

Kucharska, Wioleta

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GDAŃSK UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

CONSUMER SOCIAL NETWORK BRAND IDENTIFICATION AND PERSONAL BRANDING. HOW DO SOCIAL NETWORK USERS CHOOSE AMONG BRAND SITES?

Wioleta Kucharska*

GUT Faculty of Management and Economics

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*Gdansk University of Technology, Faculty of Management and Economics,
wkucharska@zie.pg.gda.pl (corresponding author)



Consumer Social Network Brand Identification and Personal Branding.

How do social network users choose among brand sites?

Wioleta Kucharska¹

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Abstract

Social network brand sites are increasingly attracting the attention of scientists and managers intrigued by their potential application for brand value creation. The aim of this research is to fill the gap in understanding how users choose among social networking sites as an act of brand identification. Social network users, unlike it is in real life, do not need to own branded products to use their image. For this reason their identification with brands can bring interesting implications for those who study brand value creation. The study presents a new model whose structure of social network brand sites identification drivers varies for customer brand identification in the real and virtual worlds. The presented model reveals that personal branding is a planned effect of brand identification and is crucial for brand value creation in social networks.

Keywords: CBI, social network, personal branding, brand loyalty

JEL: M30; M31; Y1

¹ Wioleta Kucharska, wkucharska@zie.pg.gda.pl; Gdańsk University of Technology, Management and Economics Faculty, Marketing Department, ul. Narutowicza 11/12, 80-233 Gdańsk, Poland

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1. Introduction

Building brand value in hyper competition conditions is a serious contemporary management problem (Bogner & Barr, 2000). One of the reasons to which scientists ascribe this difficulty is the information era. The rise of the Internet has significantly changed the market environment (network economy, Castels 2007; Wilson & Giligan, 2005). In the environment flooded with information practitioners come across obstacles to reach market goals which not long ago were possible to obtain with the use of traditional tools (Brown & Hayes, 2008). Companies expect marketing departments, perceived as cost generators, to provide adequate return of costs incurred on investment and build a certain brand value based on market share, income, and profits generated by the departments. In the face of decreasing return of resources allocated to traditional media and searching for new solutions managers engage resources in activities conducted in social media (McDonald & Wilson, 2012; Solis, 2012; Kim & Ko, 2012; Park & Kim, 2014). Social media shows itself to be a logical consequence of changes taking place within the information society. According to the new stream of network economy (Castells, 2007; Mazurek, 2014; Tapscott, 1999) social media seems to contribute to creating value in a substantial way. Marketing practice is to a great extent shaped through the application of new technology (Maklan, Peppard & Klaus, 2015). This fact may lead to thinking that social media, being one of new communication channels, constitutes an antidote to the marketing communication crisis (Bruhn, Schoenmueller & Schafer, 2012; Kaplan & Heinlen, 2010; Grönroos, 2007; Halligan & Shah, 2009; Peattie & Belz, 2010; Solis, 2012) reflected in the decreasing return on activities in traditional media (McDonald, Smith & Ward, 2006; McDonald & Wilson, 2012).

Successful brand building in social media, by engaging customers in communication with brands through online platforms such as social media sites (fan pages), has become an important object for studies for both scientists and practitioners (Kuo & Feng, 2013; Köhler et al., 2011). Thus, being aware of determinants of the CBI in a social network can help understand key factors contributing to the success of brand value creation. The aim of the paper is to describe factors which determine how network users identify with brands' social networking websites. Such identification is necessary, however not sufficient, for brand value creation to take place in social networks. Identification with a brand's social networking site means having full access to a fan page of the brand, which ensures uninterrupted access to the content connected with that particular brand. The logical consequence is the user's identification with the brand in social networks. The main research goal of the paper is to describe the structure of factors which

determine the identification of social network users with a brand's social networking website and finally with particular brands, with special emphasis on the self-presentation factor and brand category. The author has made an assumption that structures of brand identification drivers differ in real and virtual worlds. In order to prove it, the author has used two models: CBI Stokburger-Sauer, Rathneshwar, and San (2012) and Jahn and Kunz model (2012).

2. CBI

Works of Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) and Bhattacharyya & Sen (2003) Elbedweihiy et al. (2016) define CBI as “the primary psychological substrate for deep, committed and meaningful relationships that marketers are increasingly seeking to build with their customers”. It is worth emphasizing that before creating the CBI model (2012) Stokburger-Sauer conducted research on the level of social integration of brand users in relation to brand loyalty (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010). The result of the research proves a stronger relationship between the two in real life than in virtual reality. The results of the research may have contributed to creating the CBI model for real life, leaving out virtual reality, because the results pointed to weak correlation between the sense of belonging in virtual communities and brand loyalty. Luo, Zhang & Wang (2016) investigated online virtual communities' relation to brand identification but they did not exam determinants of CBI. Marin & Maya (2013), Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012) did, but their determinants models have been made for real world. Jahn & Kunz (2012), Enginkaya & Yilmaz (2014) virtual models focuses on the effect of fan pages on the customer-brand relationship, but does not exam the same set of CBI determinants as Stockburger-Sauer et al. (2012). Thus, the aim of the research is to fill the gap in understanding how users choose among brands' social networkig websites which is an act of identification with these brands.

Although Jahn & Kunz model (2012) refers to virtual reality it assumes the existence of a bond between a fan page user and a brand which is a result of fan page participation. Stockburger-Sauer et al. (2012) assume customer brand-self similiarity as one of determinants. Lack of bonding is typical of “generation Z”, that is why the postulate of eliminating bonding for the sake of brand identification is understandable and justified (Boyd, 2014). Because the Jahn & Kunz model (2012) studies a self-concept factor as the determinant of engagement for active users of fan pages only, the author postulates that it does not give a complete picture of the process of brand value creation in social networks. The presented CsnBI model of social network consumer-brand identification assumes the existence of identification and not a bond, and refers to fans identifying with the fan page regardless of the level of involvement in commercial brand communication.

The CBI construct might be considered as sufficient if the virtual reality of a social network was a reflection of a real social network. In order to build one's image with the use of a brand in the real world an individual has to use it; ergo, to own it, that is to buy branded products or be their beneficiary. Possession and using are key factors in the process of self-identification with the use of brand imagery (Belk, 1988). The relationship a brand craves for is built upon the act of using and purchasing. In a virtual world possessing a branded product is not necessary for its image to be used successfully, and thus it is reasonable to envisage that in this context a symbolic character of a brand is more meaningful than functional for consumer behavior. Similarly, a reference group will probably determine the identification to a greater extent because each activity of a consumer in the network which is somewhat related to the brand is a "public" act, visible for all users of a given network, hence, always taking place in the context of a particular reference group and never outside it. It is quite the opposite in the real world where the act of using a product does not always have a public character. Therefore, the drivers of consumer-brand identification in the network may significantly vary from the drivers in a real life. General knowledge regarding factors affecting consumer identification allows us to optimize the process of value creation in a social networking environment and take advantage of resources in a better way. This knowledge is extremely important for managerial efficiency and effectiveness. Thanks to understanding the phenomenon of consumer social network brand identification, especially when it is accompanied by lack of identification with the brand's virtual community, it is possible to optimize the process of commercial brand value creation in a virtual environment. Luo, Zhang and Wang (2016) pointed out that CBI influences identification with online social community.

3. Personal branding

Personal branding construct was invented by Peters in 1997. In the beginning, the self-marketing idea seemed to apply mainly to celebrities (Rein, Kotler & Shields), politicians and business leaders (Shepherd, 2005; Schawbel, 2009), project teams members (Kucharska & Dąbrowski 2016) but with time it turned out to have importance to average social media users (Lampel & Bhalla, 2007; Schwabel, 2009; Vitberg, 2009; Labrecque, Markos, Milne, G. R., 2011; Karaduman, 2013). With regard to the idea of "prosumerism" by Alvin Toffler (1981) one can hypothesize that there is a certain degree of probability that brands present in the social media constitute predominantly a tool for self-presentation of network users. Social media in principle serve the purpose of building relationships between people. They enable self-expression and in consequence self-presentation. In conditions specific to social media, where

recipients of the content are at the same time its producers, brands are only, or as much as, expression tools. Social media such as LinkedIn or Goldenline are used as recruitment tools. Facebook is a source of information about a lifestyle and personality of a potential candidate. Since social media provide knowledge about a person they are a crucial element for every network user who wants to build his/her image for the sake of recruiters, friends, and acquaintances. The idea of online personal branding was broadly discussed by Lampel & Bhalla (2007), Vitberg (2009), Labrecque, Markos & Milne (2011) and Karaduman (2013).

4. Conceptual framework

Labrecque, Markos & Milne (2011) imply that people use social media actively in order to create their personal brands today. According to the idea of co-branding (Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Leuthesser, Kohli & Suri, 2003), drawing from the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991), and referring to Shepherd's (2005) and Khedher's (2014) definition of personal branding as a planned process in which people make efforts to market themselves, an assumption has been made which says that a personal brand shares a communication channel with the commercial brand giving it recommendation and creating a positive WOM within its own network of mutually cooperating personal brands. On the other hand, a commercial brand grants a personal brand its image, a fact also pointed out by Muntinga & Moorman (2012). The co-branding construct is often used in the context of cooperation between commercial brands or celebrities (Ilicic & Webster, 2013), but in context of network economy and based on essence on personal brand as a planned process of self-marketing, a hypothesis has been developed which talks about a conscious identification with a commercial brand in order to create a personal brand. Namely: the more a FB user identifies with a fan page of a particular brand, the more strongly, in his/her opinion, it affects a positive attitude of other users towards his/her personal brand. A significant determinant creates a positive attitude of other social network users towards the user's personal brand, which is a result of the social network user's identification with a commercial brand. Identification with a commercial brand fan page affects a positive attitude of other users towards a personal brand of the identifying user. Thereby, it may be presumed that customer social network brand identification (CsnBI) creates a personal brand. CsnBI is a construct which reflects the construct of consumer-brand identification CBI by Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012) for consumers in a real life.

H1: CsnBI affects a positive attitude of other users towards a personal brand of a self-identifying user.

Self-expression is a form of affirmation of one's self (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Kim, Han & Park, 2001) and always takes place in a social context (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Escales & Bettman, 2005), meaning that so-called "reference groups" have an influence on both self-image as well as the act and ways of individual's self-expression. The need for self-expression defined by Bhat & Reddy (1988) has made it possible to formulate a hypothesis regarding the relationship between self-expression of network users with fan pages of commercial brands: in the opinion of a FB user, the greater are the chances of his /her self-expression created by the content of a fan page the, the stronger his/her identification with the fan page is. The result of such a correlation leads to a transfer of meanings between a brand and a user. Self-expression of a user has a subjective character, whereas the transferred content – objective.

H2: User's self-expression directly builds identification with brand's fan page.

Based on the analogy of consumer-brand identification in the real world and CBI model referring to identification with a brand in the real world (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, and Sen, 2012), it can be presumed that the same factor may also affect consumer-brand identification in a virtual world. This is where a new hypothesis originated which looks at the relationship between characteristics of a brand perceived by a network user as distinguishing and his/her propensity to identify with such a brand. Paraphrasing: the more characteristics of a given brand a FB user views as distinguishing, the stronger his/her identification with the brand's fan page is. This presumption is consistent with the Meaning Transfer Model by McCracken (1990).

H3: Brand distinctiveness directly affects one's propensity to identify with a fan page.

The next hypothesis is also based on the CBI model referring to consumer-brand identification in the real world (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen, 2012). The determinant described by this model is "social interaction" with other users related to the brand. The presumption that the determinant is also reflected in a virtual world has made it possible to formulate a hypothesis referring to the influence of the need of interaction with others users on

brand identification in a social network. Paraphrasing: if in a FB user's opinion the fan page gives him/her more possibilities to develop social contacts, the stronger this user's identification with the fan page is. Such dependence may be assumed to be probable in social networks which, from definition, are used for making contact with other people.

H4: Possibility to develop social contacts directly affects one's propensity to identify with a fan page.

Determinants drawn from Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012) offline model and the Jahn & Kunz model (2012) are: "fan page utility" and "hedonic functions of a fan page". They are also reflected in presumptions presented by the team of Park, Jaworski & McInnis (1986), which constitute a framework for theoretical assumptions of the research presented in this chapter. In light of all the arguments presented above the following has been assumed: the more useful or entertaining in a FB user's opinion the content of a fan page is, the more strongly the user identifies with the fan page.

H5: Utility of a fan page directly affects user's propensity to identify with it.

H6: Hedonic / Entertaining function of a fan page directly affects user's propensity to identify with it.

According to Kim, Han & Park. (2001), Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012), and Elbedweihy et al. (2016) the CBI construct is a predictor of loyal brand behavior in the real world, and thus analogically it can be envisaged that CsnBI construct is a predictor for loyal brand behavior in the virtual social network world as claimed by Laroche, Habibi & Richard (2013) and Greve (2014). It has been assumed that: the stronger user's identification with a fan page of the brand is, the more loyal to the brand that user will stay.

H7: CsnBI affects brand loyalty

In order to verify the developed hypotheses, appropriate tests have been conducted.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework.

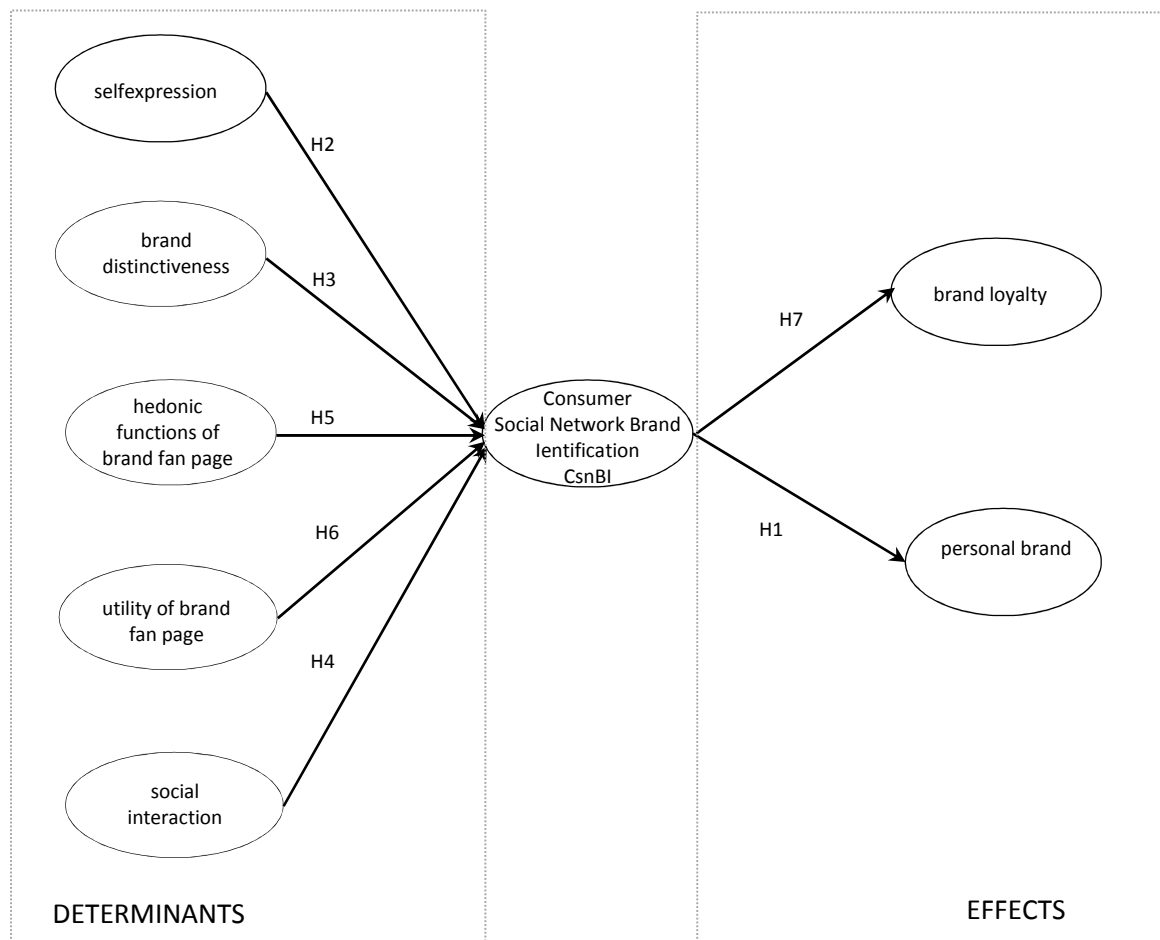


Fig.1 Conceptual framework

Source: author's own study based on Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012), Jahn & Kunz (2012), Shepherd (2005), Lampel & Bhalla (2007), East, Wright & Vanhuelle (2013).

5. Method

The study was conducted based on the data originally collected among Polish users of the social networking service – Facebook (FB) with the use of a questionnaire. The service was chosen for its leading position among Internet websites in Poland. FB comes third in popularity in Poland after Google and YouTube (Gemius, 2015). The questionnaire's design was based on measurement scales and their sources presented in Appendix 1. The respondents reacted to statements based on a 7- point Likert scale, which goes starting from 1 – definitely NOT, through 4 – neither YES nor NOT, until 7 – definitely YES. The questionnaire was preceded by a short introduction explaining the purpose and subject matter of the study. The first qualifying question directly referred to the subject matter of the study and regarded the

respondent's affiliation to any fan page on FB. The subsequent part of the structure of the questionnaire led from general to detailed questions which required more precise answers. The proper study was preceded by a pilot study (40 persons). The pilot study made it possible to optimize statements and eliminate constructs present in CBI model (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen, 2012; Jahn & Kunz, 2012), whose nature was unclear for the respondents, for example the "brand-self similarity" construct, which was a part of CBI model (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen, 2012). The respondents also did not see a difference between "memorable brand experiences" and its "distinctiveness", arguing that the identified characteristics were a result of the experience. In effect, for the benefit of the study reliability, such problematic constructs have been eliminated. Data collection took place electronically, mainly through the social networking portal Facebook with a "snowball method". The data was collected from March to June 2015 among students of Gdańsk University of Technology and University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, their families and friends.

The sample size is 641 respondents. 589 cases were accepted for further analysis, after rejecting faulty and incomplete questionnaires. The author used a non-probability sampling method, whose structure was distorted in comparison to the population of Facebook users in Poland by an overrepresentation of the 18-24 age group which accounted to 69% of all respondents. The analysis was conducted with the structural equation modeling method. For the theoretical model presented in Fig. 1, a measurement and later a structural Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) models have been developed. The model was then estimated and assessed. Estimation was conducted according to a maximum likelihood method (ML). The evaluation of the model quality was conducted based on tests such as: RAMSEA, CMIN/DF, RMR, GFI, and HOELTER with the use of SPSS AMOS 23 software. Tab. 1 presents test results of the model's goodness of fit.

Table 1: Test results of the model's goodness of fit.

	RMSEA	RMR	GFI	AGFI	PGFI	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	HOELTER 0.5
2.51	0.051	0.149	0.897	0.878	0.754	0.914	0.904	0.946	0.940	0.946	262

Source: author's own study developed with SPSS AMOS 23

Appendix 2 includes all results of tests applied in the evaluation of CsnBI model together with their reference values and sources. Based on the readings, CsnBI model may be considered as well fit in relation to the data. Model reliability level 2.51 can be viewed as high, with the

reference ≤ 5 . Model fit to the data based on approximation average error RMSEA at 0.051 also meets the reference values. Measurements of goodness of fit came close to 1, which confirms the mentioned above quality. Heolter's coefficient exceeded 200, which also corroborates the above statements. A positive evaluation of the model allows us to proceed to the presentation of test results.

6. Results

The results of the model estimation are shown in Fig.2. In the case of this model, a significant direct effect on brand identification has been noted only for one determinant that is "self-expression". All the other determinants in this model, statistically, do not have any significant influence on the studied relationship. The results of the research show that the structure of determinants varies between the virtual and real worlds (referring to Stockburger-Sauer et al. 2012 CBI model). The relation which deserves our closer attention is "CsnBI" to "personal brand". The path coefficient in the relationship "CsnBI-personal brand" equaled 0.85 whereas "CsnBI-brand loyalty" equaled 0.4. Both of them are statistically significant, but it is worth noticing that CsnBI relation to "personal branding" variable is markedly stronger than to "brand loyalty". The results imply that personal branding is a crucial planned effect of the customer social network brand's site identification. It may bring interesting practical implications and lead to a reflection and a discussion on how consumers choose among brand websites and what is the essence of fan pages of commercial brands in social networks for consumers in the context of brand value creation. Appendix 3 includes main estimates generated for CsnBI model presented in Fig. 2. Table 3 presents a verification of the hypotheses based on their measurements.

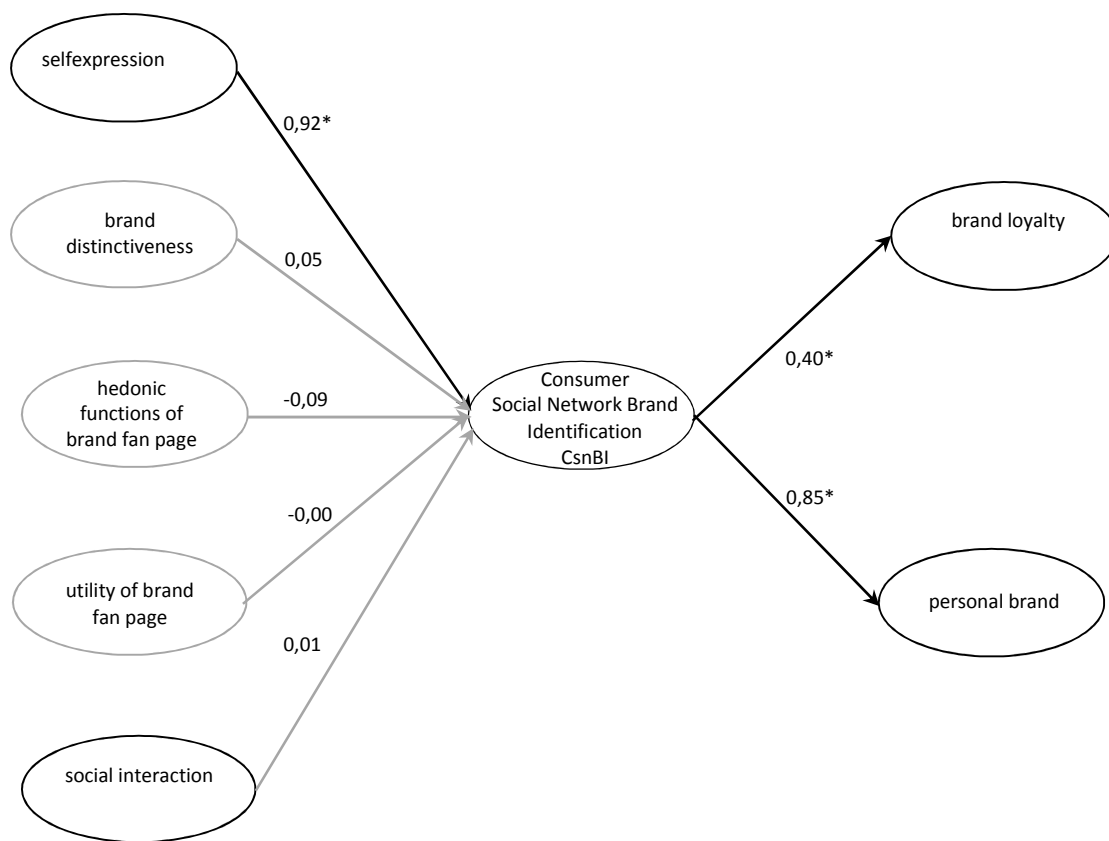


Fig.2: CsnBI structural model CFA

Source: author's own study developed with SPSS AMOS 23

* note: statistically significant results for $p < 0.001$; RAMSEA= 0.051 $\chi^2/df = 2.51$

Table 3: Hypotheses verification

hypothesis	content	C.R.	P	B	Verification
H1	CsnBI affects a positive attitude of other users towards the personal brand of the identifying user.	17,75	<0.001	0.852	sustained
H2	User's self-expression directly builds identification with the brand's fan page.	15.56	<0.001	0.92	sustained
H3	Distinctive brand characteristics directly affect propensity to identify with its fan page.	1.38	0.163	0.055	rejected
H4	Possibility to develop social contacts directly affects propensity to identify with the fan page.	0.745	0.444	-0.013	rejected
H5	Utility of a fan page directly affects propensity to identify with it.	0.047	0.962	0.001	rejected
H6	Hedonic / Entertaining functions of a fan page directly affect propensity to identify with it.	-2.143	0.032	-0.086	rejected
H7	CsnBI affects brand loyalty.	8.63	<0.001	0.406	sustained

Source: author's own study, note: AVE>.5; C.R. >0.7

7. Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of the research is to fill the gap in understanding how consumers choose among brand websites in the social network as a modern way of value creation in the network economy. In light of presented results a commercial brand is a tool for creating a personal brand, which makes personal branding a key motivator of CsnBI and in effect a key determinant in creating commercial brand's value. In other words, considering the fact that a personal brand's reputation is a desired effect of identification with a commercial brand's fan page, a deliberate creation of a personal brand's reputation by users determines values created by the commercial brand in the communication channel. It is worth pointing out that users' self-expression to a great extent takes place through the content generated by brands. This fact can result from e.g.,

users' low level of creativity and easy access to ready-to-use content. As pointed out in the introduction, with regard to the studies by Stokburger-Sauer (2010), brands on fan pages do not build communities of people who feel connected with one another. Similar results were also achieved by Jahn and Kunz (2012). Fan pages gather users who are mutually interested in one another without creating a bond between them. An interesting research question arises based on all the above, namely: does a collective of users without any connection to the brand or other users have any value to the brand? Such a group constitutes an audience rather than a community. In light of the results presented in this paper the audience focuses on their personal brand and treats commercial brands instrumentally. This stands in opposition to the literature which sees social media as an antidote to the marketing communication crisis, the issue which was explained in the introduction to this paper. A commercial brand, in light of the presented studies, is therefore only a tool for creating user's own brand. Thus, from a practical point of view, in order to build the capital of a commercial value on Facebook it is necessary to issue content which focuses on the users and their self-presentation, and not on the brand. A commercial brand therefore, in order to be effective, ought not to be the subject of the content presented on its own fan page, and ought not to be the center of its attention. It is a necessary condition, in light of the conducted studies, for the content distribution, delivered by the brand through the user's communication channel, to occur in the first place. An interesting question for future research is: to what extent does non-persuasive content build the brand capital? The nature of the content may sustain brand awareness, however managerial experience teaches that brand awareness itself in today's conditions of oversupply is not sufficient to compete successfully (Barwise, 1993). A certain limitation to the results may result from the fact that only one social network, namely Facebook, has been included in the studies. According to Smith, Fischer, and Youngjin (2012) there is a serious difference between various forms of social media. Nevertheless, because of FB's leading position not only among social media users, but the Internet users in general, it may be concluded that making assumptions regarding social media based on FB is fully justified. From a practical point of view, when planning activities following conclusions from the conducted studies, one needs to take into account the specific nature of each form. For a scientist running the CsnBI study based on other leading social portals such as Twitter, Google+ or Badoo and then comparing their results would be quite compelling. The study was conducted in Poland so its participants were mainly Polish. Because of the existence of cultural differences, comparing CsnBI study results conducted among different populations would constitute a fascinating research question. Conducting studies on CsnBI in different populations, among FB users, taking into account their level of

education would round up the subject in an interesting way. The study would also make it possible to predict the direction in which personal brand construct will develop in a bolder manner. The factor of communication quality in social networks, right next to the leading determinant that is “personal brand,” must also affect the value of a commercial brand. This dependence would be possible to observe in a “long-term study.” An interesting example of a highly qualitative study, as opposed to the quantitative approach to brand value creation in the environment of social networks, is an implementation of a novel product inspired by communication with fans of a given brand. Perhaps research on communication in social networks ought to be notably qualitative, in the context of co-creating of brand value based on the intellectual capital of users.

A fact worth noting and one that ought not to be overlooked is that the studies demonstrated in this paper have been conducted without making a distinction between brands in regard to their sales channel. Talking about industries and sales channels, from a practical point of view, having knowledge regarding CsnBI in industries where both marketing communication and transactions take place in a virtual world could prove very informative. Study results in these industries may significantly differ from those industries where all transaction happen off-line (time and place distance between the acts of communication and purchasing). A prediction of the development of the personal brand concept in the context of the conducted studies is also very interesting. From a scientific point of view, knowledge regarding personal brand awareness in relation to culture, population, but also age, education, sex, or profession is very important. From practitioners’ perspective, the growth of brand awareness may launch a new business direction dealing with consulting in the area of personal brand management, but also education or advertising. The studies presented in this paper show that the personal branding constructs in the social media have become a new and meaningful element of the virtual space and as such require to be studied in order to understand and determine how they operate in a social, cultural, and economic context.

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Appendix 1: Scales of measurement with their sources

Symb ol	Scale	Source
CB1	I feel strong sense of belonging to fan page of Brand X	CsnBI adapted from Stokburger- Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012)
CB2	I identify strongly with Brand X on fan page	
CB3	Brand X on fan page embodies what I believe in	
CB4	Brand X on fan page is a part of me	
CB5	Brand X on fan page has a great deal of personal meaning for me	
SE1	Brand X on fan page helps me to express myself	Self-expressive value adapted from Kim, Han & Park (2001)
SE2	Brand X on fan page reflects my personality	
SE3	Brand X on fan page enhances my self	
SC1	Brand X on fan page helps me make a good impression on others	Self-concept value adapted from Jahn & Kunz, (2012)
SC2	Brand X on fan page helps me improve the way I am perceived	
SC3	Brand X on fan page helps me present to others who I am	
SC4	Brand X on fan page helps me present to others who I want to be	
D1	Brand X on fan page has a distinctive identity	Brand Distinctiveness adapted from Stokburger- Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012)
D2	Brand X on fan page is unique	
D3	Brand X on fan page stands out from its competitors	
SO1	I can meet people like me on Brand X fan page	Social Interaction value adapted from Jahn & Kunz, (2012)
SO2	I can meet new people like me on this fan page	
SO3	I can find out more about people like me on Brand X fan page	
SO4	I can interact with people like me on Brand X fan page	
F1	Content of fan page Brand X is helpful for me	Functional value adapted from Jahn & Kunz, (2012)
F2	Content of fan page Brand X is useful for me	
F3	Content of fan page Brand X is functional for me	
F4	Content of fan page Brand X is practical for me	
H1	Content of fan page Brand X is funny	Hedonic value adapted from Jahn & Kunz, (2012)
H2	Content of fan page Brand X is exciting	
H3	Content of fan page Brand X is pleasant	
H4	Content of fan page Brand X is entertaining	
CO1	Most people that are important to me think that my relationship with Brand X in a social network gives me a good image	Perceived Personal Brand Attitude based on Ajzen (1991)
CO2	I expect that my relationship with Brand X in a social network creates good associations with me	
CO3	The people, whose opinions I value think, that my relationship with Brand X in a social network creates a good attitude towards me	
CO4	Most people that are important to me think that my relationship with Brand X in a social network gives me a good reputation	
LB1	When buying products from the category Brand X belongs to, I usually choose Brand X	Brand loyalty East, Wright, Vanhuelle (2013)
LB2	I regularly buy Brand X products	
LB3	I am willing to recommend Brand X products	

Source: author's own study based on Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen (2012), Kim, Han & Park (2001), Kunz & Jahn (2012), Ajzen (1991), East, Wright & Vanhuelle (2013)

Appendix 2: Tests applied for Model CsnBI quality evaluation

TEST	DESCRIPTION	Reference value	Value obtained	Model evaluation
Chi ² /df	CMIN/DF model reliability (Wheaton, 1977)	≤5	2.65	✓
RMSEA	Root Mean Error of Approximation, (Stieger, Lind, 1980)	RMSEA ≤0.08 RMSEA LO≤0.05 RMSEA HI [0.1;0.08]	0.051	✓
RMR	Root Mean Square Residual, (Joreskog, Sorbom, 1984)	[0;1] the closer to 0 the better fit the model is	0.149	✓
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index , (Joreskog, Sorbom, 1984)	[0;1] the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.897	✓
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index, (Joreskog, Sorbom, 1984)	[0;1] the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.878	✓
PGFI	Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (Mulaik, 1998)	[0;1] the closer to 0 the better fit the model is	0.754	✓
NFI	Normed Fit Index (Bentler, Bonett, 1980)	[0;1] the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.914	✓
RFI	Relative Fit Index (Bollen, 1986)	[0;1] the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.904	✓
IFI	Incremental Fit Index (Bollen, 1989)	[0;1] the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.946	✓
TLI NNFI	Tucker-Lewis index (Bollen, 1989), Non Normed Fit Index (Bentler, Bonett, 1980)	[0;1 the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.940	✓
CFI	Comparative Fit Index (McDonald, Marsh, 1990)	[0;1] the closer to 1 the better fit the model is	0.946	✓
HOELTER	Hoelter's coefficient defines the sample size for which the hypothesis of model correctness is accessible (Hoelter, 1983)	H .05 ≥200	262	✓

Source: author's own study developed with SPSS AMOS 23

Appendix 3: CsnBI structural model CFA: estimates developed with SPSS AMOS 23

Unstandardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
CsnBI	<---	selfexpression	1,038	,067	15,568	***	par_21
CsnBI	<---	distinctiveness	,070	,051	1,385	,166	par_22
CsnBI	<---	hedonic	-,104	,048	-2,143	,032	par_23
CsnBI	<---	utility	,001	,039	,021	,984	par_24
CsnBI	<---	socialinteract	,013	,041	,325	,745	par_25
personalbrand	<---	CsnBI	,775	,044	17,752	***	par_36
brandloyalty	<---	CsnBI	,396	,046	8,633	***	par_40

Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimate
CsnBI	<---	selfexpression	,924
CsnBI	<---	distinctiveness	,055
CsnBI	<---	hedonic	-,086
CsnBI	<---	utility	,001
CsnBI	<---	socialinteract	,013
personalbrand	<---	CsnBI	,852
brandloyalty	<---	CsnBI	,406

Covariances: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
selfexpression <--> distinctiveness	,805	,087	9,275	***	par_26
selfexpression <--> hedonic	,784	,092	8,504	***	par_27
selfexpression <--> utility	,601	,083	7,280	***	par_28
selfexpression <--> socialinteract	1,053	,107	9,825	***	par_29
distinctiveness <--> hedonic	,810	,082	9,833	***	par_30
distinctiveness <--> utility	,458	,070	6,552	***	par_31
distinctiveness <--> socialinteract	,767	,087	8,800	***	par_32
hedonic <--> utility	,347	,073	4,751	***	par_33
hedonic <--> socialinteract	,767	,093	8,235	***	par_34
utility <--> socialinteract	,709	,087	8,130	***	par_35

Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
selfexpression <--> distinctiveness	,514
selfexpression <--> hedonic	,476
selfexpression <--> utility	,366
selfexpression <--> socialinteract	,550
distinctiveness <--> hedonic	,556
distinctiveness <--> utility	,316
distinctiveness <--> socialinteract	,453
hedonic <--> utility	,228
hedonic <--> socialinteract	,431
utility <--> socialinteract	,400

Variances: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
selfexpression	1,774	,166	10,699	***	par_41
distinctiveness	1,386	,117	11,839	***	par_42
hedonic	1,532	,141	10,836	***	par_43
utility	1,519	,117	13,041	***	par_44
socialinteract	2,067	,155	13,346	***	par_45
zz34	,337	,062	5,409	***	par_46
zz35	,508	,063	8,084	***	par_47
z48	1,780	,162	10,971	***	par_48
z5	1,220	,084	14,456	***	par_49
z6	1,018	,073	13,982	***	par_50
z7	1,298	,090	14,492	***	par_51
z8	1,038	,077	13,522	***	par_52
z9	,714	,051	13,901	***	par_53
z10	,658	,050	13,059	***	par_54
z11	,547	,047	11,692	***	par_55

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
z12	,648	,050	12,967	***	par_56
z13	,861	,075	11,562	***	par_57
z14	,696	,056	12,494	***	par_58
z15	,855	,071	12,109	***	par_59
z16	1,474	,102	14,385	***	par_60
z17	,498	,038	13,234	***	par_61
z19	,436	,035	12,288	***	par_62
z20	,647	,045	14,275	***	par_63
z21	1,049	,075	14,062	***	par_64
e22	,942	,068	13,760	***	par_65
e23	,708	,061	11,693	***	par_66
e24	1,007	,073	13,872	***	par_67
z25	,500	,057	8,725	***	par_68
z26	,624	,056	11,086	***	par_69
z28	,950	,067	14,072	***	par_70
z29	1,363	,097	14,088	***	par_71
z30	1,231	,088	13,995	***	par_72
z31	1,618	,104	15,618	***	par_73
z33	1,516	,096	15,842	***	par_74
z18	,315	,029	10,957	***	par_75
z43	1,012	,091	11,138	***	par_76
z44	1,372	,105	13,012	***	par_77
z45	1,377	,105	13,078	***	par_78
z46	1,476	,108	13,686	***	par_79

Squared Multiple Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
CsnBI	,850
brandloyalty	,164
personalbrand	,725

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Gdańsk University of Technology, Faculty of Management and Economics
Narutowicza 11/12, (premises at ul. Traugutta 79)
80-233 Gdańsk, phone: 58 347-18-99 Fax 58 347-18-61
www.zie.pg.edu.pl

