INTERACTIVE DIGITAL ADVERTISING VS. VIRTUAL BRAND COMMUNITY: EXPLORATORY STUDY OF USER MOTIVATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING RESPONSES IN TAIWAN

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the influence of user motivation to engage in online social networking on responses to social media marketing. It addresses two aspects of user motivation, need for online social capital and psychological well-being, and two types of social media marketing, interactive digital advertising and virtual brand community. Facebook provides the target social networking site. A survey among 502 college-aged Facebook users in Taiwan reveals that these users responded to Facebook advertising and virtual brand communities differently. Users' motivation for online social networking had varying effects on their social media marketing responses. These results have key implications for social media marketing use in social networking online.

The growing popularity of social media leads advertisers to invest more effort into communicating with consumers through online social networking. Social media, especially social networking sites (SNS), enable users to present themselves, establish and maintain social connections with others, and articulate their own social networks (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007). In this setting, brand managers often seek two types of marketing communication: interactive digital advertising and virtual brand communities. The former exposes social media users to brand-related messages (Keller 2009; Taylor 2009); the latter encourage them to engage in brand-centered social relations (Casaló, Flavián, and Guinaliu 2008). However, such social media marketing trends also raise concerns about how to optimize the effects of marketing communication in the context of online social networking.

Social media pertains essentially to social networking among users, so marketing communication approaches in such user-centered social networking contexts reflect the views of marketing practitioners (Mulhern 2009). The most prevailing communication approach focuses on the media features of social networking, such that social connections transform into personal channels for brand communication (Russell 2009). Thus social media provide suitable platforms for viral advertising and marketing (e.g., Golan and Zaidner 2008; Utz 2009) and electronic word of mouth (e.g., Libai et al. 2010). However, this perspective ignores the motivations that prompt users to adopt social media, as well as the contextual influence of social networking on users' perception and responses. Recent studies show that experience with social networking sites influences user responses to online shopping and advertising (e.g., Cha 2009; Hoy and Milne 2009; Kelly, Kerr, and Drennan 2010; McMahan, Hovland, and McMillan 2009),

and the intentions and social coherence of online community networks also shape perceptions of marketing communication in SNS (e.g., Sohn 2009; Zeng, Huang, and Dou 2009).

From a user perspective, social media use instead is driven by various gratifications, such as making new friends or locating old friends (Raacke and Bonds-Raacke 2008). Social capital and psychological well-being both drive social media use (e.g., Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007; Gangadharbatla 2008; Pfeil, Arjan, and Zaphirls 2009; Zywica and Danowski 2008). From a practical perspective then, a key question is whether drivers of social media use carry over to influence marketing communication, such that they shape user perceptions of and responses to social media marketing. However, the manner in which interactive digital advertising gets applied in social networking contexts differs from the methods for virtual brand community. Therefore, when applying social media marketing, it could have differential impacts on advertising versus brand communities.

To examine the effectiveness of social media marketing, this study explores the relationship between user motivations to use social media and user responses to social media marketing. The analysis compares user responses to interactive digital advertising and virtual brand community, two forms of targeted marketing communication. Facebook, the wildly popular social networking site, provides the study setting. Among Facebook users, Taiwanese college students represent users from a collectivist culture, for whom being socially informed and connected is the foremost concern. Therefore, this study explores user motivation and social media marketing responses among Taiwanese college students.

USER MOTIVATION FOR ONLINE
SOCIAL NETWORKING

As a Route to Social Networking

Social networking sites enable users to present themselves; express, establish, and maintain social connections with others; and articulate their own social networks (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007). In this context, boyd and Ellison (2007) recommend using the term "network" instead of "networking" to emphasize how such site applications are structured and can be used by users. The primary usage of social sites thus is to articulate a publicly visible, accessible display of social connections, though the reasons for the connections vary. In response, Beer (2008, p. 518) contends that "networking *is* the main preoccupation" of such sites, such that users are motivated to form expanding social networks. Thus making and accumulating social connections represent the primary focus of activity on SNS. In this case, social media sites feature particular applications that differentiate them from other sites.

Despite different emphases, various empirical studies confirm the popularity of social media use for forming and displaying social connections (e.g., Donath and boyd 2004; Hargittai 2007). Some scholars argue for the utility of social media, which provide users with ways to organize and navigate social networks (Donath 2007), participate in networked public spaces, and perform their identity (boyd 2007). Others apply uses and gratifications theory to explain why and how users use social media. Raccke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) suggest that the popularity of social media among college students is a result of their many uses and gratifications, including keeping in touch with old or current friends, making new friends, or locating old friends. In other words, social media use is a communication route for meeting the social need for friends (Raccke and Bonds-Raacke 2008).

A need to be socially connected underlies users' engagement in online social networking. Online social networking creates social spaces, or third places, for creating and performing personal identity and community (Donath 2007; Hargittai 2007; Humphreys 2007). Pempek, Yermolayeva, and Calvert (2009) show that college students often use Facebook for social interaction to develop identity and peer relationships. According to Donath (2007), when the number of friends on social networking sites and the quality of personal relationships signal status and popularity, the benefits generated from social interactions motivate people to connect online. Users also may gain in social capital and psychological well-being (e.g., Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007; Zywica and Danowski 2008). From a user's standpoint, the benefits of online social networking thus may serve as drivers of social media use.

Social Capital

Social capital refers to resources created in social networks and relationships between people, with value or benefits for the members of the social relations (Coleman 1988). Bargh and McKenna (2004) and Bargh, McKenna, and Fitzsimons (2002) contend that online personal interactions break the boundaries of physical, face-to-face constraints and lead to the accumulation of social capital. Three forms of social capital can be created by online social interactions and networking: bridging, bonding, and maintained (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007; Williams 2006). Bridging social capital relates to weak ties, those loose social connections that allow for information exchange and diffusion. In online networks, weak ties refer to distant acquaintances who may be known in specific contexts but also can provide access to various ides and experiences. Bonding social capital instead occurs between members of tightly knit social relations who are emotionally engaged. In online networks, tightly knit, strong ties include close confidants, who can be relied on and who share interests and beliefs. Finally, maintained social capital is the ability to maintain existing valuable social connections across life changes.

Donath and boyd (2004) argue that SNS do not increase strong ties but support the formation and maintenance of weak ties, which enhance bridging social capital. In a survey of SNS use among undergraduate students, Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) note a strong association between Facebook use and all three forms of social capital. An intensive use of Facebook predicted social capital accumulation, especially bridging social capital. Thus the use of SNS can maintain social relations but also expands the scale and scope of the user's social networks and experiences (Donath 2007). Pfiel, Arjan, and Zaphiris (2009) also consider a social capital divide between teenagers and older users; teenagers had more friends than older users on MySpace, but whereas the teenagers' social networks consisted of many weak and strong ties with peers, older users' consisted of a more diverse group. It seems that the form of social capital needed and gained through SNS differs for different age groups. Teenagers look to expand their ideas and experiences and find emotional support from their peers; older people also look for experiences but with people outside their own age group.

No matter the type of social capital sought and accumulated, it exerts a positive influence on users of SNS. Requena (2003) suggests that the importance of social capital lies in the social support, integration, and cohesion it provides. Because SNS make access to social support, integration, and cohesion possible, users are motivated to participate in social networks, to gain and accumulate social capital. Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) also show that Facebook usage interacts with measures of psychological well-being, such that users who experience low self-esteem or life satisfaction benefit more from bridging social capital with increased SNS use.

Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being refers to global cognitive judgments of the self, which include self-esteem and life satisfaction (Diener, Suh, and Oishi 1997). Self-esteem measures one's evaluation and judgment of self-image and worth (Rosenberg 1989); life satisfaction measures one's evaluation and judgment of the person's own life (Diener, Suh, and Oishi 1997; Pavot and Diener 1993). These cognitive judgments are subjective and psychological in nature. Diener and Biswas-Diener (2003) contend that subjective, psychological well-being brings about positive emotions and has important implications for personal empowerment.

Helliwell and Putnam (2004) find that social capital generated from social ties with family, friends, and community has positive influences on psychological well-being. Studies of the Internet also indicate that its use enhances online social interactions, helps create and maintain social connections, and improves user psychological well-being (e.g., Bargh and McKenna 2004; Bargh, McKenna, and Fitzsimons 2002; Hampton and Wellman 2003). Social media research supports the link between the use of social networking sites and user psychological well-being. Zywica and Danowski (2008) find that users with higher and low self-esteem both seek popularity on Facebook but for different uses and gratifications. Users experiencing higher self-esteem and who are more extroverted enhance their offline popularity by increasing it on Facebook. In contrast, users experiencing low self-esteem, who are often more introverted, strive to increase their Facebook popularity to compensate for their lack of popularity offline. Gangadharbatla (2008) reports positive effects of collective self-esteem and need to belong on attitudes toward Facebook and willingness to join SNS. Collective self-esteem and need to belong were some reasons people used SNS. Therefore, psychological well-being as a user motivation should influence the manner in which people use social networking sites.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Communicating Brands in Online Social Networking Contexts

Social media provide a new landscape for brand marketing communication, where consumers take a more active role as marketers, and brands are social currency (Henning-Thurau et al. 2004; Sheehan and Morrison 2009; Walsh et al. 2010). Mulhern (2009) advocates for transforming marketing communications into practices to connect consumers and brands in the context of social networking. In his view, the role of media in marketing communication shifts from message execution to the expansion of consumer understanding. Corresponding to Mulhern's view, Sheehan and Morrison (2009) note the creativity challenge that the advertising industry faces in an evolving confluence culture where consumer-generated social media are popular, and consumer content sharing and cocreation shape media realities. Russell (2009) proposes a set of new rules for advertising in the interactive, online context. Advertising is not just about the message itself but rather offers a personal channel and link to other people, contents, and sites. Social media marketing, in other words, provides meaning and connection between brands and consumers and offers a personal channel and currency for user-centered networking and social interaction. Cha (2009) finds that social networking experience is important in influencing attitudes toward shopping for virtual items, which are hedonic experience goods. Cha thus suggests that SNS act as venues that combine social interaction, emotional involvement, and hedonic experience.

Social connectivity. Social media and online social networking sites provide social graphs that depict networked social interactions (Shih 2009). These graphs are interpersonal connections and social relations that represent who a user is. It is reasonable to assume that the successfulness of branding in a social networking context relies in the social connectivity of consumer-networked relations the brand might provide. Thus brands must create whatever consumption experience users desire when social networking online. The content of marketing communication must be customized, allowing for consumer engagement and brand connectivity and showing how individuals, groups of networked people, communities, and brands relate.

==User interactivity.== Interactivity depends on the context. In an online social networking context, interactivity refers to a user-centered interaction with machines, messages, or other users, focusing on the experiential aspect of networking process (Liu and Shrum 2002). This user interactivity enables consumers to participate in personal social networking by selecting the content, timing, and communication act (Li, Daugherty, and Biocca 2002). Specific applications of social media empower consumers, such that they can take active control and perform two-way communications. Active control takes place in a social networking context and requires attention and participation from all participating parties, including individual users, groups of networked people or communities, and brands.

Interactive Digital Advertising Versus Virtual Brand Community

Keller (2009) lists eight major types of communication for building strong brands. Of special concern for this study is interactive marketing, with its digitalized, designed online activities and programs to engage consumers and prospects. Two types of interactive marketing often sought in social media are interactive digital advertising and online/virtual brand communities. The following sections discuss the social connectivity and user interactivity of each type of interactive marketing in social media.

Interactive digital advertising. Taylor (2009) proposes six principles of digital advertising, five of which relate to consumer understanding and insight: considerations of privacy, trust, and relevance, as well as experiential values of interactivity and entertaining. Studies show that users tend to avoid advertising in SNS to protect their privacy, because they had negative experiences, consider it not relevant, or are skeptical about advertising persuasion in social media (Hoy and Milne 2010; Kelly, Kerr, and Drennan 2010). McMahan, Hovland, and McMillan (2009) examine the effects of gender differences for consumer online behavior on interactivity and advertising effectiveness and find a significant interaction effect between gender and human-to-computer on consumer online behavior but not for human-to-human or human-to-content interactions. Women and men have different preferences for human-to-computer interactivity, and the difference leads to differential online shopping and social networking experiences. Human-to-computer interactivity in Internet advertising allows for navigational control and customization of content, but it lacks two-way communication between users. Zeng, Huang, and Dou (2009) find that

perceived relevance and value of advertising to the online social networking community are important influences on consumers' attitudinal and behavioral responses to it.

Virtual brand community. A virtual brand community is a structured set of brand-consumer social relations articulated online (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001; Wellman and Gulia 1997). Virtual brand communities are powerful tools of marketing communication, because they help reveal consumer needs and brand loyalty (Casaló, Flavián, and Guinaliu 2008). Ridings and Gefen (2004) find that social support and friendship are the two major reasons people spend time in online communities. Whereas brand-consumer relations are the focus of a virtual brand community, social connections among community members are the emphasis of online social networking. Despite the difference in focus and emphasis, virtual brand communities and online social networking share the same communication feature: social connectivity among people. Social identity, group norms, and intention are important for user perceptions of and responses to marketing communication in social media (Koh and Kim 2004; Zeng, Huang, and Dou 2009).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Although social media marketing is increasing, empirical research into its effectiveness is still limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of social media marketing by linking user motivation to engage in online social networking with marketing communications in social media. Two user motivations drive online social networking: social capital and psychological well-being. In addition, two types of interactive marketing, interactive digital advertising and virtual brand communities, are the target of this study. User responses to both types of social media marketing are first compared, then examined separately. In line with the exploratory nature and purpose of this study, it asks the following research questions:

RQ1: In the context of online social networking, do users respond to interactive digital advertising differently from the way they respond to virtual brand community?

RQ2: Does user motivation for online social networking affect the user's responses to interactive digital advertising in social media?

RQ3: Does user motivation for online social networking affect the user's responses to a virtual brand community in social media?

Proposed Relationships

To guide the exploration of stated research questions, a conceptual framework is proposed, based on the motivational nature of social media use and the communication feature of brand marketing in social media. The proposed framework is constructed to illustrate the relationships between user motivation and user responses to social media marketing in an online social networking context. The proposed conceptual framework in Figure 1 focuses on three main concepts: user motivation for online social networking, social media marketing, and user responses to social media marketing.

First, user motivation for online social networking is a driving force that motivates the use of social media and the content embedded in these media. Two motivational concepts are relevant, namely, need for online social capital and user psychological well-being. Social capital refers to the social resources that a person can gain from social connecting and networking. Need for online social capital serves as a motivation for online social networking and thus social media use. Social resources gained from online social networking include information bridging, emotional bonding, and maintained social connections. Psychological well-being is a person's cognitive judgments of him- or herself, which include self-esteem and life satisfaction. Perception of self-esteem and life satisfaction drives a person to seek online social networking to strengthen social ties, whether to enhance or compensate for offline social popularity.

Second, social media marketing can be operationalized as brand communications placed in an online social networking context. Social media marketing is characterized by social connectivity and user interactivity in the brand's attempt to communicate with its consumers and prospects. Two types of social media marketing are targeted in this study, advertising and virtual brand communities. Advertising exposes social media users to brand-related messages. Social media advertising takes a digital form and enables user interaction with the message. It epitomizes one-way communication and user information processing and searching. A virtual brand community instead involves a structured set of brand-centered social relations. These communities provide for two-way communication and social connections centered on brand-consumer relations. Advertising and virtual brand communities present distinctive platforms for brand communications and branded content. It is important and in the interest of this study to understand how each performs in an online social networking context.

Third, user responses to social media marketing should depend on the user's motivation for online social networking. Furthermore, the influence of user motivation on user responses should vary by the type of social media marketing. The response measures included in this study are trust and global perceptions of social media marketing, attitudes toward social media marketing and the brand launching the social media marketing, and user participation intentions.

Figure 1. Proposed Relationships between User Motivation and User Responses to Social Media Marketing
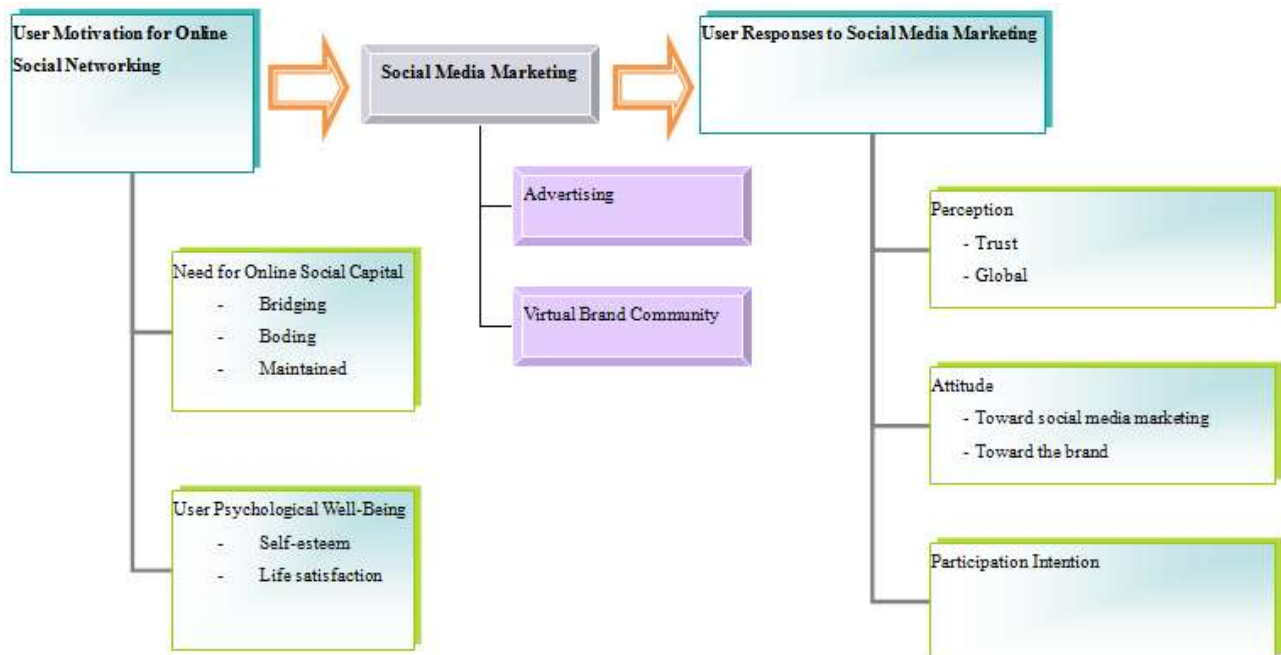
METHOD

To address the research questions, Facebook was chosen as the targeted social media. At the time of the data collection, Facebook was ranked as one of the most popular social networking sites among college student users in Taiwan (Insightxplorer Monthly Report 2009). A survey of 502 college students from Shih Hsin University in Taipei, Taiwan, who were Facebook users was conducted. Of the survey participants, 74% were women, which represents an obvious bias toward female college students. This limitation and potential sample bias will be discussed subsequently. All participants received a booklet, in which the cover letter stated the purpose of the survey. Most participants completed the questionnaire in about 20 to 25 minutes.

MEASURES

Only the focal study measures are reported here.

User motivation. Both social capital and psychological well-being were measured. Three measures of social capital-

bridging, bonding, and maintained social capital-were adapted from existing scales. The term "online" was added, because the focus of the study was on online social networking (Williams 2006). The user's need for online social capital also was emphasized to underscore its role as a motivational driver of social media use. The revised need for online social capital items then were translated into Mandarin to be comprehensible to college students in Taiwan. Participants' need for online social capital was assessed on a five-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree"). The full set of need for online social capital measures consisted of 24 items, subjected to a principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation.

Table 1 illustrates the full measure and the factor analysis results. The analysis resulted in three distinct factors, with 51.9% of the variance explained. The three factors reflected need for online bridging, bonding, and maintained social capital, with scale reliabilities reaching satisfactory levels (Cronbach's a = .90, .79, .84, respectively).

Table 1. Summary Statistics and Factor Analysis Results for Need for Online Social Capital Items (n = 479)

Individual Items and Scales[2]	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings[1]		
			Bridging	Bonding	Maintained
Bridging online social capital (α = .90)	3.44	.65			
I need to interact with people online to make myself interested in things that happen outside.	3.57	.92	.804	.036	.108
I need to interact with people online to make myself want to try new things.	3.81	.80	.780	-.062	.169
I need to talk with people online to make myself curious about other places in the world.	3.55	.89	.757	.084	.141
To feel like part of larger community, I need to interact with people online.	3.54	.88	.746	.124	.104
I need to interact with people online to make myself interested in what people unlike me are thinking.	3.67	.83	.718	.005	.172
To feel connected to the bigger picture, I need to interact with people online.	3.75	.87	.705	.074	.229
To remind myself that everyone in the world is connected, I need to interact with people online.	3.29	.89	.686	.282	.118
I need to get online to come in contact with new people all the time.	3.01	.98	.628	.385	.041
I need to interact with people online to give myself new people to talk to.	2.95	.96	.627	.380	.001
I need to spend time to support general online community activity.	3.32	.89	.610	.152	.091
Bonding online social capital (α = .79)	2.61	.57			
When I'm in need, I need to interact with people online to find someone to put their reputation on the line for me.	2.42	1.00	.043	.771	.111
If I needed an emergency loan, I need to interact with people online to find someone I could turn to.	1.85	.87	-.014	.748	-.135
I need to interact with people online to find someone who would share their last dollar with me.	1.85	.82	.029	.715	-.199
I need to interact with people online to get good job references.	2.56	.95	.189	.680	.108

When I'm in need, I need to find people online who would help me fight an injustice.	2.73	.86	.207	.575	.169
When I feel lonely, I need to find people who I can talk to online.	2.96	1.00	.259	.540	.214
I don't expect people who I interact with online to do anything important for me. (reversed)	2.25	.89	.048	.383	-.277
When I am in need of help to solve my problems, I need to interact with people online to find someone I can trust.	3.48	.97	.329	.348	.324
I need to interact with people online to find someone I can turn to for advice about making very important decisions.	3.33	1.05	.314	.328	.268
Maintained online social capital (α = .84)	3.74	.65			
I need to get online to find useful information from an acquaintance.	3.75	.76	.143	.046	.804
I need to get online to find out about events in another town from an acquaintance living there.	3.94	.74	.113	-.004	.779
I need to get online to ask an acquaintance to do a small favor for me.	3.67	.82	.150	.112	.775
I need to get online to contact an acquaintance if travelling to a different city.	3.70	.86	.112	-.038	.754
I need to get online to find and reunite acquaintances.	3.63	.88	.225	-.011	.612
Total variance explained = 51.91%	Eigenvalue =		7.181	3.078	2.199

[1]Principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation.

[2]Scales were constructed by taking the mean of items.

The study also assessed participants' psychological well-being. Self-esteem measures were constructed with seven items drawn from Rosenberg's (1989) self-esteem scale. Life satisfaction measures consisted of five items drawn from the satisfaction with life scale (Diener, Suh, and Oishi 1997). Changes in wording and language were made to accommodate the study context. Responses to these items were reported on a five-point Likert scale. The full set of psychological well-being items were also factor analyzed with principal components factor analysis. Table 2 illustrates the measurement items and presents the factor analysis results. The two resulting factors reflected self-esteem and life satisfaction. Both measures reached satisfactory scale reliability (Cronbach's a = .83, .87, respectively).

Table 2. Summary Statistics and Factor Analysis Results for Psychological Well-Being Items (n = 493)

			Factor Loadings[1]	
Individual Items and Scales[2]	Mean	SD	Self-esteem	Life satisfaction
Self-esteem (α = .83)	3.81	.52		
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	4.02	.60	.781	-.061
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	3.88	.66	.775	.145
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	3.99	.62	.767	-.038
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (reversed)	3.82	.85	.701	.071
I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (reversed)	3.58	.92	.673	-.005
I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	3.80	.64	.666	.129
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	3.66	.77	.605	.467
Life satisfaction (α = .87)	2.86	.76		
In most ways my life at present is close to my ideal.	2.95	.93	.117	.856
I am satisfied with my life at present.	3.19	.92	.205	.836
The conditions of my life at present are excellent.	3.00	.93	.147	.832
So far I have gotten the important things I want now.	2.68	.96	-.045	.813
If I could live my time over now, I would change almost nothing.	2.53	.98	-.098	.656
Total variance explained = 59.34%	Eigenvalue =		4.37	2.813

[1]Principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation.

[2]Scales were constructed by taking the mean of items.

User responses to social media marketing. Three categories of user responses to social media marketing were assessed in the study: perceptions, attitudes, and participation intention. These responses were measured separately for Facebook advertising and virtual brand communities. The perceptions of social media marketing were divided into trust and global perceptions. The trust measures were created by adapting Soh, Reid, and King's (2009) ADTRUST scale, which distinguishes cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of advertising trust. Sixteen items construct the four sets of trust composite measures, as shown in Table 3, Panel a. The items measured

participants' perceptions of reliability, usefulness, affect of social media marketing, and willingness to rely on social media marketing. All perception responses were assessed on five-point Likert scales, and the scale reliabilities for both advertising and virtual brand communities were satisfactory (both Cronbach's a = .94).

The study also assessed participants' global perceptions of Facebook advertising and virtual brand communities. Of specific interest were their evaluations of the extent to which social media marketing was informative, entertaining, and irritating (Cheng et al. 2009). As shown in Table 3, Panel b, a total of 17 evaluative statements with five-point Likert scales measured global perceptions of social media marketing. Scale reliabilities for both types of social media marketing were satisfactory (Cronbach's alpha = .81, .75).

Table 3. Perceptions of Social Media Marketing

a. Trust
   Individual Items and Scales
   <u>Reliability</u>
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is reliable.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is credible.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is dependable.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is accurate.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is truthful.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is honest.
   <u>Willingness to rely on</u>
   I am willing to rely on (Facebook advertising, virtual brand community) conveyed information when making purchase-related decisions.
   I am willing to make important purchase-related decisions based on (Facebook advertising, virtual brand community) conveyed information.
   I am willing to consider the (Facebook advertising, virtual brand community) conveyed information when making purchase-related decisions.
   I am willing to recommend the product or service that I have seen in (Facebook advertising, virtual brand community) to my friends or family.
   <u>Usefulness</u>
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is valuable.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is useful.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is good.
   <u>Affect</u>
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is enjoyable.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is likable.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is positive.
b. Global
   Individual Items and Scales
   <u>Informative</u>
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is a convenient source of product information.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) makes product information immediately accessible.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) informs me about the latest products and information available on the market.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) supplies relevant product information.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is a good source of up-to-date product information.
   (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) helps me get special product price news.
   <u>Entertaining</u>

(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) helps me to know which products will reflect my unique personality.
I take pleasure in thinking about what I see, hear or read in (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community).
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is more interesting than the content of other media.
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) tells me what people who share my lifestyle will buy and use.
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) usually makes people laugh and has great amusement value.
From (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) I learn about fashions and what to buy to impress others.
Irritating
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is confusing.
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is annoying.
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is irritating.
I consider (Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) an unwelcome interruption.
(Facebook Advertising, Virtual Brand Community) is deceptive.

The next set of measures involved attitudinal responses to social media marketing. Attitudes toward advertising and virtual communities in Facebook, as well as attitudes toward the brands promoted in advertising and virtual communities, were measured with the same seven pairs on seven-point semantic differential scales (Batra and Ahtola 1990; Mau, Silberer, and Constien 2008). The scale items included "valuable/worthless," "useful/useless," "beneficial/harmful," "wise/foolish," "pleasant/unpleasant," "nice/awful," and "agreeable/disagreeable." Scale reliabilities for all attitudinal measures ranged from .88 to .92.

The third set of response measures assessed participants' intention to participate in social media marketing. Five seven-point semantic differential scales were used: "willing to/not willing to," "intend to/not intend to," "likely/unlikely," "positive/negative," and "active/inactive." Scale reliabilities for participation intentions in advertising and virtual brand community were .91 and .92, respectively. Table 4 presents a summary of the scale reliabilities and the Cronbach's α for each user response measure.

Table 4. Canonical Analysis of Measures of User Responses to Social Media Marketing

User Responses	Number of items	*Cronbach's α*	
		Advertising	Virtual Brand Community
Perception			
Trust	16	.94	.94
Reliability	6	.95	.93
Usefulness	3	.87	.86
Affect	3	.81	.84
Willingness to rely on	4	.91	.89
Global	17	.81	.75
Informative	6	.92	.93
Entertaining	6	.87	.87
Irritating	5	.91	.94
Attitude			
Toward advertising/virtual community	7	.88	.91
Toward the brand	7	.89	.92
Participation Intention	5	.91	.92

RESULTS

To provide empirical evidence regarding the first research question, paired t-tests were conducted. In each test, user responses to Facebook advertising were compared with those related to the virtual brand community, and the difference in responses was tested for statistical significance. These test results are summarized in Table 5.

Collectively, users responded to Facebook advertising less favorably than they did to the virtual brand community in the context of online social networking. College participants thought the virtual brand community was more trustworthy, informative, and entertaining and less irritating than advertising in Facebook. Attitudes toward the virtual brand community were more favorable than attitudes toward advertising and the advertised brand. Moreover, intention to participate in social media marketing was more intense for the virtual brand community ($M_{advertising} = 3.10$, $M_{virtual brand community} = 4.44$, paired t = 19.24, $p < .01$). The findings suggest that users perceive advertising and virtual brand community differently in the context of online social networking, and then act on what they think. The nature of social networking in Facebook might make some types of marketing communication more acceptable than others, in which case user motivations for online social networking may play important roles in determining people's responses to social media marketing.

Table 5. Comparisons of User Responses to Social Media Marketing on Facebook: Advertising Versus Virtual Brand Community

User Responses	Advertising		Virtual Brand Community			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Paired t	n
Perceptions						
Trust						
Reliability	2.35	.65	3.04	.63	18.25**	471
Usefulness	2.71	.70	3.27	.61	15.08**	471
Affect	2.50	.76	3.28	.63	19.13**	471
Willingness to rely on	2.44	.83	3.15	.71	16.09**	471
Global						
Informative	3.27	.76	3.47	.62	5.18**	471
Entertaining	2.76	.73	3.21	.59	12.97**	470
Irritating	3.49	.70	2.72	.62	19.20**	471
Attitudes						
Toward advertising/virtual community	3.62	.93	4.54	.83	16.81**	471
Toward the brand	3.80	.87	4.32	.74	13.97**	481
Participation Intention	3.10	1.18	4.44	1.13	19.24**	474

*$p < .05$.

**$p < .01$.

To explore the influence of user motivation for online social networking on user responses to Facebook advertising, several multiple regression analyses were conducted. In each regression, need for online social capital and psychological well-being were entered as predictors of user responses. The accounts of explained variance in trust perception, global perception, attitudinal responses, and participation intention in Facebook advertising were examined separately. A summary of the regression results is described in Table 6.

For trust perceptions of Facebook advertising, the regression results showed that user motivation had significant effects on all four trust measures. Specifically, need for online bonding had a significant, positive effect on trust in advertising; however, need for online bridging and maintained social

capital failed to predict advertising trust perceptions. Another interesting observation arises from the predictive power of psychological well-being. Life satisfaction accounted for significant explained variance in trust perceptions, with the exception of usefulness perceptions of Facebook advertising (β = .039, n.s.). Life satisfaction had a positive effect on trust perceptions of advertising. In contrast, self-esteem had little influence on advertising trust perceptions. A negative effect even was observed for advertising reliability (β = -.096, p < .05). College participants experiencing higher self-esteem tended to perceive Facebook advertising as less reliable.

For the global perception, the regression results indicated that user motivation affected judgments of informative and entertaining values but failed to predict the extent to which college participants thought Facebook advertising was irritating ($F_{(5, 474)}$ = .728, n.s.). Of special interest was the null effect of psychological well-being on all three aspects of global perception. Neither self-esteem nor life satisfaction affected college participants' judgments of Facebook advertising values. The effect of need for online social capital was sporadic but distinct according to the form of social capital sought. Need for online bonding enhanced judgments of the entertaining value of advertising (β = .217, p < .01), and need for maintained social capital improved judgments of its informative value (β = .152, p < .05).

For attitudinal responses and participation intention, the results showed no effect of user motivation. User motivation did not affect attitudes toward advertising or the advertised brand, nor did it affect the intention to participate in Facebook advertising. However, a few exceptions involving online bonding emerged. Need for online bonding improved attitude toward advertising (β = .115, p < .05) and increased participation intentions (β = .131, p < .05).

Table 6. Regression Analysis of User Responses to Facebook Advertising

	Advertising						
	Need for Online Social Capital (β)			Psychological Well-Being (β)			
User Responses	Bridging	Bonding	Maintained	Self-esteem	Life satisfaction	R^2	$F_{(df1, df2)}$
Perceptions							
Trust							
Reliability	-.064	.193**	.055	-.096*	.120**	6.1%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 6.143**
Usefulness	.026	.139**	.076	.044	.039	4.0%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 3.914**
Affect	.018	.170**	.005	.009	.100*	4.6%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 4.615**
Willingness to rely on	.041	.216**	.011	-.053	.101*	7.7%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 7.887**
Global							
Informative	-.031	.093***	.152*	.060	.064	4.7%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 4.172**
Entertaining	.032	.217**	.068	-.028	.080	7.7%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 7.878**
Irritating	.013	-.090	.013	.007	-.003	0.8%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = .728
Attitudes							
Toward advertising	-.052	.115*	.035	-.015	.017	1.3%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 1.241
Toward the advertised brand	.018	.051	.026	.054	.021	1.0%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = .921
Participation intention	-.012	.131*	-.059	.032	-.011	1.6%	$F_{(5, 474)}$ = 1.557

*p < .05.

**p < .01.

***p = .069.

Finally, to explore the influence of user motivation for online social networking on user responses to Facebook virtual brand community, a similar set of multiple regression analyses was performed. Need for online social capital and psychological well-being were entered as explanatory variables to predict user trust perceptions, global perceptions, attitudinal responses, and participation intentions in the Facebook virtual brand community. Table 7 summarizes the regression results.

For trust perceptions, the regression results confirmed the effect of user motivation on all four trust measures. Need for online social capital had an effect on trust perception, such that need for online bridging improved perceptions of virtual brand community usefulness and willingness to rely on it. Need for online bonding increased willingness to rely on the virtual brand community, but need for maintained social capital enhanced affect perceptions. Reliability perceptions were not affected by need for online social capital, though the effect of online bridging approached significance (β = .099, p = .069). The effect of psychological well-being emerged only when self-esteem was concerned. Self-esteem improved both usefulness and affect perceptions of trust in the virtual brand community. Life satisfaction had no relation with trust perceptions of the virtual brand community in Facebook.

For global perception, the effect pattern was similar. Need for online social capital influenced how the Facebook virtual brand community was perceived when its entertaining value was under consideration. Users with a higher need for online social capital perceived the virtual brand community as more entertaining. Judgments of informative value and irritation were not related to need for online social capital; however, these judgments were affected by how the respondent evaluated self-esteem. Users experiencing higher self-esteem perceived the virtual brand community as more informative (β = .109, p < .05) and less irritating (β = -.107, p < .05). Life satisfaction had no relation to perceptions of the Facebook virtual brand community.

User motivation also affected attitudinal responses and participation intentions. Both need for bridging and bonding online influenced attitudes and participation intentions. Need for online bridging improved attitudes and participation intentions, but need for online bonding dampened these responses to the virtual brand community. Need for maintained social capital did not appear influential. Consistent with previous findings, self-esteem improved attitudinal responses and intentions to participate in the virtual brand community. Life satisfaction had no influence at all.

Table 7. Regression Analysis of User Responses to the Facebook Virtual Brand Community

| | Virtual Brand Community | | | | | | |
| | Need for Online Social Capital (β) | | | Psychological Well-being (β) | | | |
User Responses	Bridging	Bonding	Maintained	Self-esteem	Life satisfaction	R^2	$F_{(df1, df2)}$
Perceptions							
Trust							
Reliability	.099***	.015	.064	.040	.030	2.7%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 2.545^*$
Usefulness	.114*	.069	.051	.121*	-.026	4.7%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 4.603^{**}$
Affect	.028	.065	.147**	.120*	-.035	5.3%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 5.199^{**}$
Willingness to rely on	.122*	.164**	.052	-.030	.015	7.1%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 7.147^{**}$
Global							
Informative	.092	-.015	.074	.109*	-.027	3.4%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 3.259^{**}$
Entertaining	.147**	.108*	.105*	.080	.003	8.3%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 8.431^{**}$
Irritating	.004	.073	-.095†	-.107*	.040	3.1%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 2.985^*$
Attitudes							
Attitude toward virtual community	.144**	-.129*	.038	.147**	-.024	5.7%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 5.628^{**}$
Attitude toward the community brand	.130*	-.101*	.095††	.114*	-.025	5.4%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 5.939^{**}$
Participation intention	.239**	-.108*	.024	.148**	-.019	8.2%	$F_{(5, 467)} = 8.412^{**}$

*$p < .05$.

**$p < .01$.

***$p = .068$.

†$p = .063$.

††$p = .056$.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this exploratory study, user responses were collected and examined in an online social networking context. A summary of the findings shows that users' responses to advertising differ from their responses to virtual brand communities. Specifically, paired comparisons indicate that users are more accepting of virtual brand communities than of Facebook advertising, and they respond more favorably to them as well. Not only do Facebook users put more trust in virtual brand communities, but they think of them as less irritating. It also seems that users have better attitudes toward virtual brand communities and the brand that builds the community. Despite this empirical evidence, it is not clear if the type of social media marketing, provided with specific content and on a particular communication platform, makes the difference in attitude toward the brand. Nevertheless, users are more fond of brand communities on Facebook and willing to participate in the community while social networking online. One possible explanation is that users' needs are gratified by the content provided in Facebook virtual brand communities (Gangadharbatla 2011), especially in contexts in which users mean to socialize, connect, and share information when hanging out on social media (Dickey and Lewis 2011).

Social networking online is the main reason users keep spending time with social media such as Facebook. Therefore, users perceive and respond to marketing venues, such as advertising and brand communities, in a different way than they do to traditional media. This study has explored the impact of users' motivation for online social networking on their responses to social media marketing. The findings indicate that user motivations generate complex effects for responses to social media marketing, differing across Facebook advertising and virtual brand communities.

Among the three forms of social capital, need for online bonding is the sole predictor of Facebook advertising responses; need for online bridging and maintained social capital has nothing to do with responses to advertising in Facebook. One possible explanation for this observation centers on content use of Facebook advertising; users need social capital in the context of online social networking. Users might be oriented toward user-generated content, which is considered reliable and credible, in their search for social capital (Dickey and Lewis 2011). The content of advertising is provided by advertisers rather than being generated by users, which could be easily ignored when users attempt to share, exchange information, or maintain social relations online. In contrast, advertising content might have specific relevance for users who are in search of social bonding, regardless of its reliability or credibility. As this study shows, users who need bonding and emotional engagement when they seek social networking online are more willing to trust Facebook advertising, perceive it as more entertaining, and offer better advertising evaluations and higher participation intentions. Just as interesting is the finding that the positive impact of need for bonding social capital is not observed for attitude toward the brand that launches the Facebook ad. It is unclear why brand attitude does not benefit from the user's need for emotional engagement, while other advertising responses do. A tentative interpretation would suggest that the advertising itself, not the brand, provides the value of social bonding and emotional engagement.

All three social capital forms predict responses to virtual brand community. In this case, need for online social capital generates positive responses to the virtual brand community with respect to trust, entertaining value, and attitudinal responses. Need for online bridging creates better evaluations of the virtual brand community in Facebook and the brand, as well as generating stronger intentions to participate in the community. However, the negative influences of online bonding on these variables is worth noting. On the surface, it appears that users who need online bonding are willing to rely on the brand community for emotional engagement, but they are not necessarily satisfied with its offerings. In contrast with speculations related to advertising, the content of the brand community may not sustain personal relevance and value for social bonding. In summary, the findings indicate that the effect of need for online social capital is complicated by the type of social media marketing and the content provided. A possible resolution of this complication recognizes that user intentions and perceived control over the marketing venue

may play important moderating roles for user responses related to different online social capital needs (O'Toole 2011).

Another aspect of user motivation is psychological well-being, which has different impacts on responses to advertising versus virtual brand communities in Facebook. User self-esteem does not predict responses to Facebook advertising well, with one exception: Users with high self-images tend to consider virtual brand communities unreliable. Life satisfaction only explains user trust perceptions of advertising but fails to influence how advertising is generally perceived and evaluated. Overall, users' psychological well-being has little to do with how they perceive or evaluate Facebook advertising or how they participate in it.

However, with regard to the virtual brand community, psychological well-being reveals some influence. User self-esteem generates positive effects on responses to the Facebook virtual brand community, though life satisfaction is not relevant in these responses. High self-esteem improves trust perceptions, through better perceptions of its informative value and lowered perceptions of irritation. Furthermore, users with a high self-image tend to evaluate the community and the brand that builds the community in favorable ways; they also are likely to participate in the Facebook brand community. This finding implies that the use of a virtual brand community, with content generated together with participating users in a socially networked environment, reflects self-image. Perhaps for users who want to exercise more control over content generation (Daugherty et al. 2011) or create self-identities (Prince 2011), self-esteem influences how the virtual brand community gets used and perceived.

In summary, this single study represents an initial step for social media marketing exploration. The explanations offered here are speculative in nature and should be verified and validated further to gain a full understanding of how advertising and brand communities work in social media.

LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Limitations

The sample recruited for this study overwhelmingly consisted of female college students, which creates the threat of sample bias toward one gender group and could limit the conclusion and inferences drawn from this study. Female users of Facebook might differ from male users in their motivation to use social media, in which case they should behave and respond to social media marketing in a social networking context differently. To complicate the issue even further,

findings from consumer research suggest that female consumers behave differently in their decision making and their preference for media consumption. The issue of gender difference in advertising media consumption is worth further empirical investigation. Furthermore, this constraint implies that the findings should be considered with caution, because they are based mainly on responses from female participants.

Another sample limitation pertains to the college students, who represent a special age group and generation. Research findings have confirmed age differences in online social networking (Pempek, Yermolayeva, and Calvert 2009; Pfeil, Arjan, and Zaphiris 2009). Specifically, college students use social media to obtain bridging social capital, linked to weak ties among old connections (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007); older users look for social and emotional support through networking with others. As a result, using college students as the sample limits the generalizability of the study findings.

Implications

Despite these limitations, this study provides empirical evidence of the effects of social media marketing generated by interactive digital advertising and virtual brand community. In addition, the impact of user motivation on user responses to social media marketing is examined. The results have implications for both social media marketing practice and research.

In particular, social media marketers must recognize what interactive digital advertising and virtual brand communities can do, not only for a brand but for users and potential consumers. As marketing venues in social media, advertising and brand community provide different communication platforms for users who create and maintain social networks online. Although advertising is mostly one-way communication, a brand community allows for two-way communications among users. Consequently, users may perceive and use the content each platform provides differently, for their own gratification. In addition, users are more willing to trust, like, and participate in a brand community in social media. The user motivations that drive social networking online exert significant effects on user responses to advertising and brand communities in social media. With their various needs for online social capital and psychological well-being, users behave differently toward advertising and the brand community. Need for bonding social capital relates to positive responses to advertising but negatively to attitudinal, intentional responses to brand

community. Need for bridging instead relates to positive responses to brand community, with no effect on advertising responses. Similarly, user self-esteem is related positively to responses to brand community, but it shares no relation with advertising responses. The implication is that user motivation shapes the way users look at and use advertising and brand communities. Practitioners of social media marketing should create content that is specific to each marketing communication platform, as well as relevant to what users of social media want and need.

This study also suggests future research directions. Some areas warrant further exploration and empirical examination. For example, the relationship between social media consumption and user acceptance of marketing communication in the context of online social networking should be investigated more closely. Social media are personalized, user-generated media, in which users exercise great control over use and content creation (Dickey and Lewis 2011). As social media become more personalized, users of social media are more reluctant to accept advertiser-generated, pushed messages. As a result, the degree of user control that advertising and brand community can provide becomes very important in developing brand communication platforms. The nature of the content that advertising and brand communities put forward also should be explored. Further explorations of brand communication platforms in social media could consider the relevance of content to users, especially if social media marketers hope to connect brand messages with potential consumers.

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