Santa Fe Amsterdam is struggling with brand awareness, creating social media presence is an effective way of building more brand awareness.

5.2.3 Choosing the right social media platforms

As one can see in figure 4.1 displayed in chapter 4.1.4, the most used social media platform among the respondents of the questionnaire is Facebook, with 76%. This is followed by Instagram and YouTube with 66% each. When looking at figure 2.4 in chapter 2.6.1, one can see that the results from the questionnaire correspond to the graph developed by Statista. The most popular social

media platform as of April 2020 is Facebook, YouTube ranks second and Instagram ranks sixth among the fifteen most popular social media platforms (Clement, J., 2020). According to the interviewees, the Santa Fe Amsterdam office itself is not present on social media, however, Santa Fe Relocation as a worldwide organisation is. The organisation is present on LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube and these platforms are run by the marketing department at the Santa Fe London office. Important to note, most of the respondents of the questionnaire agreed that active presence from a company on social media can make them more reliable, credible, attractive, desirable, and memorable.

5.2.4 Social media marketing

According to Hinton and Hjorth (2013), the consumer purchasing behaviour is highly influenced by the content that is posted by companies and brands. According to the respondents of the questionnaire, content posted by companies that would be most appealing include photos, videos and reviews. Additionally, the respondents' attention would be drawn when a company posts tips and advice and similarities to the respondents' lifestyle on their social media platforms. Santa Fe as a worldwide organisation posts new content on the social media platforms mentioned earlier every other day. These posts mainly consist of sharing achievements, giving updates or information, allowing followers to join webinars and advertising the organisation's services. The posts are often accompanied with a photo or video (Santa Fe Relocation, n.d.). As one can see, the organisation is partially in line with what appeals to the respondents. However, as mentioned in chapter 2.6.2, if a company wants to use social media marketing activities, it is very important that the content attracts the consumer's attention (Neti, S., 2011).

Santa Fe Amsterdam creates customer loyalty by having frequent meetings with its customers, by giving occasional discounts, and by gifting presents during the Christmas period in order to show appreciation. As mentioned in chapter 2.6.2, according to Neti (2011) social media marketing can help a company with increasing customer loyalty. Especially support services on social media lead to loyal customers. According to the respondents of the questionnaire, speedy communication via social media is an important factor for their buying decisions. Satisfied customers can also result in a positive influence on customer retention (Neti, S., 2011). Lastly, according to the interviewees, Santa Fe Amsterdam does not focus on creating brand awareness online because they have no social media presence. However, as mentioned in chapter 2.6.2, according to Bin Azman and Shojaee (2013), social media presence can generate a lot of electronic word-of-mouth advertisement and, consequently, brand awareness.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, conclusions will be drawn based on the research findings. The three research questions will be answered, which, consequently, will lead to the answer of the central research question: "Can Santa Fe Amsterdam improve its brand awareness through the use of social media?"

6.1 What are the characteristics of strong brands?

Based on the information gathered, characteristics of a strong brand include quality, credibility, customer loyalty, uniqueness, and exposure. Below, one can find more elaboration on these concepts and if Santa Fe Amsterdam possesses these characteristics.

6.1.1 Quality

The quality of a company's product or service is very important to consumers. A product or service should be made and delivered in a way that it completely satisfies the needs of consumers because it can be of high influence to the marketing success of a brand. Under quality, one can categorise aspects such as good customer service and reliability (Keller, K.L., 2001). According to the interviewees, Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service can be considered to be of a satisfactory level, however, the quality of the company's customer service may deteriorate from time to time due to difference of service level between different Santa Fe offices and high workload among the Santa Fe Amsterdam employees. Also, the high workload occasionally deteriorates Santa Fe Amsterdam's reliability since there is not enough time to fully deliver the services that were promised.

6.1.2 Credibility

Without credibility, consumers would not trust to buy products or services from a brand or company. Brand credibility is one of the four important brand judgments consumers make when reacting to a brand. Credibility can be created through reviews, consistency, and achievements, among others (Keller, K.L., 2001). According to the interviewees, Santa Fe Amsterdam can be considered a credible organisation. The company offers their customers to leave reviews via CSATs and Trustpilot. Additionally, the company has been awarded with awards such as best destination service provider 2019. In regards to consistency, the services provided are consistent, however the different work styles of Santa Fe employees and high workload may cause some inconsistency. Nevertheless, every customer gets delivered the same services but it might be in a different way.

6.1.3 Customer loyalty

Having loyal customers is what keeps a business running. Having satisfied customers can result in a positive influence on customer retention. Customer retention and repeat purchasers are aspects of customer loyalty (Neti, S., 2011). Santa Fe Amsterdam creates customer loyalty and customer retention by having weekly or monthly meetings with the corporate clients' HR teams in order to improve and maintain a good relationship. Additionally, Santa Fe Amsterdam occasionally offers discounts to its corporate clients and send out gifts during the Christmas period in December. Next to corporate clients, Santa Fe Amsterdam also offers its services to private clients from time to time. However, the company is more focused on engaging corporate clients to repeat buying the services than private clients.

6.1.4 Uniqueness

A strong brand is easily recognisable, well-known, or even famous under consumers. In order to achieve this, a brand must be unique from other brands in order to stand out. A brand or company should differentiate itself from other and be innovative in order to be unique (Chabot, B., Gustafson, T., 2007). According to ███████████, Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself from others by being a "one-stop shop", meaning that the company provides all the services needed for expats to relocate. Additionally, according to █████████, because there are so many offices worldwide, Santa Fe can offer local knowledge to its customers. Regarding innovativeness, Santa Fe Amsterdam has recently switched to a different system which makes the process of relocation easier for both the customers as well as Santa Fe Amsterdam employees. Additionally, the company's management board created a global strategy with many innovations included.

6.1.5 Exposure

One can see compare creating brand exposure to creating brand awareness. Advertising has helped the brand Apple to gain a lot of brand awareness. According to surveys, 90% of the American population is familiar with Apple, this is mostly due to exceptional advertising (Chabot, B., Gustafson, T., 2007). A brand or company can gain brand exposure, or brand awareness, through social media, sponsoring, events, etc. As mentioned earlier, the Santa Fe Amsterdam office itself is not present on social media. Santa Fe as a worldwide organisation is present on social media platforms, which are Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. These platforms are managed only by the marketing team at the Santa Fe London office. However, one can argue that Santa Fe Amsterdam having their own social media pages can aid in gaining more brand awareness because the Amsterdam office has more insight in how to attract new Dutch customers. Next to

social media, Santa Fe Amsterdam gains brand exposure by sponsoring and by being present at events.

6.2 What are the steps to improve brand awareness?

According to Aaker (1991) crucial factors of achieving brand awareness include being different, involving a slogan or jingle, symbol exposure, publicity, event sponsorship, considering brand extensions, using cues, repetition, and the recall bonus. As one can see in chapter 5.2.1, Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself by being a "one-stop shop". Next, the company uses "We make it easy" as a slogan. Furthermore, the company has the red horse as a symbol and they expose this symbol through social media, via the global social media channels, and events. Lastly, in order to gain publicity, Santa Fe Amsterdam is present at events, and Santa Fe as a global organisation sponsors from time to time.

In order for Santa Fe Amsterdam to improve its brand awareness, they could consider brand extensions, using cues, repeat itself in order to achieve recall amongst consumers, and, consequently, gain the recall bonus. The recall bonus entails having and maintaining top-of-mind awareness by a high level of exposure (Aaker, D.A., 1991). Additionally, in order to create top-of-mind awareness, the company should establish a high level of exposure. More exposure can be achieved by creating local social media pages in the Netherlands.

6.3 Which social media platforms are most popular and influential as a branding tool?

According to Statista, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram are the most popular social media platforms with the most active users (Clement, J., 2020). According to the results of the questionnaire, the respondents most actively use Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. According to the interviewees, Santa Fe as a global organisation is present on LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. This means that the global organisation is already present on the most popular and influential social media platforms. However, as mentioned earlier, the Santa Fe Amsterdam office is not present on social media. If they were to start a presence on social media, it would be favourable for them to start on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram.

6.4 How can Santa Fe Amsterdam improve its brand awareness through the use of social media?

In answering the sub-questions of this thesis, it has become clear that Santa Fe Amsterdam lacks some characteristics that make a brand strong. First of all, the quality of services offered by the company is perceived as satisfactory due to high workload and differences in service level between

Santa Fe offices. However, in order to create high brand loyalty, and consequently high brand awareness, it is important to not only meet the customers' expectations, but to exceed them (Keller, K.L., 2001). Secondly, the Santa Fe Amsterdam office itself has no presence on social media. All social media marketing efforts are performed by the marketing team at the Santa Fe London office. As mentioned in chapter 2.6.3, when a company has business operations in multiple countries, it is important to extend the digital footprint to guarantee that a company can optimally connect to its target audiences in every country. However, having several social media accounts for each platform in every country is not necessary, one local social media page could be sufficient (Nomdarkham, J., 2020). Having no presence on social media means that Santa Fe Amsterdam is neglecting a medium that provides a lot of brand exposure. Currently, Santa Fe Amsterdam is solely gaining brand exposure by occasionally being present at events, which are now, due to Covid-19, non-existent. Also, according to Aaker (1991), there are several factors that are crucial in achieving brand awareness, including symbol exposure and publicity. Santa Fe Amsterdam gains symbol exposure and publicity only by attending these occasional events mentioned above. Lastly, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are the most popular and actively used social media platforms (Clement, J., 2020). Santa Fe as a global organisation is present on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram. However, as mentioned previously, the local office in the Netherlands has no presence on any social media platforms.

One can conclude from the answer given above that Santa Fe Amsterdam cannot improve its brand awareness online unless they create presence on social media. Additionally, it has also become clear that Santa Fe Amsterdam's brand awareness could also be improved by improving aspects that have nothing to do with social media, such as service quality.

7. Recommendations

In order for Santa Fe Amsterdam to establish more brand awareness through the use of social media, the author has developed four recommendations in order for the company to reach this objective. The recommendations can be found below.

7.1 Recommendation 1

In order to create more brand awareness via social media, it is logical that Santa Fe Amsterdam should primarily focus on creating presence on social media. Since Santa Fe as a global organisation is already present on LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, it is not necessary for the Santa Fe Amsterdam office to create presence on multiple channels. It is recommended to start creating presence on social media by developing a local Santa Fe Amsterdam account on either Facebook or Instagram. These two social media platforms belong to the most popular and actively used social media channels and are easy to use (Clement, J., 2020). By having a local social media page, Santa Fe Amsterdam can simultaneously improve its customer loyalty. According to the respondents of the questionnaire, active presence from a company on social media can make them more reliable, attractive, credible, memorable, and desirable.

7.2 Recommendation 2

If creating a local social media page is not feasible, the author recommends Santa Fe Amsterdam to create a small marketing team in the Netherlands that can aid in managing the global Santa Fe social media pages that are currently solely managed by the marketing team at the Santa Fe London office. This way, more focus can be laid on creating content that attracts Dutch customers and, consequently, this creates more brand awareness, or brand exposure, for Santa Fe Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

7.3 Recommendation 3

As noticed in the conclusion on the previous chapter, Santa Fe Amsterdam could improve other aspects in order to establish more brand awareness. Next to using social media, it is recommended that the company works on diminishing the workload of the employees during peak seasons. Due to the high workload, the quality of the services reduces which is a negative influence on the company's brand awareness. Additionally, currently, Santa Fe Amsterdam solely gains brand exposure through occasional events. It is recommended that the company puts more effort into

creating exposure through the use of advertising, event sponsoring, and perhaps considering brand extensions (Aaker, D.A., 1991).

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Interview questions

1. What do you think of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service?

2. Do you think Santa Fe Amsterdam delivers the service they promise? Why/why not?

3. Do you feel Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation? Why/why not?

4. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam offer customers to leave reviews? If so, in what way?

5. Do you feel the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services are consistent? Why/why not?

6. What achievements does Santa Fe Amsterdam have and are they showcased?

7. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam put in the effort to create customer loyalty?

8. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam have many repeat purchases from private persons? Why/why not?

9. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam engage existing customers to continue buying services from them?

10. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiate itself from competitors?

11. Can the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam be considered high quality? Why/why not?

12. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam innovate itself?

13. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam use social media? If so, on which channels? If not, why not?

14. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam focus on branding, and creating brand awareness, on social media?

15. How many times per week does Santa Fe Amsterdam post new content on its social media page(s)?

16. Do you think Santa Fe Amsterdam is active enough on social media? Why/why not?

17. Besides social media, how does Santa Fe Amsterdam establish brand exposure?

Appendix 2 – Interview transcripts

Interview with ███████████

Sydney: Hi ████████████, thank you for taking the time to answer some of my questions for my final project.

████████████**:** Sure, it is no problem at all! I am happy to help you!

Sydney: That's great to hear. I would like to start with the first question. What do you think of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service?

████████████**:** I believe Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service is good, however, not every office of Santa Fe worldwide applies the same service level. That is why I think the service level could improve under better cooperation between offices.

Sydney: Okay. And do you think Santa Fe Amsterdam delivers the service they promise?

████████████**:** Yes, I think they do 75% of the time. I am not sure the scope of the service is always clear for the assignee. The accounts are aware of the inclusions, exclusions and conditions but I'm not always sure this is clearly communicated to the assignee.

Sydney: Okay, thank you for the elaboration! Next question is: do you feel Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation?

████████████**:** I believe Santa Fe is a credible organisation, mostly due to very dedicated and passionate people. And, Santa Fe Amsterdam has certificates and accreditations to show their credibility as well.

Sydney: Ah, I have a question about Santa Fe Amsterdam's achievements in a moment! But good to know we're in the same headspace! So the next question I would like to ask is: does Santa Fe Amsterdam offer customers to leave reviews?

████████████**:** Yes, when all the services are complete, our system automatically sends out a CSAT score form to the assignees and we also send out a Trustpilot review request.

Sydney: Okay, so the reviews are more based on the assignees than the corporations?

████████████**:** Yes, exactly! Even though the corporations are our direct customers, if their employees are not happy, the corporations are not happy either.

Sydney: I understand! Do you feel the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services are consistent?

████████████**:** Hmm, that is a tough one. I feel like the quality is consistent on high traffic lanes, if you know what I mean. We know how to anticipate and what to expect. But, when different Santa Fe offices get involved, this changes.

Sydney: Okay. So, we talked a little bit about this in the beginning, what achievements does Santa Fe Amsterdam have and are they showcased?

████████████**:** Yes, Santa Fe Amsterdam has been awarded several awards and this is visible on the general website and on different social media platforms. Most of the achievements are

showcased on LinkedIn. I'm sure Santa Fe has several achievements, but they don't come to mind right now.

Sydney: I understand that. I now would like to talk a little bit about customer loyalty. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam put in the effort to create customer loyalty?

████████: I know that the sales team works closely with client managers and account managers. They have weekly or monthly review meetings to improve and maintain a good relationship with corporate clients.

Sydney: Just to make sure I understand you, the client managers and account managers are employed at the corporations that we serve?

████████: Yes, that is correct. The client managers and account managers are providing us with new assignees that are in need of our service in order to work here in the Netherlands.

Sydney: Right, all clear now, thank you. And Santa Fe Amsterdam also provides services to private persons. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam have many repeat purchases from these private persons?

████████: I don't know the exact numbers of repeat purchases, but I often see that private people that have previously moved with us have had a pleasant experience. But I would like to mention that private people that moved with us stay in the Netherlands for a long time and they usually only need our service once.

Sydney: Understandable. So, how does Santa Fe Amsterdam engage existing customers to continue buying services from them?

████████: My response is actually similar to the question you asked earlier about how we create customer loyalty. We have weekly or monthly meetings to improve and maintain our relationship with the corporate client.

Sydney: Oh yes, that makes sense. The next question I would like to ask is: how does Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiate itself from competitors?

████████: Wow, good question. I think we differentiate ourselves by having offices worldwide and with that having a lot of local knowledge which can make the service of better quality to the assignees. We also provide a complete service, which includes immigration services, destination services and move services.

Sydney: Do you think the complete service provided by Santa Fe Amsterdam can be considered high quality?

████████: I do think the quality of our services is good, but, again, not every office of Santa Fe worldwide applies the same service level. And because we often work closely together with other Santa Fe offices, this can mean that our service quality may deteriorate a little at times.

Sydney: Okay. And how does Santa Fe Amsterdam innovate itself?

████████: I would say that Santa Fe Amsterdam innovates itself by developing new services that can be offered to both new corporate clients, as well as existing corporate clients. And, of course, occasionally to the private persons.

Sydney: Okay, great, thank you. The next few questions are about social media. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam use social media?

████████: Well, the Santa Fe Amsterdam office does not use social media. All Santa Fe's social media pages are manages by the head office in London.

Sydney: Oh, okay. And do you perhaps know which platforms are used by them?

████████: I believe they use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. I do like to mention that the employees of Santa Fe Amsterdam do occasionally share some content posted by the head office on their personal LinkedIn page.

Sydney: I see. So, it is safe to say that Santa Fe Amsterdam does not focus on branding or creating brand awareness via social media in the Netherlands at all?

████████: Not that I am aware of, no. Perhaps the head office in London does, but I am not sure.

Sydney: Okay. Do you know how many times the head office posts new content on its social media pages?

████████: I believe they post about 3 new posts a week on average.

Sydney: Okay. And do you think that this is active enough?

████████: I think they can be more active and more visible like you see at our competitors.

Sydney: I agree. Besides social media, how does Santa Fe Amsterdam establish brand exposure?

████████: I think Santa Fe Amsterdam is occasionally present at events and I think they do some sponsoring.

Sydney: Okay. These were all my questions. Thank you so much for answering them!

████████: You're welcome, I hope they are of any use for your thesis.

Sydney: I think they will.

████████: Good to hear. Good luck with your thesis, Sydney!

Sydney: Thank you!

Interview with ██████████

Sydney: Hi ████████████, first of all, I would like to thank you for taking the time to have this interview with me.

████████████: Of course, Sydney. Anything to help you with your thesis!

Sydney: I appreciate that. Shall we begin? What do you think of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service?

████████████: I think my colleagues are truly devoted to their work and want what's best for their clients. But, when our workload is really high, it can be difficult to give the same attention to every single expat.

Sydney: Right. And do you think that Santa Fe Amsterdam delivers the service they promise?

████████████: Santa Fe has several packages that we offer to our accounts where our services are described in detail. If you would precisely follow the services we offer as described in our packages, then I would say that we cannot always delivers our promises because of lack of time per case.

Sydney: Okay. Do you feel Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation?

████████████: I believe so, because Santa Fe as a worldwide organisation is present on most review platforms as far as I am concerned. And, I think, that should help to prove that a company is credible. Santa Fe even responds to critical reviews, but I think those replies should be more personal as most of them look standardised. I guess, you could see it as a form of creating customer loyalty.

Sydney: Great that you mention customer loyalty. We will further elaborate on that in a few. But first, I would like to comment on the review platforms you mentioned. How can customers of Santa Fe Amsterdam leave reviews?

████████████: Every completed service is finalised by a CSAT and we can also be found on Trustpilot.

Sydney: Okay, thank you. Do you feel the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services are consistent?

████████████: I believe every consultant is trained the same way as everyone else as to delivering our service. However, again, depending on the workload, sometimes we have more time to spend on one service more than the other which can cause some inconsistency.

Sydney: Okay. What achievements does Santa Fe Amsterdam have and are they showcased?

████████████: As far as I know, we have recently been awarded an award for best destination service provider 2019. Once this was announced internally, we updated our signature with this achievement so that it was showcased to our most important stakeholders. I also believe, it was posted on our social media pages.

Sydney: Okay, thank you. Now, I would like to ask a few questions about customer loyalty. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam put in the effort to create customer loyalty?

██████████████: For our corporate clients, we have a devoted account management team here who keep in touch with the HR stakeholders and have regular review meetings. This way our clients feel trusted with our organisation. For individual expats, the need to create customer loyalty is of less importance because our main customers are corporations.

Sydney: Okay. So does that mean that Santa Fe Amsterdam does not have many repeat purchases from private persons?

██████████████: Not that I am aware of. As I said, our main focus lies on corporations.

Sydney: And how does Santa Fe Amsterdam engage the existing corporate clients to continue buying services from them?

██████████████: The account management team has regular and year-end review meetings with the corporations. We also update our clients through newsletters and we proactively ask clients how they are doing or if they need anything.

Sydney: Okay. Is there a way that Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiates itself from competitors?

██████████████: Well, our slogan is "We make it easy". We want to portray ourselves as the one-stop shop for our clients and I think that we are doing a pretty good job at it. I also think our personal approach is also giving us an advantage over our competitors.

Sydney: Thank you. Do you think the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam can be considered high quality?

██████████████: Again, depending on our workload, but we as a team always try to give the utmost to our clients. That way our clients may perceive our services as top-notch.

Sydney: The workload really is a reoccurring topic in this interview. Next question I would like to ask is how does Santa Fe Amsterdam innovate itself?

██████████████: Our management board has a global strategy outlined for the coming years where many innovations are being made. But, unfortunately, this is still very confidential and that is why I cannot say much about it.

Sydney: I understand, but thank you for telling me this much. The next couple of questions are about social media. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam use social media?

██████████████: As a worldwide organisation, we are present on the biggest social media platforms. But as a local organisation in the Netherlands, we do not have our own social media pages. Santa Fe in general only advertises on social media from our global headquarters in London.

Sydney: Okay, do you know which social media platforms they use?

██████████████: I believe they are active on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

Sydney: Thank you. So, since Santa Fe Amsterdam does not have any social media pages, am I right to say that Santa Fe Amsterdam does not focus on branding or creating brand awareness on social media at all?

████████████**;** Yes, you are. We still need to develop a social media advertising strategy for our local office in the Netherlands.

Sydney: Okay. Do you perhaps know how many times per week the London office posts new content on its social media pages?

████████████**:** Our global marketing department in the UK posts approximately every one or two days as far as I am aware of.

Sydney: Okay. And do you think that is active enough?

████████████**:** For the London office I think that is quite active. But to come back at our office in the Netherlands, I think it would be a good idea if we would be more present as a moving and relocation company in the Netherlands. It would be a great idea to advertise in online newsletters, comment on social media posts, and in general, I think we should create a social media presence for our Dutch customers.

Sydney: Okay. Besides social media, how does Santa Fe Amsterdam establish brand exposure?

████████████**:** Sometimes we are attending local events, such as networking and international conferences.

Sydney: Well, that was my final question. Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and helping me in gathering the information I need!

████████████**:** It was a pleasure, Sydney. If you need any further help, you know where to find me.

Sydney: Great, thank you!

Interview with ███████████

Sydney: Hi █████████████, I am very glad that you are willing to help me with answering these interview questions.

██████████████: Hi Sydney, I am glad to be able to help you. It is about time you hand in your thesis!

Sydney: Haha, I know, it has taken me long enough. So, let's not waste any more time. What do you think of Santa Fe Amsterdam's customer service?

█████████████: It is okay, but I think it can be better.

Sydney: Why is that?

█████████████: Well, I don't want to go into too much detail but I feel like the workload of the employees here at Santa Fe is too high which makes it hard for us to fully commit to our assignees. And I am of the opinion that that decreases the quality of our customer service.

Sydney: Okay, thank you for explaining. And do you think that Santa Fe Amsterdam delivers the service they promise?

█████████████: I would like to think that we do, but as I said, the operational team is understaffed and not always able to deliver the service we promise.

Sydney: I understand that. Do you feel Santa Fe Amsterdam is a credible organisation?

██████████████: Yes. We show our credibility by offering our customers to leave reviews and we are also member of several associations such as FIDI.

Sydney: Oh, okay. My next question was going to be about customer reviews, so good that you brought that up. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam offer customers to leave reviews?

██████████████: Oh, well, we send out Trustpilot and CSATs to our assignees after our service has been completed. I think the results of the Trustpilot are shown on the general website of Santa Fe.

Sydney: Okay. My next question is: do you feel the quality of Santa Fe Amsterdam's services are consistent?

█████████████: Well, in general it is consistent. But when you look more in-depth, I would say not really, because it depends on the consultants here at Santa Fe. There is no one way of working, but we do all follow a general line of actions, if you know what I mean.

Sydney: I do. You all have different workstyles, but in the end the same service is provided.

████████████: Yes, exactly.

Sydney: What achievements does Santa Fe Amsterdam have and are they showcased?

█████████████: I'm not sure if the Santa Fe office in the Netherlands has any achievements, but I know that Santa Fe in general has won some awards for best moving company of the year in 2019, and I believe best relocation company of the year as well.

Sydney: That is great. And do they showcase it anywhere?

███████████: Yes, they share it on the Santa Fe social media pages such as LinkedIn.

Sydney: Okay. I would now like to talk a little bit about customer loyalty. How does Santa Fe Amsterdam create customer loyalty?

███████████: I know that we often give discount on the service fees in order to create customer loyalty. And in December, during the Christmas period, we send out presents to our corporate clients to show our appreciation.

Sydney: That's great! And Santa Fe Amsterdam also provides services to private persons, does the company have many repeat purchases from private persons?

███████████: Not that I know of.

Sydney: Do you know why that is?

███████████: Not really, we are more focused on our corporate clients and keeping them happy. Only a very small percentage of our business is from private persons.

Sydney: Okay. And how does Santa Fe Amsterdam engage existing corporate clients to continue buying their services?

███████████: As I mentioned earlier, we offer our services for a lower price which makes it attractive for the corporations to stay with us. We also have a lot of meetings with them so that we know if there are issues that need to be fixed.

Sydney: Okay. Next, how does Santa Fe Amsterdam differentiate itself from competitors?

███████████: We offer the complete package so that the assignees only have to deal with Santa Fe when they move countries. A lot of our competitors hire external parties to offer certain services.

Sydney: Okay. Do you think the services offered by Santa Fe Amsterdam can be considered high quality?

███████████: Well, to go back to my previous answer, I think the quality of the service is okay but because the workload is too high, it can be better.

Sydney: Right. And does Santa Fe Amsterdam innovate itself?

███████████: we switched to a new system which makes the relocation process easier for consultants and assignees, but for the corporate clients as well. But we still use the old system for some things, which results in consultants having to do double work. And this also increases the workload.

Sydney: Okay. I would now like to ask some questions about social media. Does Santa Fe Amsterdam use social media?

███████████: No, our office does not have social media. I know the marketing department in London uses LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. But our own office doesn't.

Sydney: Okay. So, does Santa Fe Amsterdam focus on branding, and creating brand awareness, on social media?

██████████████: I think they try by using the content from London and then sharing it on their personal LinkedIn accounts.

Sydney: So, no general Santa Fe Amsterdam social media pages exist?

██████████████: No, the office in London is the head office and they take care of all the social media aspects.

Sydney: Okay. Do you know how many times a week they post new content on social media?

██████████████: I am not sure, but I would say maybe once a month.

Sydney: And do you think that is active enough?

██████████████: No, they should be more present.

Sydney: Okay. Is there any other way that Santa Fe Amsterdam tries to establish brand exposure?

██████████████: Yes, through networking events and sponsoring.

Sydney: Okay, well, that was it!

██████████████: Oh, great. Thank you for interviewing me, Sydney.

Sydney: Thank you for answering my questions!

Appendix 3 - Questionnaire

1. Please select your age range
   - o   Under 18
   - o   19-24
   - o   25-34
   - o   35-44
   - o   45 or older

2. Please select your gender
   - o   Male
   - o   Female
   - o   I'd rather not say
   - o   Other

3. Which social media platforms do you actively use? (select one or more)
   - o   Facebook
   - o   LinkedIn
   - o   Instagram
   - o   Twitter
   - o   YouTube
   - o   Snapchat
   - o   Pinterest
   - o   Blogs
   - o   Tiktok
   - o   Other

4. Why do you use social media platforms? (select one or more)
   - o   To share photos and/or videos
   - o   To stay in touch with family and friends
   - o   To share my opinion
   - o   To meet new people
   - o   To find entertaining/educational/interesting content
   - o   To network
   - o   To stay up to date with news and events
   - o   To research products I would like to buy
   - o   To find recommendations or reviews of services/products/brands

o   Other

5. After seeing a product/service/brand on social media, have you ever found yourself interested in that specific product/service/brand?

o   Yes

o   No

o   Maybe

6. If you were to follow companies/brands on social media, what content shared by them would appeal to you the most? (select one or more)

o   Photos

o   Videos

o   Podcasts

o   Blogs/written content

o   Infographics

o   Customer/follower reviews

o   Other

7. On social media, what type of messages or content would draw your attention to a brand/company the most?

o   Tips and tricks or advice

o   Knowledge or experience sharing

o   Being able to interact

o   Similarities to your lifestyle

o   What the company/brand does

o   Social Corporate Responsibility

o   Promotions and advertisements

o   Events

o   Displaying the production process

o   The brand's core values

o   Employee or collaborator introductions

o   Other

8. How likely are you to recommend a company/brand to others that you found on social media?

Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 = Unlikely

2 = Somewhat likely

3 = Neutral

4 = Likely

5 = Very likely

1   2   3   4   5

When you follow or like a company/brand on social media, how important is it that they are…

Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5

1 = Not important

2 = Somewhat important

3 = Neutral

4 = Important

5 = Very important

9. Reacting to comments and messages fast

1   2   3   4   5

10. Posting details about the products or services

1   2   3   4   5

11. Posting appealing content

1   2   3   4   5

12. Actively posting new content

1   2   3   4   5

13. Posting promotional advertisements and sales

1   2   3   4   5

14. Offering lotteries or competitions to win a product or service

1   2   3   4   5

How important are the following aspects for your buying decisions?

Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5

1 = Not important

2 = Somewhat important

3 = Neutral

4 = Important

5 = Very important

15. Speedy communication from the company/brand on social media

1   2   3   4   5

16. Comments/posts from other social media users

1   2   3   4   5

17. Social media advertisements

1   2   3   4   5

18. Recommendations from family or friends

1   2   3   4   5

19. Reviews from other purchasers

1   2   3   4   5

Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make a brand more…

Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5

1 = Completely disagree

2 = Somewhat disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Somewhat agree

5 = Completely agree

20. Reliable

1   2   3   4   5

21. Credible

1   2   3   4   5

22. Attractive

1   2   3   4   5

23. Desirable

1   2   3   4   5

24. Memorable

1   2   3   4   5

25. In the last month, have you purchased a product or service without doing research about it on social media?

- o   Yes
- o   No
- o   I don't remember

26. Do you recognise the brand of Santa Fe Relocation?
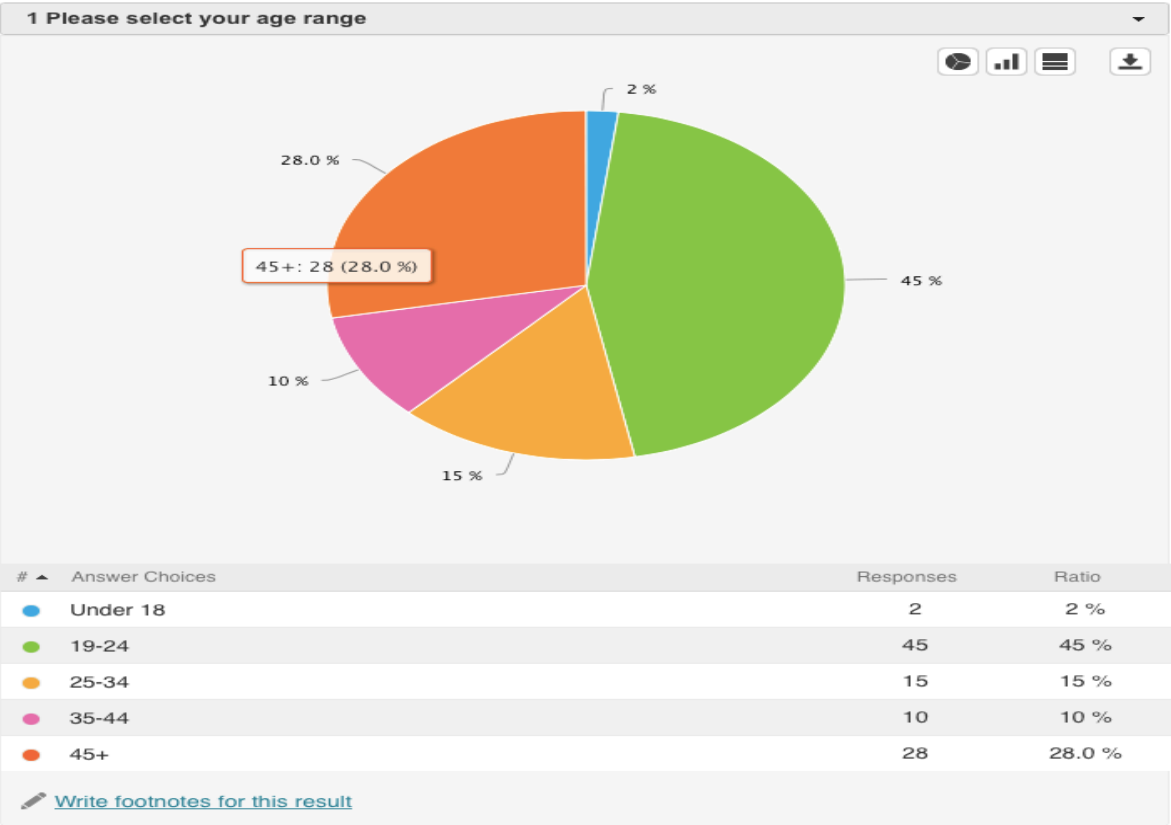
- o   Yes
- o   No

Appendix 4 – Results of questionnaire

Figure 2 Age range of questionnaire respondents
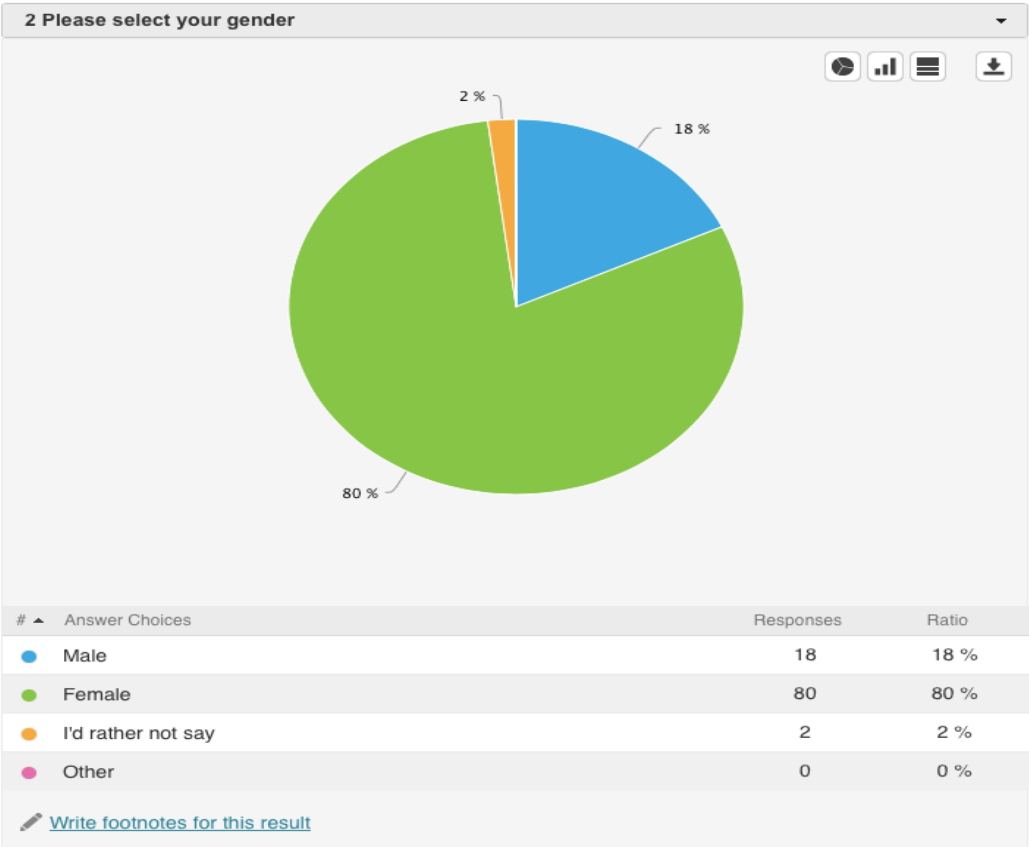
Figure 1 Gender of questionnaire respondents

3 Which social media platforms do you actively use?

# ▲	Answer Choices	Responses	Ratio
●	Facebook	76	76 %
●	Other	4	4 %
●	LinkedIn	29	29.0 %
●	Instagram	66	66 %
●	Twitter	18	18 %
●	YouTube	66	66 %
●	Snapchat	48	48 %
●	Pinterest	26	26 %
●	Blogs	2	2 %
●	Tiktok	18	18 %
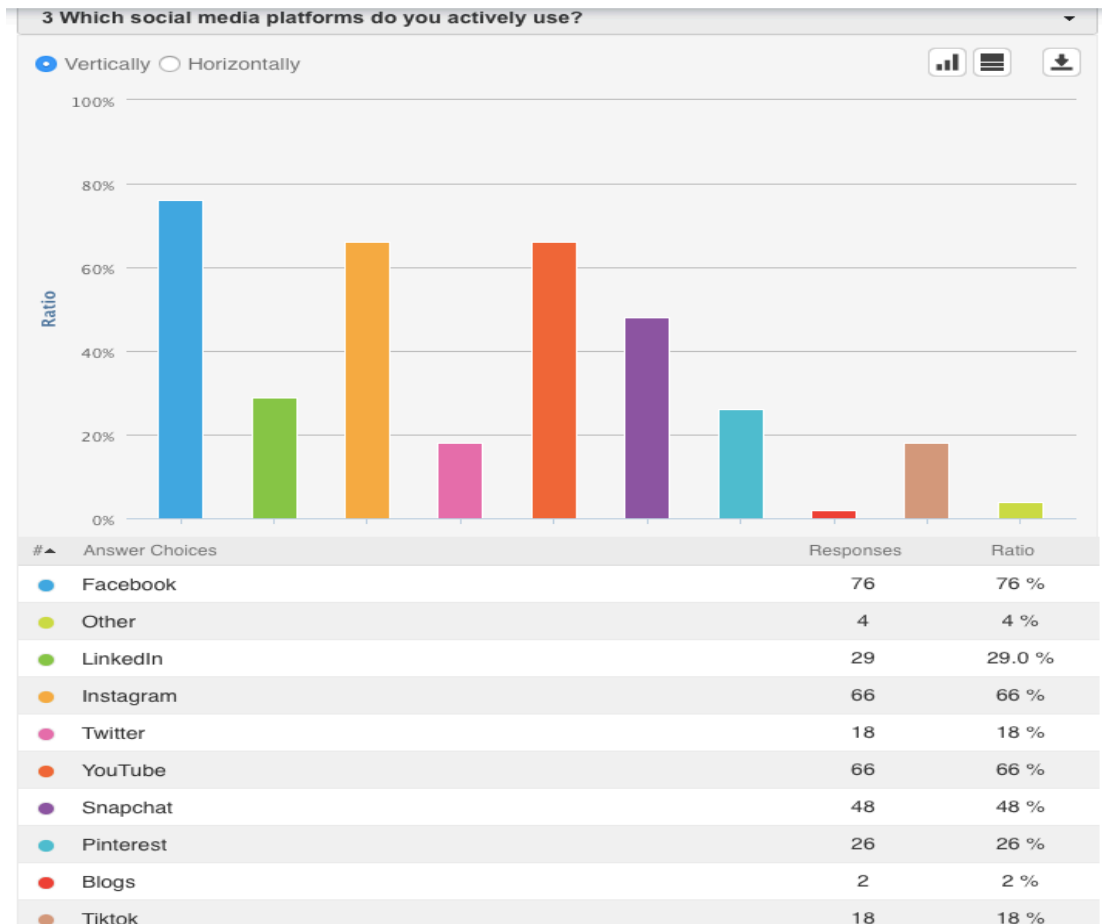
Figure 4 Most actively used social media platforms by respondents

4 Why do you use social media platforms?

# ▲	Answer Choices	Responses	Ratio
●	To share photos and/or videos	53	53 %
●	Other	6	6 %
●	To stay in touch with family and friends	70	70 %
●	To share my opinion	13	13 %
●	To meet new people	14	14.0 %
●	To find entertaining/educational/interesting content	74	74 %
●	To network	33	33 %
●	To stay up to date with news and events	67	67 %
●	To research products I would like to buy	29	29.0 %
●	To find recommendations or reviews of products/services/brands	26	26 %

✎ Write footnotes for this result

Figure 3 Reasons for using social media platforms by respondents
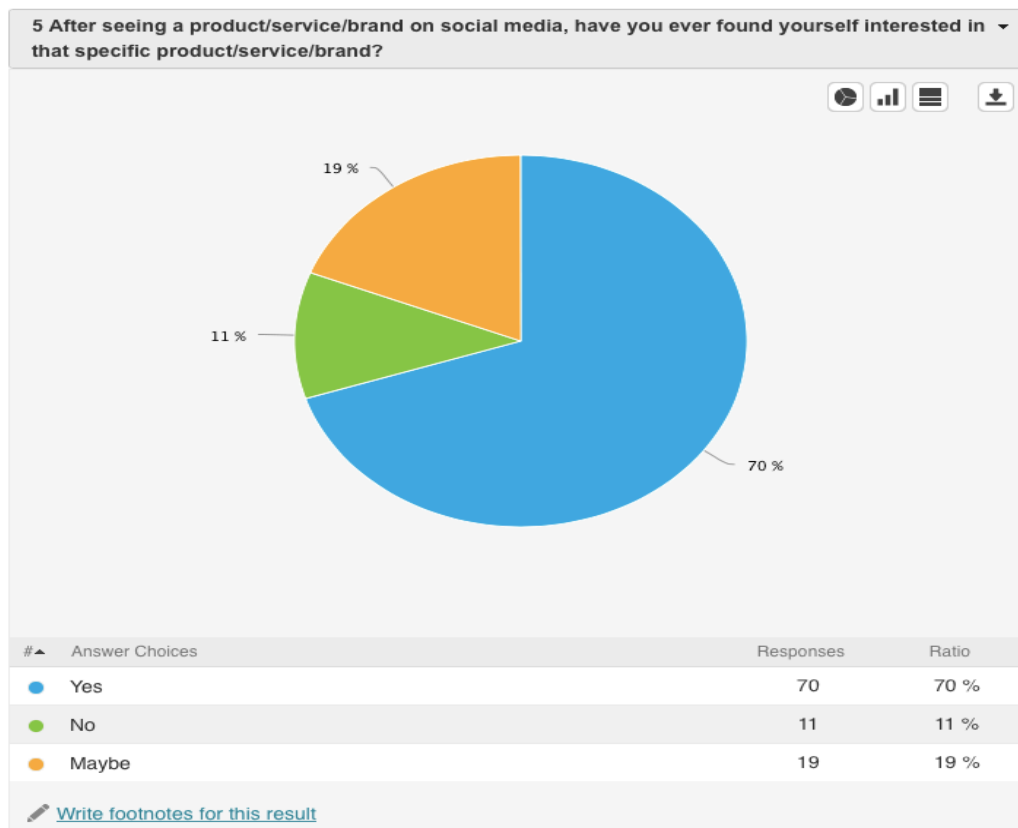
Figure 5 Percentage of respondents that are interested in a product/service/brand after seeing it on social media
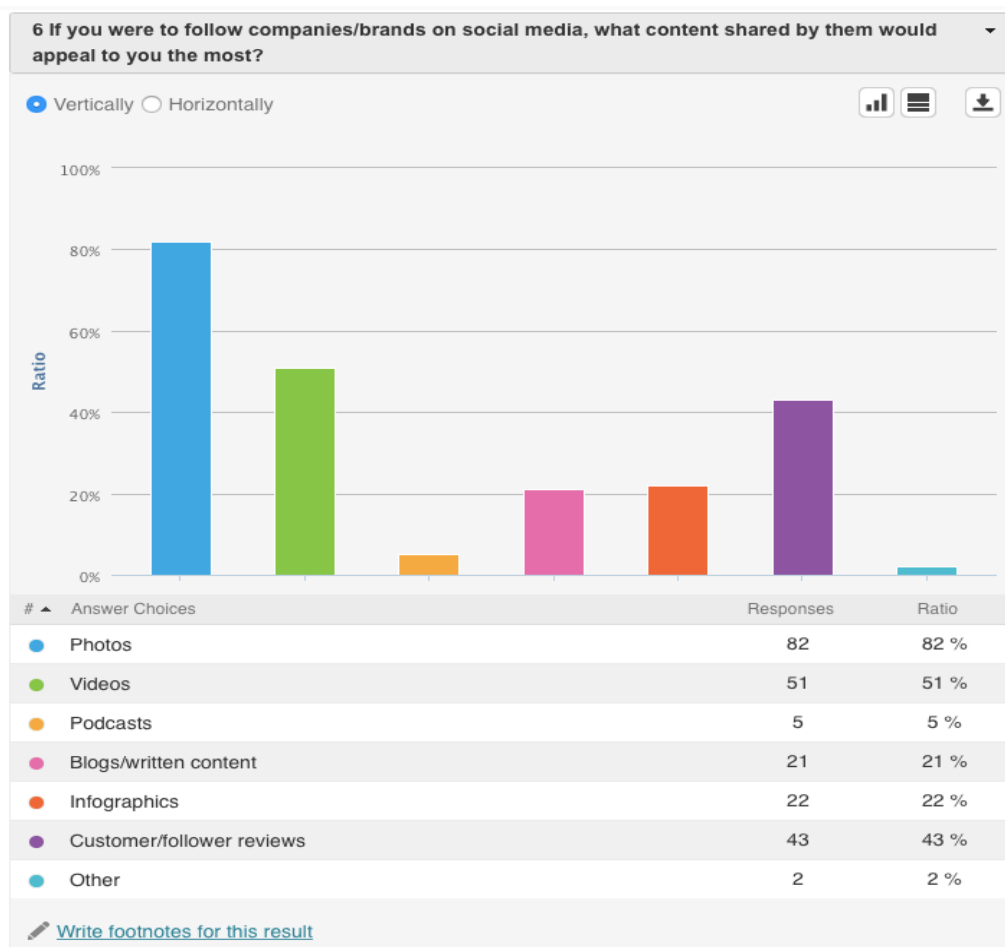
Figure 6 Most appealing content on social media according to respondents
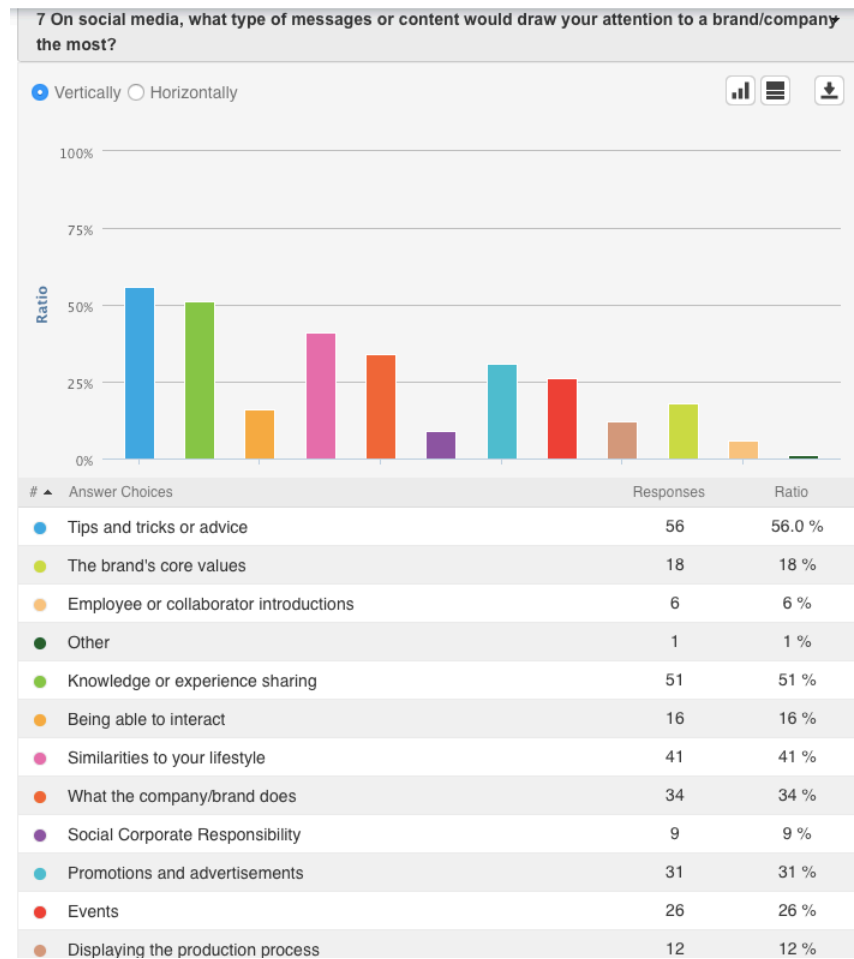
Figure 7 Type of messages or content that would draw the respondents attention the most
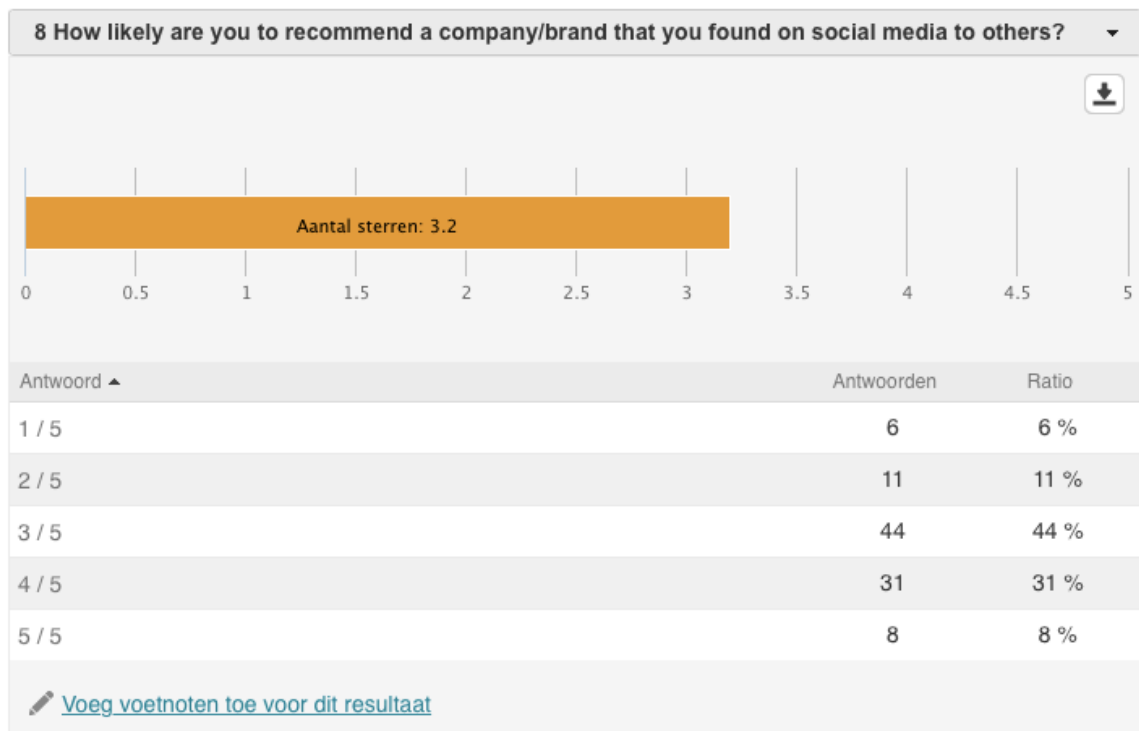

Figure 8 Likeliness of recommending a company or brand found on social media to others
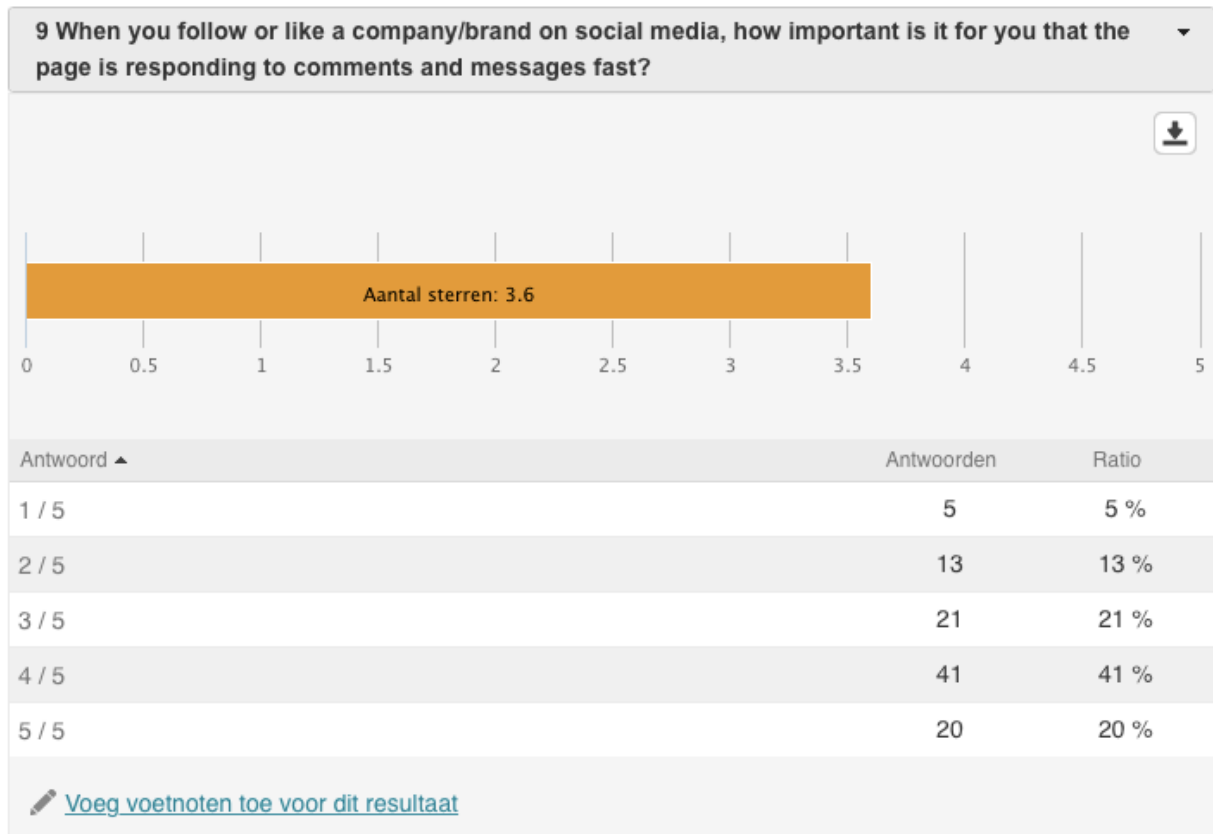
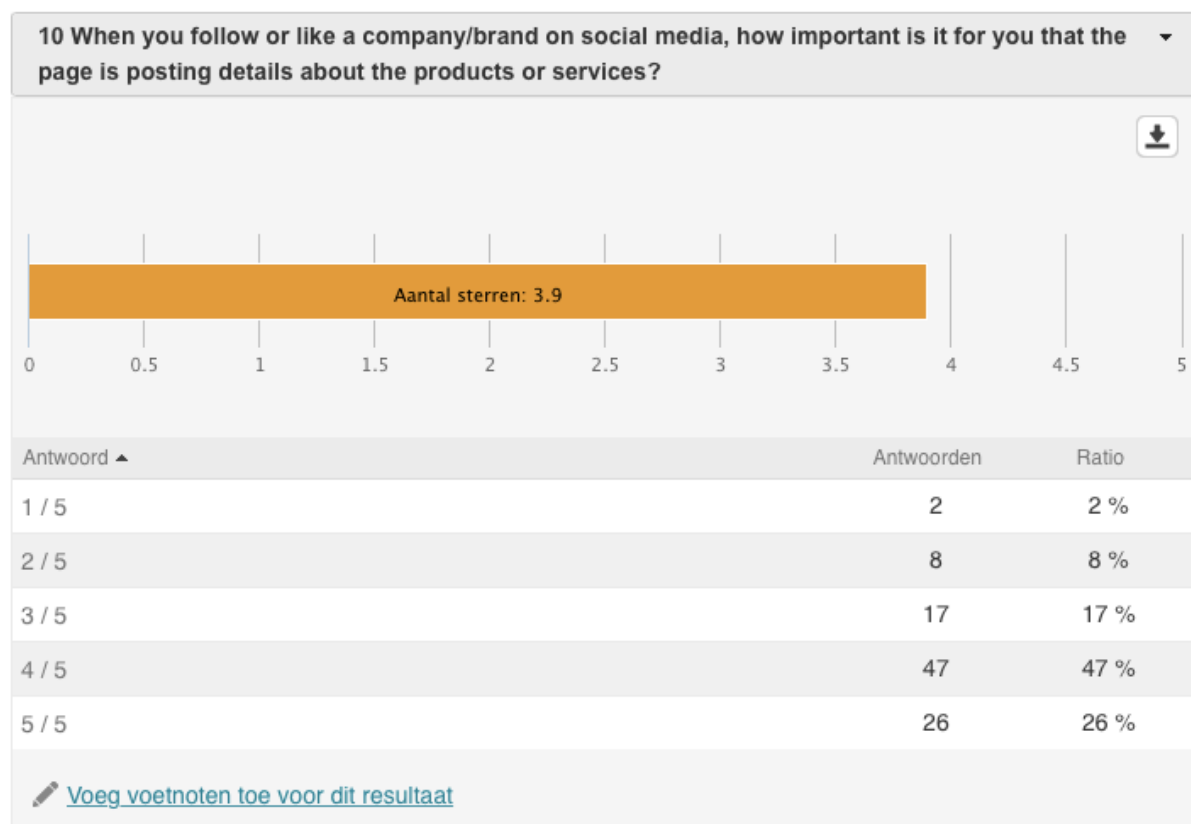Figure 10 Importance of companies or brands responding to comments and messages fast

Figure 9 Importance of companies and brands posting details about the products or services

11 When you follow or like a company/brand on social media, how important is it for you that the page is posting appealing content?

Aantal sterren: 3.9

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	5	5 %
2 / 5	2	2 %
3 / 5	25	25 %
4 / 5	39	39 %
5 / 5	29	29 %

✎ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
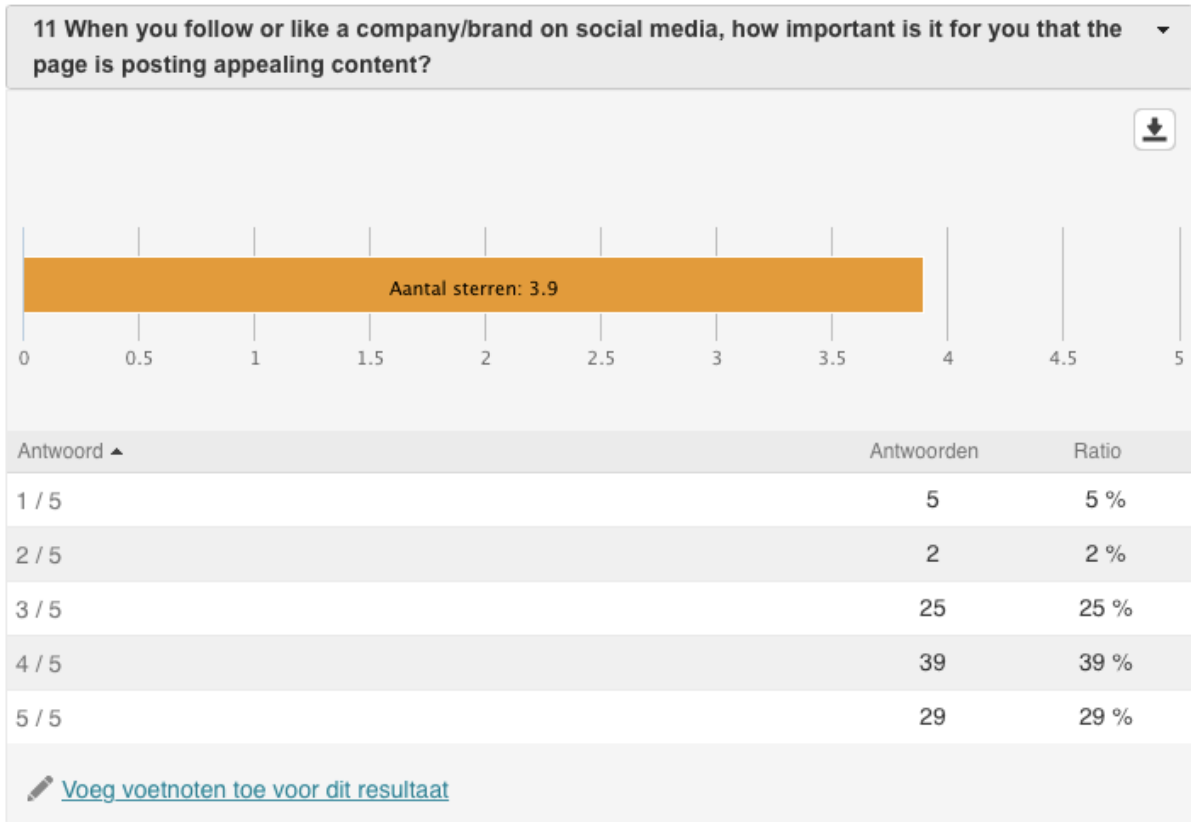
Figure 11 Importance of companies or brands posting appealing content

12 When you follow or like a company/brand on social media, how important is it for you that the page is actively posting new content?

Aantal sterren: 3.8

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	4	4 %
2 / 5	3	3 %
3 / 5	29	29 %
4 / 5	39	39 %
5 / 5	25	25 %

✎ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
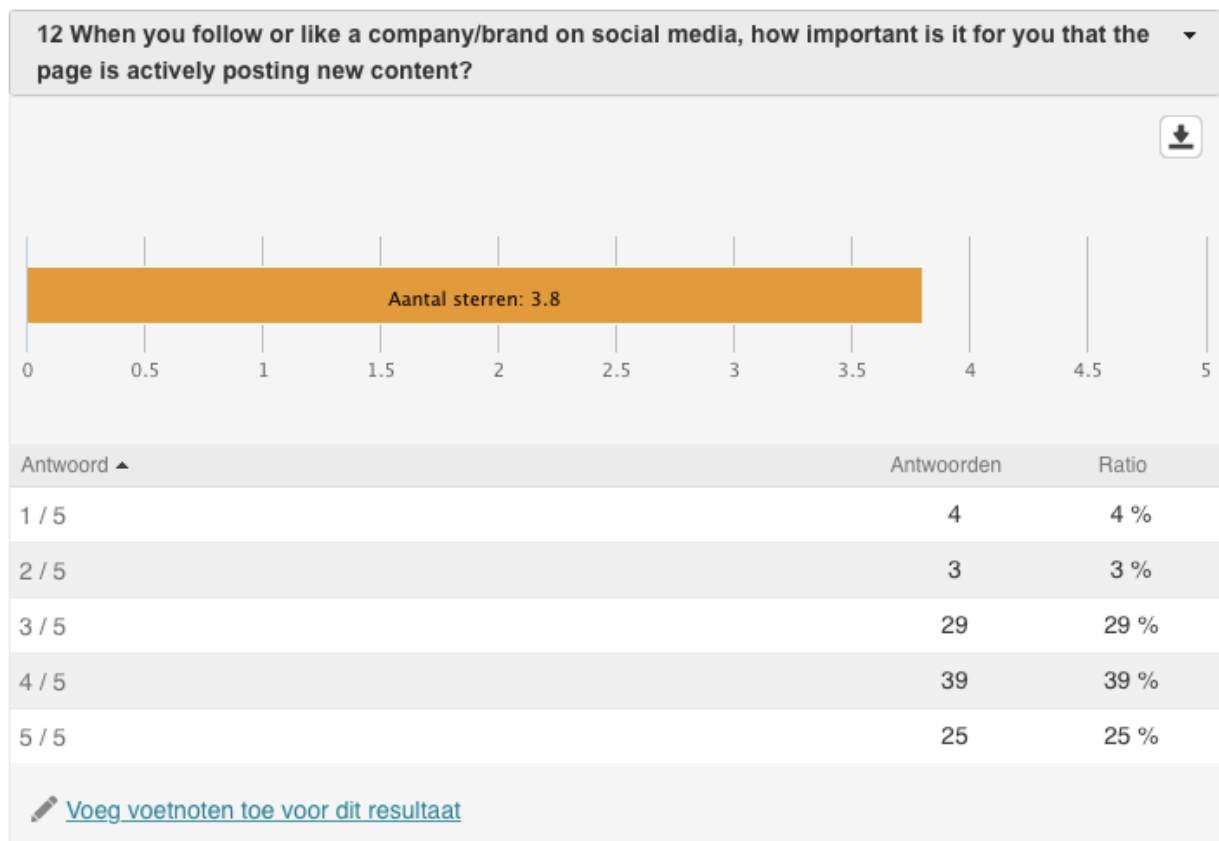
Figure 12 Importance of companies or brands actively posting new content

13 When you follow or like a company/brand on social media, how important is it for you that the page is posting promotional advertisements and sales? ▼

⬇

Aantal sterren: 3

| 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 2 | 2.5 | 3 | 3.5 | 4 | 4.5 | 5 |

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	11	11 %
2 / 5	21	21 %
3 / 5	31	31 %
4 / 5	28	28 %
5 / 5	9	9 %

✏ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
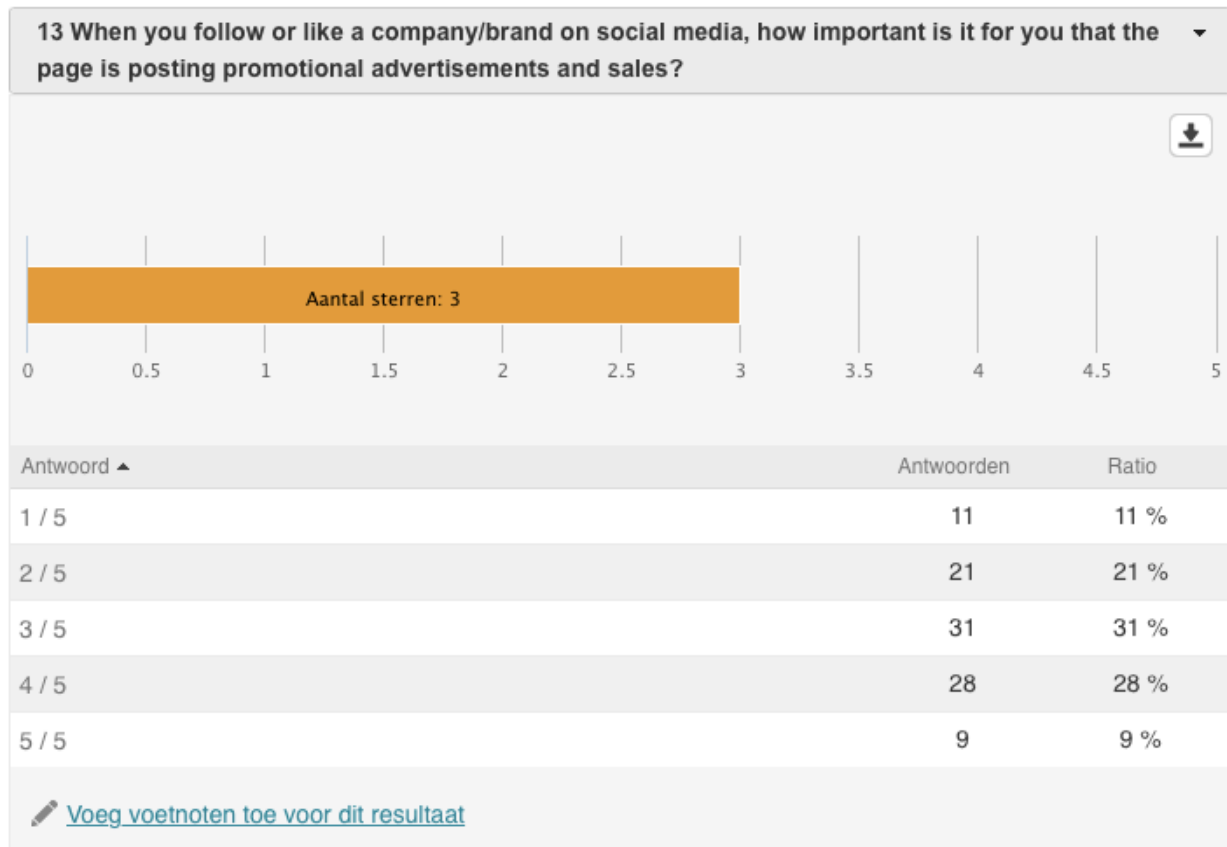
Figure 13 Importance of companies or brand posting promotional advertisements and sales

14 When you follow or like a company/brand on social media, how important is it for you that the page is offering lotteries or competitions to win a product or service? ▼

⬇

Aantal sterren: 2.6

| 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 2 | 2.5 | 3 | 3.5 | 4 | 4.5 | 5 |

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	19	19 %
2 / 5	25	25 %
3 / 5	34	34 %
4 / 5	17	17 %
5 / 5	5	5 %

✏ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
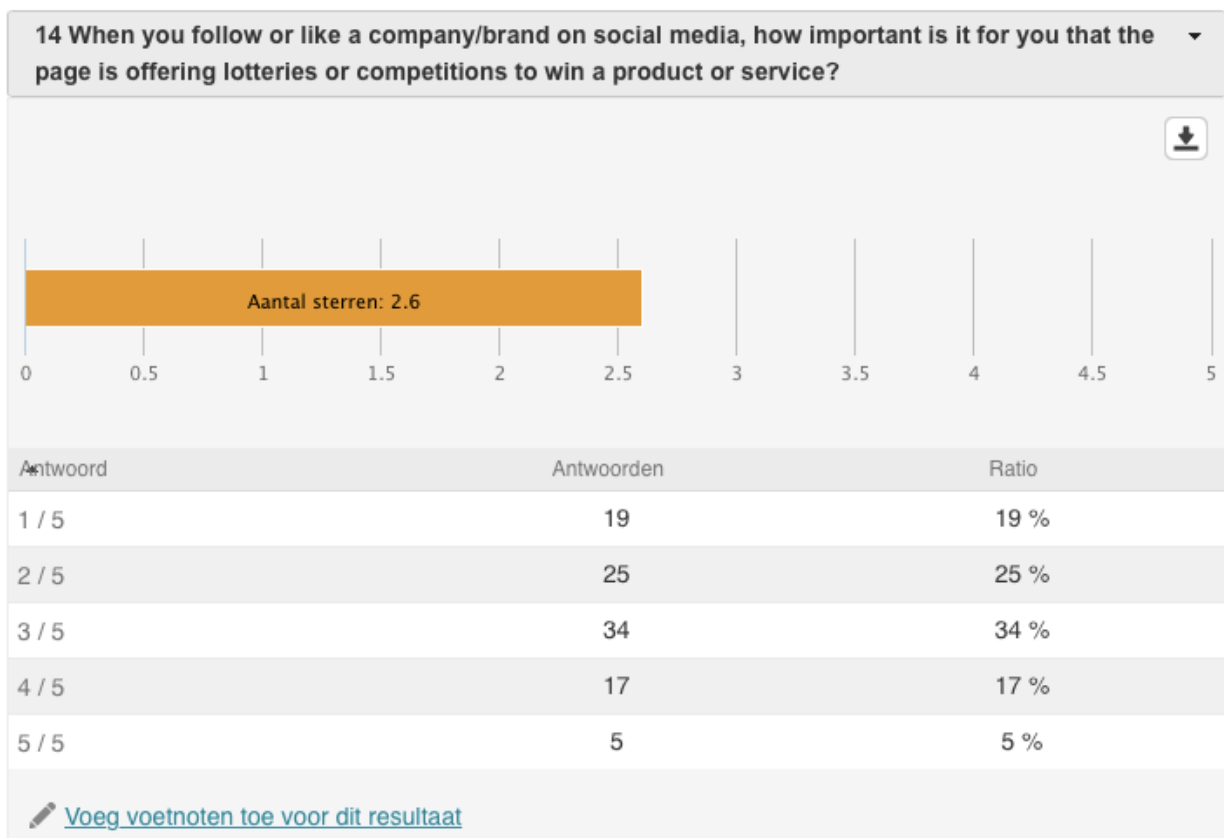
Figure 14 Importance of companies or brands offering lotteries or competitions

15 How important is speedy communication from the company/brand on social media for your buying decisions?

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	5	5 %
2 / 5	11	11 %
3 / 5	21	21 %
4 / 5	34	34 %
5 / 5	29	29 %

✏ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat

Figure 15 Importance of speedy communication from a company or brand for respondents' buying decisions

16 How important are comments/posts from other social media users for your buying decisions?

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	4	4 %
2 / 5	12	12 %
3 / 5	23	23 %
4 / 5	41	41 %
5 / 5	20	20 %

✏ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
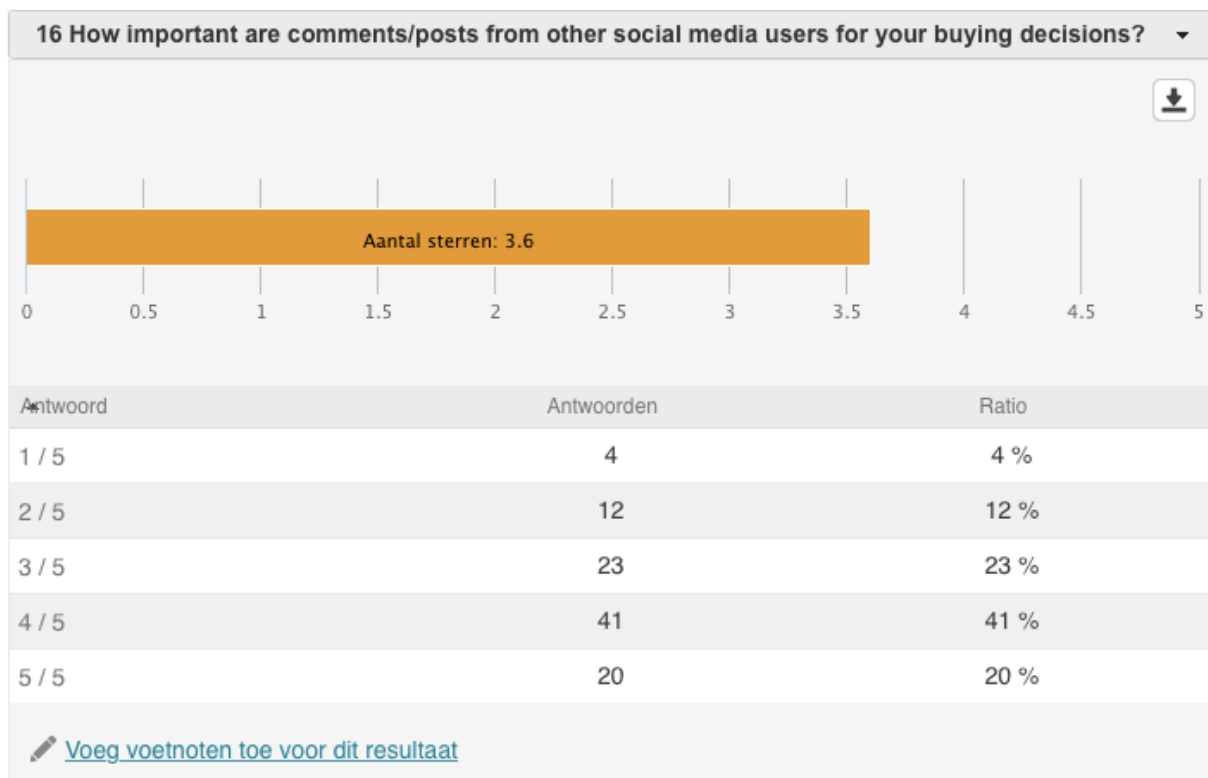
Figure 16 Importance of comments or posts from other social media users for respondents' buying decisions

17 How important are social media advertisements for your buying decisions?

Aantal sterren: 2.8

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	16	16 %
2 / 5	26	26 %
3 / 5	26	26 %
4 / 5	25	25 %
5 / 5	7	7 %

Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
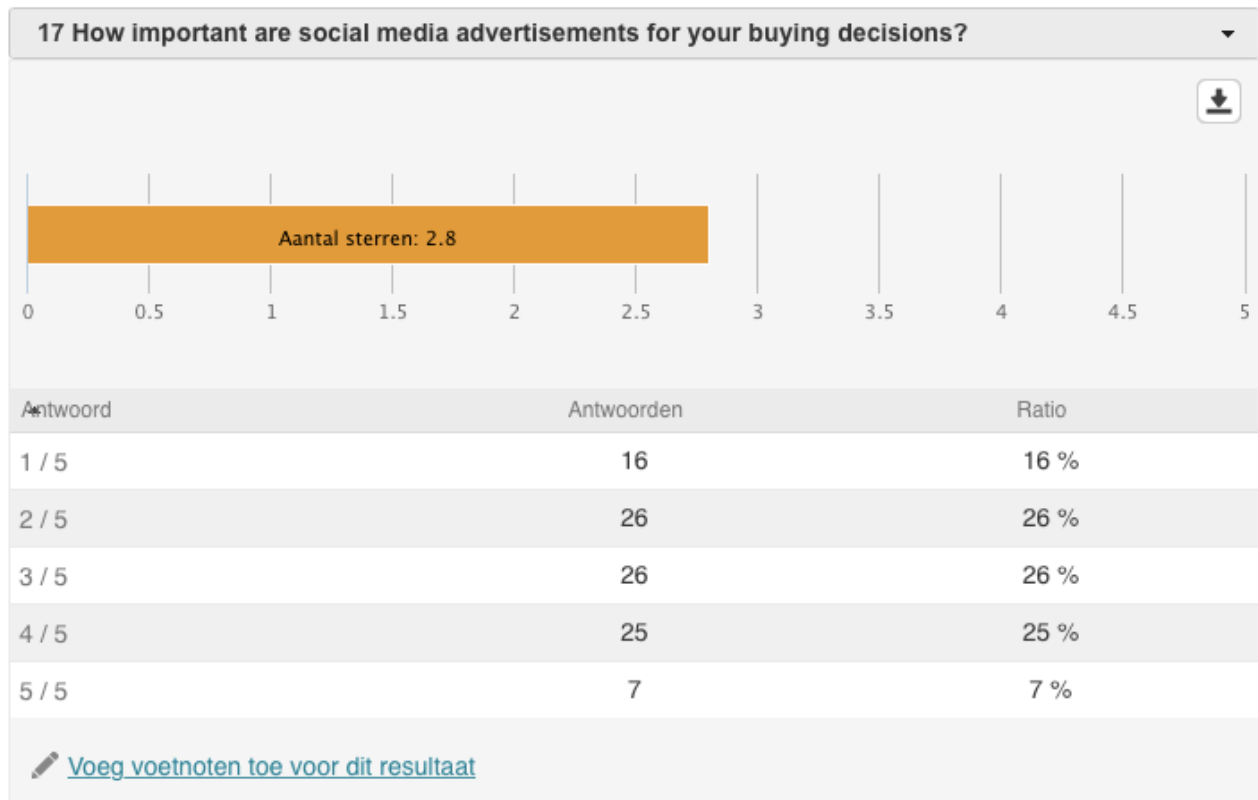
Figure 18 Importance of social media advertisements for respondents' buying decisions

18 How important are recommendations from family or friends for your buying decisions?

Aantal sterren: 3.8

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	6	6 %
2 / 5	6	6 %
3 / 5	24	24 %
4 / 5	34	34 %
5 / 5	30	30 %

Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
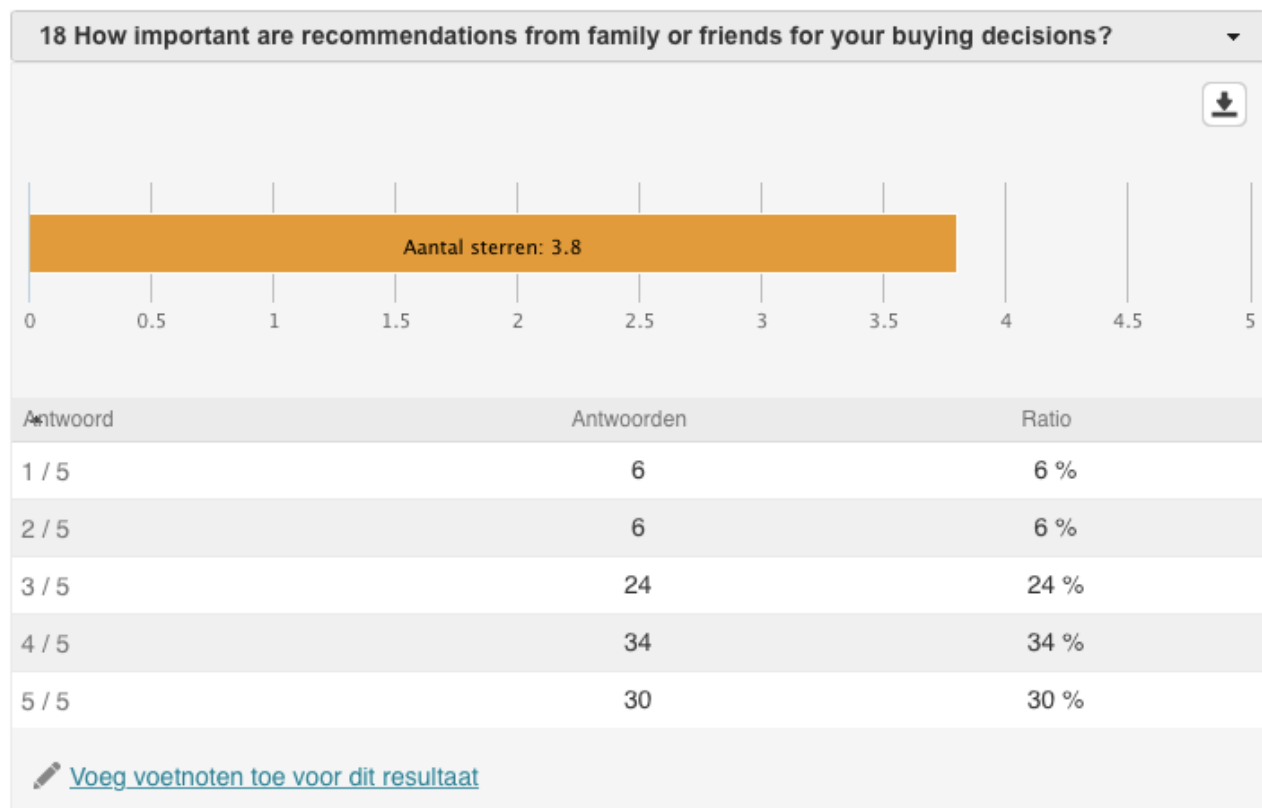
Figure 17 Importance of recommendations from family or friends for respondents' buying decisions

19 How important are reviews from other purchasers for your buying decisions?

Aantal sterren: 3.7

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	3	3 %
2 / 5	6	6 %
3 / 5	29	29 %
4 / 5	38	38 %
5 / 5	24	24 %

Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
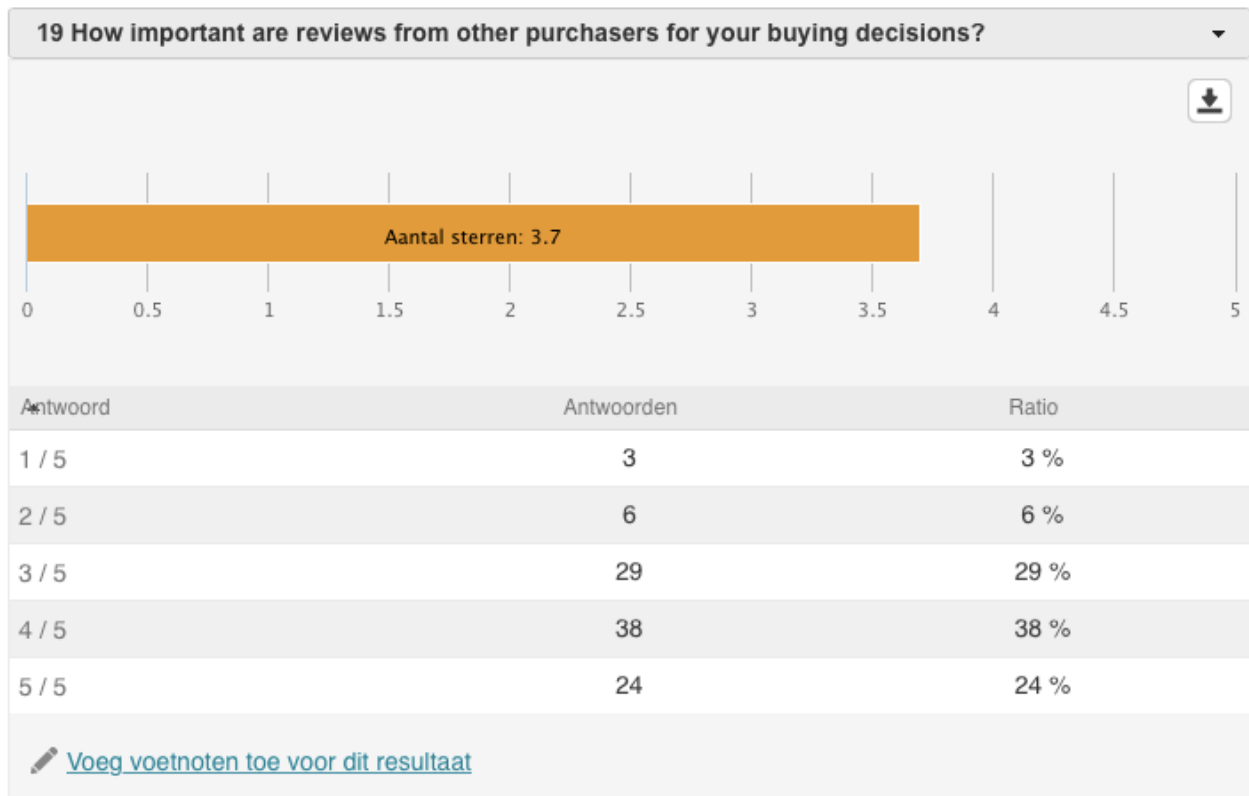
Figure 20 Importance of reviews from other purchasers for respondents' buying decisions

20 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more reliable

Aantal sterren: 3.4

Antwoord	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	5	5 %
2 / 5	10	10 %
3 / 5	35	35 %
4 / 5	39	39 %
5 / 5	11	11 %

Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat
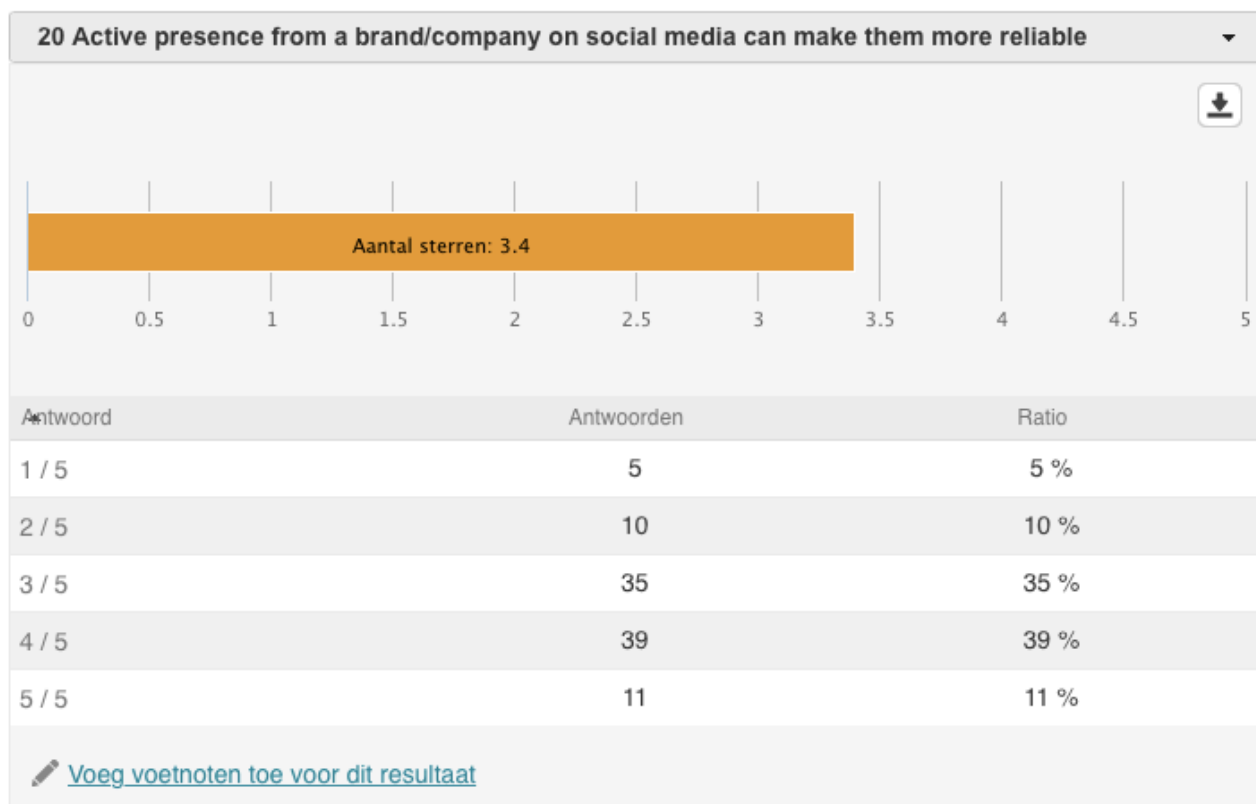
Figure 19 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more reliable

21 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more credible

Aantal sterren: 3.4

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	4	4 %
2 / 5	12	12 %
3 / 5	37	37 %
4 / 5	32	32 %
5 / 5	15	15 %

✎ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat

Figure 21 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more credible

22 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more attractive

Aantal sterren: 3.7

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	3	3 %
2 / 5	8	8 %
3 / 5	23	23 %
4 / 5	50	50 %
5 / 5	16	16 %

✎ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat

Figure 22 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more attractive

23 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more desirable

Aantal sterren: 3.5

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	2	2 %
2 / 5	13	13 %
3 / 5	35	35 %
4 / 5	35	35 %
5 / 5	15	15 %

✎ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat

Figure 24 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more desirable

24 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more memorable

Aantal sterren: 3.6

Antwoord ▲	Antwoorden	Ratio
1 / 5	4	4 %
2 / 5	8	8 %
3 / 5	30	30 %
4 / 5	36	36 %
5 / 5	22	22 %

✎ Voeg voetnoten toe voor dit resultaat

Figure 23 Active presence from a brand/company on social media can make them more memorable

Figure 25 Percentage of respondents that have purchased a product or service without doing research on social media
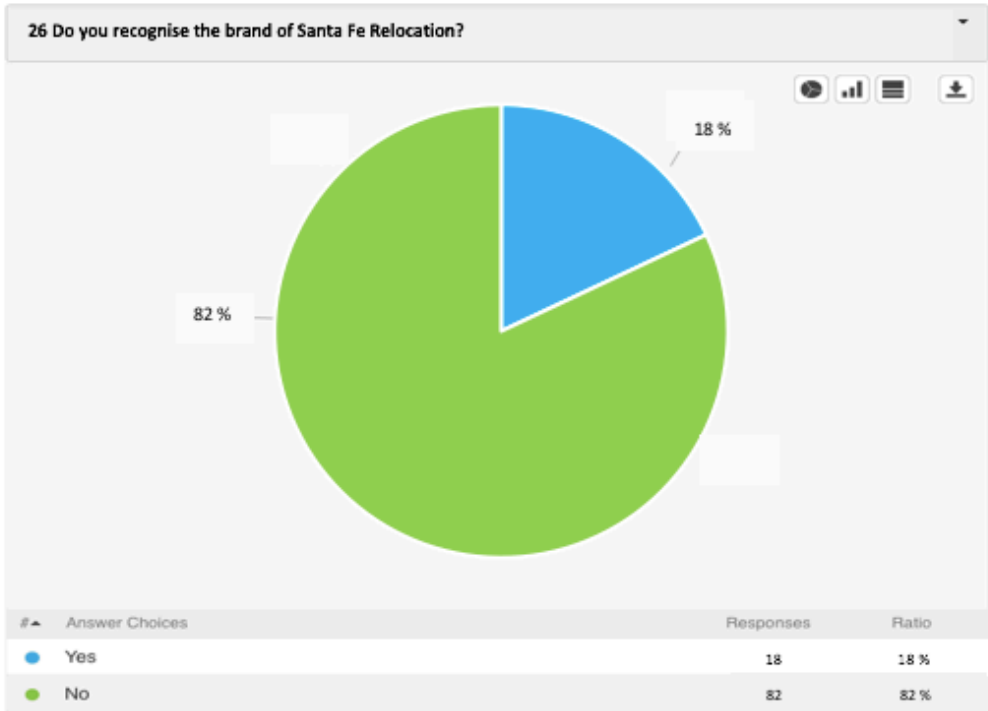
Figure 26 Percentage of respondents that recognise the brand of Santa Fe Relocation

Appendix 5 – Student Ethics form

THE HAGUE
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

European Studies Student Ethics Form

Your name: Sydney van Diermen

Supervisor: Ernst van Weperen

Instructions:

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx). If you are planning research with human subjects, you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

a. Read section 2 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
b. Complete section 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
c. Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and ask him/her to sign the form.
d. Always append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation. This is a knock-out criterium; if not included the Final Project/Dissertation is awarded an NVD.

Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)

(i) Title of Project: How can Santa Fe Amsterdam improve its brand awareness through the use of social media

(ii) Aims of project:

The aim is to determine the effectiveness of social media as an instrument for building a company's brand awareness and to propose improvement points to Santa Fe Amsterdam in order for them to gain brand awareness.

(iii) Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)

Yes

If yes: you should complete the section 2 of this form.

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects. I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature_____   Date _____

Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.

(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):
The participants will be interviewed. The interview has structured questions and the questions are open-ended. Therefore, they will share their knowledge of the situation and might share opinions, feelings, etc.

(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?
The people that will be interviewed are employees at Santa Fe Amsterdam. I have asked their permission to be interviewed and they agreed. They will also sign the Informed Consent Form.

(iii) What sort of stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to? Tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below

- ☒ Questionnaires
- ☐ Pictures
- ☐ Sounds
- ☒ Words
- ☐ Other

(iv) Consent: Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. By means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual. Appendix the Informed Consent Form to your Final Project/Dissertation as well.

(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data?
In order to guarantee the confidentiality of participant's data I will keep their records secure by only sending information with password protected files. Only relevant findings obtained during the interviews will be presented in·the thesis, therefore, personal information/opinions/feelings shared during interviews will not be reported in the thesis. Additionally, I will only mention the interviewees' last name in the thesis. For the questionnaires, the respondents are anonymous respondents and therefore I do not know who the individual is.

Student's signature: Date: 14-12-2020

Supervisor's signature: Date: 14-12-2020

Appendix 6 – Informed Consent forms

THE **HAGUE**

UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

1) Research Project Title: Improving brand awareness through social media

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

This final project focuses on how Santa Fe Amsterdam can improve its brand awareness in the Netherlands through the use of social media. The interview will give the author important primary data which will aid in forming recommendations to Santa Fe Amsterdam.

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

THE HAGUE
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

1) Research Project Title: Improving brand awareness through social media

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

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Appendix 7 – List of figures and tables