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## **Master's Thesis**

**How does brand communication affect  
consumer behavior: The influence of  
message strategy on word-of-mouth**

**Master's degree in business administration**

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## Preface

This master thesis closes the chapter of a five-year period at Inland University. It has been an interesting time, filled with great experiences which we will remember for the rest of our lives. It seems like yesterday that we attended the opening of the master's course. Now, we are here, in the middle of 2020, finishing the thesis we have worked hard on. Soon, our time as students are passed and a new chapter of life begins, where we are to use all which we have learned and apply it to the working life. We are both very excited at the prospect and look forward to the future.

We would like to thank all who have made our stay a great experience and created a platform for self-development and learning. First of all, we thank our supervisor, Tore Mysen, who has always been very accessible, given great advice and been with us from the start to the end of the thesis. You have greatly contributed to this body of work. We would also like to thank our families, significant others, friends, classmates, and faculty members who have both helped with the thesis, supported us, and made our time here at Rena, a joy. We want to thank each other, for always keeping the other in check, good discussions and working diligently together till the very end.

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The recent studies on the leveraging of consumer voices has focused on electronic word-of-mouth, while few have assessed message strategies effect on a consumer's word-of-mouth. This study examines the effect different message strategies yield on stimulating a consumer word-of-mouth.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The study takes a cross-sectional survey research with a causal design. The message strategies used in this study are informative, transformative, and interactive, and are based upon a set framework of brand posts that represent each of the message strategies. The data is gathered through a questionnaire on Facebook. The sample is analyzed through factor analysis, independent t-test, a correlation matrix, and a multiple regression analysis.

**Findings:** The results of this study show that the informative and interactional message strategies have a moderate effect on consumer word-of-mouth tendencies, and that there is significant difference between male and female in regards to informative message strategies. The research model explains 46% of the variance for word-of-mouth.

**Limitations:** A cross-sectional study is employed due to time constraints. Thus, there might be issues regarding common method variance (CMV), and causal inference (CI). This study does not employ a control variable.

**Originality/value: (Contribution):** This study contributes to the literature by testing the trichotomy of message strategies' effect on word-of-mouth. As there is little research conducted regarding this message strategy, this study extends the body of knowledge on how consumers can be engaged by a brand's message. Furthermore, this study finds support for the differences amongst male and female regarding the informative message strategy.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background and positioning

The internet has, in many ways, transformed how we interact with each-other and search for information. Where social media connects the marketer and consumer, a new dynamic of customer reach and interaction through the leveraging of consumer voices is brought forth to great marketing results (Lipsman, Mudd, Rich, & Bruich, 2012). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and chat applications have increased the speed and ease of communication amongst both the consumers themselves, and their communications with the brand. The affordances of the internet provide “thousands of blogs, millions of tweets, and billions of emails are written” (Berger, 2014, p. 587) and the social talk thereof generates over 3.3 billion brand impressions, every day (Keller & Libai, 2009). Thus, these billions of interactional touchpoints have increased the consumer’s power over brands through their social media buzz surrounding products, services and/or the brands (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011).

The leveraging of consumer voices is often referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM) (Lipsman et al., 2012) and is widely accepted as an essential tool to marketing strategies and communications (Mishra & Satish, 2016). Westbrook (1987, p. 261) defines WOM as the: “informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services and/or their sellers”. With the technological flexibility available through the smartphone and social media platforms, communications can now take form through a wide array of multimedia content. This increases the consumers possibilities to express themselves through sharing their opinions and experiences about brands, products or services (Sozer, 2019; Tafesse, 2016).

This social buzz, WOM, created by the consumers is considered highly credible and influential in comparison to efforts created by the firm (López & Sicilia, 2014; Schindler & Bickart, 2001; D. G. Taylor et al., 2012) and is therefore proficient as a marketing tool for transmitting commercial and other firm-related information (Keller & Fay, 2012). WOM occurs through two channels, either as online (public conversations) or offline (private conversations), and the vast majority is argued (potentially up to 90 percent) to occur through WOM’s offline channel (Keller, 2007; Keller & Fay, 2009; Lang & Hyde, 2013). Therefore, the understanding of how different types of messages, or message strategies affect a

consumer's tendencies to engage in WOM is essential to achieve desired marketing outcomes and goals.

As such, a brand's message strategy deals with how to frame a marketing message in a manner that can be received positively by the target audience and achieve desired marketing outcomes (Puto & Wells, 1984; Taylor, 1999) and can be defined as "a guiding approach to a company's or institution's promotional communication efforts for its products, its services, or itself" (Taylor, 1999, p. 7). Kim, Kim & Kim (2019) argue that message strategies help drive consumers WOM behaviors. Unique combinations of message strategies are crafted through emotional (affective) and informational (cognitive) message strategies can help the firm to induce consumers' engagement through WOM. In which, 'what people say' is more important than 'how much people say it' (Gopinath, Thomas & Krishnamurthi, 2014). To this extent, message strategies provide marketers with the tool to close the gap between what consumers need to hear with what marketers want to say (Laskey, Day & Crask 1989; Taylor, 1999).

To communicate message strategies on social media, firms use brand posts. Whereas brand posts are the regular updates (messages) authored by the brand on social media to their fans, customer, and consumer (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). Message strategies deal with how these brand posts are framed to achieve the desired marketing outcome (Puto & Wells, 1984). Prior literature on message strategies' effect on consumer behavior is mainly focused on content analysis (c.f. Ashely & Tuten, 2015; De Vries et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015; Taecharungroj, 2017; Tafesse, 2015). By using content analysis of message strategies, research focus on the online aspect of WOM, while less focus is attributed to WOM's offline setting.

Furthermore, complications in the advertising literature derive as a wide array of different typologies and classifications of brand posts and message strategies are used as measures in these content analyses. For instance, amongst these various message strategies are: Task-oriented, interactional-oriented and self-oriented (D. H. Kim, Spiller & Hettche, 2015), Social currency, emotional, functional, storytelling (Yuki, 2015), or information-sharing, emotion-evoking, and action-inducing (Taecharungroj, 2017). As such, the categorization of brand posts used to measure each of these message strategies seem to be created in an ad-hoc manner to fit the various message strategies (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). Thus, new studies might find it hard to replicate prior findings, for example, prior literature has suggested that entertainment (-ing brand posts) can yield a positive effect on the number of shares and likes



(Tafesse, 2016), in which other studies do not support these findings (De Vries, Gensler & Leeflang, 2012).

This study uses Tafesse and Wien's (2017) formalized analysis of twelve exhaustive and mutually exclusive brand posts categories. In which, Tafesse and Wien (2017) argue that, out of these twelve, eleven of the brand posts can be separated into three message strategies. As such, this study builds on Puto & Wells' (1984) conceptualization, informative and transformative, whilst adding a new interactive message strategy (Tafesse & Wien, 2017; 2018b). This study addresses this gap in literature and aims at contributing to the knowledge of how selected message strategies may influence word-of-mouth (WOM). This study's conceptual model is depicted in figure 1.1 and aims at answering the research question: *What is the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth?*

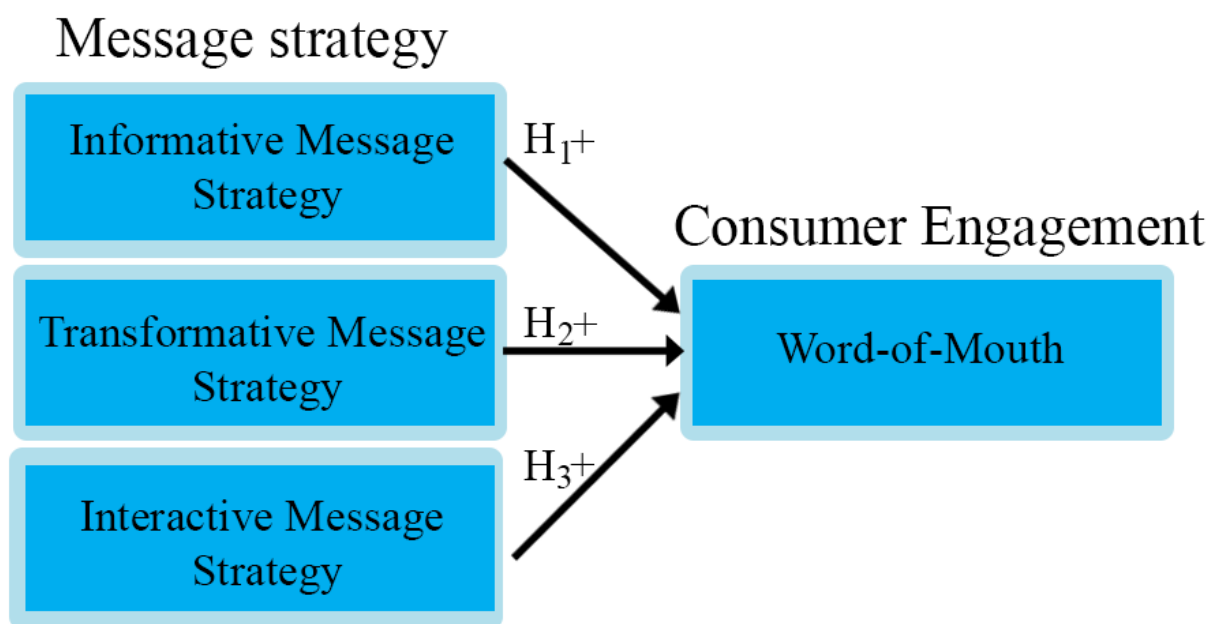


Figure 1.1 - Conceptual research model

## 1.2 Practical & theoretical implications

This study contributes to the current literature by researching the suggested avenue by Tafesse and Wien (2017) and Osei-Frimpong & McLean (2018) by conducting a detailed message-level (informative vs transformative vs interactive) analysis of brand posts, and its effect on a consumer's engagement in WOM. As such, contributing to the advertising literature of message strategies and social media marketing by increasing the knowledge of how to harness the interactive and networking capabilities of social media for marketing purposes.

By addressing the current gap in the understanding underpinning the relationship between a brand's messages and a consumer behavior. This study's perspective on brand posts, their coherent message strategy, and effect on offline WOM can provide new insight to both academia and practitioner. Which is increasingly important as: "brands managers have lost their pivotal role as authors of their brands' stories (...) [and consumers] are now empowered to share their brand stories easily and widely through social networks" (Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins & Wiertz, 2013, p. 243).

For managers, this study aims to shed light on a consumer centric preference for message strategies and recommendations based upon which message strategy yields effect on a consumer's tendency to engage in WOM. Given that this study employs eleven aggregated brand posts into three major message strategies, managers may use Tafesse & Wien's (2017) framework of brand posts as a part of their message strategy initiatives. As such, these message strategies might aid a firm in revealing how different message strategies can leverage consumers voices for business building outcomes.

## 1.3 Research Context

To study how message strategies affects a consumer's WOM, the practical choice is to utilize the context of social media on the digital platform Facebook. In which, Facebook is also a good place to gather respondents, as it has a population of 3,454 million users in Norway (Ipsos, 2019). Facebook has taken the prime position as the preferred social network service, in which the consumers are exposed to third-party interactions in their feed, such as: sponsored content and/or by potentially subscribing to a brand social media updates (brand posts) (Wiese, Martínez-Clement & Botella-Carrubi, 2020). For these reasons, Facebook

provides the potential to gather information about what consumers think of the different message strategies and how it relates to their behavioral engagement through word-of-mouth.

Taking the quantitative approach, the collected data is obtained through surveys and analyzed through an OLS multiple regression. As the brand posts framework of Tafesse & Wien (2017) and their research on consumer engagement is based on Facebook (Tafesse & Wien, 2018), it would be possible to test their findings in an offline WOM context. This different approach can increase the understanding of the relationship between message strategy and WOM in an offline context.

#### 1.4 Structure of the thesis

In the following chapters, this study's theoretical framework is presented. The literature on WOM, message strategies, and brand posts is discussed before presenting hypothesis development. This study's choice of methodology, the research design, sampling procedure, development of the questionnaire is elaborated upon. Following suit, is this study's validity and reliability, that will discuss the construct-, nomological-, internal and external validity. Following the methodology is this study's analysis, results, and discussions. This chapter investigates, firstly, the construct validity through convergent and discriminant factor analysis. Secondly, discusses the regression assumptions in an accordance to Berry (1993) BLUE OLS. Thirdly, the results of this study are elaborated upon and discussed juxtaposed to the hypothesis, and lastly, a total discussion followed by this study's conclusion. Finally, the limitations and recommendations for future research for this study are presented and discussed.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Overview

This chapter presents the theoretical framework with the relevant literature. By going more into depth, the theories and previous studies will create a broader understanding for the themes and concepts of this thesis. The theoretical framework is developed in a way which focuses on using relevant literature to approach the research question. At the end, the hypothesis underlying the research question will be presented in a concise version of the theory. From now on, abbreviations are used for the various message strategies. Thus, transformative message strategies are abbreviated to 'TMS', informative message strategies will be abbreviated to 'TMS', interactive message strategies will be abbreviated to 'IaMS', and word-of-mouth is WOM.

### 2.2 Literature review

Reviewing literature is important to find good literary works to develop the foundation for a study. This study's theoretical framework is a result of reading, reviewing, and extracting the important aspects of relevant articles and other literary reviews regarding the topics of this study. As such, the authors read through different articles and literature reviews to find interesting subjects that have gaps which are recommended for future research. These articles give insight into various subjects, whereas the authors landed upon online messages strategies and how it relates to word-of-mouth as the topic of choice. From here, within the literature reviews on the topic, the most cited studies, and other relevant citations are read to create a better understanding of the conducted studies and its current gaps. Thus, using a snowball approach to find relevant articles.

To find these articles, various search engines are used in this thesis. The most used engines are Google scholar, Business Source Complete and Oria. Access to these search engines give many possibilities for further literature exploration through being able to sort through authors, journals, and central topics. Amongst the most searched words used to find literature on the search engines were:

engagement, consumer engagement, behavioral engagement, engagement antecedents, word-of-mouth, WOM, eWOM (electronic WOM– electronic word-of-mouth), eWOM antecedents, WOM antecedents, WOM drivers, drivers of engagement, consumer behavior, consumer motivations, WOM motivations, social media, message strategy, brand posts, firm-generated content/FGC, interpersonal communication,

content, consequences of engagement, literature reviews, sharing behavior, Facebook, sponsored content, earned audience, DCM, engagement antecedents, narrowcasting, broadcasting, drivers for WOM, interactive-, emotional-, functional drivers/engagement.

The search terms are both searched individually, used in combination, and with filters, such as articles within the last decade, all to create a better overview and find new literature. The theoretical structure is based on a variety of articles and studies, whereby the central terms for this study are categorized and sorted to be used as the theoretical framework. An overview of the central literature for this thesis can be found at table 2.1. The digital reference program Mendeley is used to categorize, navigate, and cite all source material in the thesis. The search for literature is mainly conducted in English, due to the fact that most of the research regarding advertising and consumer behavior are written in English. There are 85 citations within this study, while approximately, 200 articles/studies are reviewed to complete this thesis with the best overview of topics related to the research question.

Central literature	
Reference	Utility
Alexandrov, Lily & Babakus (2013)	Social drivers of WOM
Barach & Berger (2014)	Broadcasting and Narrowcasting
Berger (2014)	Drivers of interpersonal communication
Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić & Ilić (2011)	Consumer engagement
Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić & Ilić (2013)	Consumer engagement
Calder, Isaac & Malthouse (2016)	Consumer engagement
De Vires, Gensler & Leeflang (2012)	Brand posts on brand pages
Dolan, Conduit, Fahy & Goodman (2016)	Uses & Gratifications and social media engagement behaviour
Jahn & Kunz (2012)	Fan pages and customer fan-page engagement
Kim, Kim & Kim (2019)	Message strategy and eWOM
Laskey, Day & Crask (1989)	Typology of message strategy
Lipsman, Mudd, Rich & Bruich (2012)	Consumer engagement and brand content
Mishra & Satish (2016)	eWOM review
Puto & Wells (1984)	Message strategy
Schamari & Schaeffers (2015)	Drivers of consumer engagement
Tafesse & Wien (2017)	Brand post framework
Tafesse & Wien (2018b)	Consumer engagement and message strategy

*Table 2.1 – Central literature*

### 2.3 Consumer Engagement

Literature on consumer engagement depict three separate categories of engagement, which are cognitive-, emotional- and behavioral engagement (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Munjal, Mishra & Shanker, 2019; Vivek, Beatty & Morgan, 2012). Cognitive engagement refers to the functional motives which consumers have; emotional engagement refers to the hedonic motives, and behavioral engagement is the activation through actions of one or more of the previously mentioned motives (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). When one or more motive is met, the consumer is more likely to act on it through their behavior.

Engagement can come in two forms, which are active engagement and passive engagement (Schamari & Schaefer, 2015). The distinction lies in whether the content is just consumed (passive) with no change in behavior, whereby active engagement can encourage action from the consumer (Schamari & Schaefer, 2015). Creating content where the consumer actively wants to engage through meeting one or more motives is therefore important to achieve better results.

By producing content which appeal to one or more of the motives described by Hollebeek & Macky (2019), Lovett et al., (2013), Alexandrov et al., (2013), the chance for active consumer engagement increases. When consumer engagement increases, a firm can reap the rewards. The reward can be that an engaged consumer will have a higher chance of being affected by the brand and its content, both today and/or in the future. This, in turn creates an arena for further spreading of the brand content (Brodie et al., 2011). If the content appeals to one or more motives by satisfying their goals and needs, behavioral engagement through word-of-mouth (WOM) (van Doorn et al., 2010) can occur.

To satisfy their goals and needs, consumers can use different digital platforms to connect with other like-minded individuals with similar goals and needs. These digital platforms facilitate interaction between two prospects without human intervention. Mäntymäki, Baiyere & Islam, (2019, p. 452) define digital platforms as: “the digital infrastructure, rules, and processes that enable resource exchange between external producers and consumers”. Whereby the interconnectedness between producer and consumer on a digital platform is one of the defining characteristics of it. Social media (digital) platforms have become the hubs for which companies establish a tenacious connection, reach, and relationship with its customers and prospects through the exchange of messages (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011). Consumers who have a positive relationship with a brand, often referred to as ‘fan(s)’ (by subscribing to a

brand), can bring great value to a brand. In which, Lipsman et al. (2012, p. 40) argue that the ‘value of a fan’ can be: “the increasing depth of engagement and loyalty among fans; generating incremental purchase behavior, and leveraging the ability to influence friends of fans”.

## 2.4 WOM

Word-of-mouth is defined as “informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and/or services or their sellers,” (Westbrook, 1987, p. 261). Brown, Barry, Dacin & Gunst (2005, p. 125) argues that “In its broadest sense, WOM communication includes any information about a target object (e.g., company, brand) transferred from one individual to another either in person or via some communication medium”. Thus, WOM is what individuals converse about related to a brand, firm, or offering with others.

Word-of-Mouth encompasses many aspects of interpersonal communication between individuals and can drive marketing campaigns further and longer by talk initiated by their consumers. Through everyday conversations, consumers talk about products, services, brands, and their experiences with friends, family and acquaintances (Berger, 2014; Westbrook, 1987). By having such conversations, word-of-mouth is passed on from consumer to consumer. Conversations can happen through two channels of communication, either narrowcasting (Offline WOM) or broadcasting (Online WOM) (Barasch & Berger, 2014).

This study focuses on the narrowcasting between individuals (Barasch & Berger, 2014) whereby the sender of WOM has a specific person in mind who they wish to share the content with. The sharing of content, through narrowcasting (Barasch & Berger, 2014), can be done verbally or through chat applications (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014). In previous studies (De Vries et al., 2012; Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004; Tafesse & Wien, 2018) on the subject, engagement is measured through eWOM, which is an online context. eWOM is an extension of offline word-of-mouth, as technology has facilitated easier sharing of content to several individuals at the same time (Barasch & Berger, 2014; Mishra & Satish, 2016).

As eWOM (online WOM) are messages posted online, where the word-of-mouth is aimed at “communicating with multiple people” (Barasch & Berger, 2014, p. 286; Lovett, Peres & Schachar, 2013) and is a form of broadcasting (Barasch & Berger, 2014). This is opposite of what this study focuses on, which is WOM (offline WOM), narrowcasting (“communicating with just one person”) (Barasch & Berger, 2014, p. 286). In which, this variant of WOM (offline) is argued to account for the vast majority of WOM present amongst the consumers (Lang & Hyde, 2013). It is important for firms to engage consumers actively, and not passively (Schamari & Schaefer, 2015). By engaging consumers through content which they like, they can successfully create active consumer engagement (earned audience) (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010; Nagy & Midha, 2014). In turn, the active engagement can encourage word-of-mouth.

#### 2.4.1 Drivers of WOM

Berger (2014) argues that a consumer talks about their daily experiences with others (e.g. their opinions, news, vacations, movies, restaurants etc.). A consumer's digital lives are filled with various forms of content that can be used in the context of chit-chat. The consumption habits of consumers can be understood through the theory of uses and gratifications (U&G) (Katz & Foulkes, 1962). The theory proposes that consumers of media consume to satisfy their goals and needs, by which the consumer is an active participant in the media rather than a passive receiver (Dolan, Conduit, Fahy & Goodman, 2016; Schamari & Schaefer, 2015). Literature argues that the activation of the consumer can happen if the content meets one or more of three drivers for the spreading of WOM, which could be the social, functional, and emotional (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Berger & Schwartz, 2011; Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014; Lovett et al., 2013; Milkman & Berger, 2014; Sozer, 2019). These drivers are important for marketers to understand, as they make up a substantial portion of why consumers participate in WOM during everyday conversation (Berger, 2014).

The social driver consists of human desire to be part of groups, socialize and being able to converse with others (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Berger, 2014). The driver for social interaction can be met through facilitation of social bonding (Berger, 2014), whereas the individual can seek content which satisfies this need. Being a part of a brand community can evoke WOM by increasing the consumer likelihood of speak about it to others (Brodie et al., 2013). Individuals have a need to be included in social interactions, inducing social bonding and drives sharing behavior through establishing elements such as common ground (Berger,



2014). Common ground can be established through themes which touch upon topics that are more relatable to the consumer, such as current events or personal interests. By consuming content which touches upon common interests or themes, consumers are more likely to pass it on to others because they feel more included within a social circle (Berger, 2014).

The functional driver consists of the need for information, whereas it serves both a utilitarian and knowledge need (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Consequently, this search for informative (e.g. functional and/or educational) content may trigger the behavioral output of WOM (Kim et al., 2019; Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014). Information sharing through WOM can solve two pressing issues, either by seeking advice or sharing informational content to relieve others of potential problems that they might face (Berger, 2014). In turn, this might facilitate social benefits such as helping others or being knowledgeable (Berger, 2014; T. Kim et al., 2019; Lovett et al., 2013; Milkman & Berger, 2014).

The emotional driver consists of the emotional experience consumers have with products or content, which in turn can make them want to share that experience (Berger, 2014). Previous studies have shown that characteristics such as satisfaction, the excitement, emotions, and feelings a brand evokes through various content, products, services or experiences has an effect on word-of-mouth (Berger & Schwartz, 2011; Lovett et al., 2013; Milkman & Berger, 2014; Sozer, 2019). All of these are characteristics can promote arousal in the consumer, either positive or negative (Berger, 2014). Content which evoke a greater emotional response, such as a relatable story or humor, in the recipient is more likely to be talked about (Swani, Milne & Brown, 2013; Wien, 2019).

Social, functional, and emotional drivers try to explain why consumers of content act in a manner which promotes and encourages word-of-mouth after the consumption. WOM drivers are not necessarily activated exclusively, as content can include aspects which activate two or more motivations. If consumers find content stimulating through feelings, entertainment, being part of a greater group, common grounds through interests, or functional values, they are more likely to talk about it with others (Berger, 2014; L. De Vries et al., 2012; Tafesse & Wien, 2018b). Jahn & Kunz (2012) argue that to encourage consumers to engage in word-of-mouth, a firm can stimulate and satisfy one or more of the U&G needs (content-, relationship- and/or self-oriented). Firms can encourage consumers to participate in word-of-mouth by meeting their needs and motivations by creating content which appeal to them.

## 2.5 Message strategies

A firm can use message strategies as a guiding principle to determine the domain of brand content a firm utilizes as a part of its advertising efforts (e.g. sponsored content or brand posts) (Puto & Wells, 1984) on social media. Taylor (1999, p. 7) defines message strategy as “a guiding approach to a company’s or institution’s promotional communication efforts for its products, its services, or itself”. In which it is generally referred to ‘what to say’ and ‘how it is said’ in marketing and advertising communications plan (Taylor, 1999). In social media, message strategies are often conveyed through brand posts sent out as either advertisements (sponsored content) or on the brand’s social media page (brand pages) (Gaber & Wright, 2014; Tafesse & Wien, 2017; Wiese et al., 2020).

Puto & Wells (1984) pave the way of understanding affective and cognitive appeals within their informative and transformative advertising. Laskey et al. (1989) built on their dichotomy by adding more specific categories within the message strategies (comparative, unique selling proposition, preemptive, hyperbole and generic). These categories aids marketers bridge the gap between what consumers need to hear and what marketers want to say (Laskey et al., 1989; Taylor, 1999). As such, message strategy guides the marketer to controlling the design and execution of marketing messages outbound to the consumers (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) and tailor their advertising efforts to pique consumers’ rational and emotional interests.

Hanna et al. (2011) argues that the power of social media resides within the potential to create connection in a vast network, by which consumers can become a “active participants in the media process” (Hanna et al., 2011, p. 267). Where Tafesse and Wien (2018b) elaborate on this argument by extending on the notion that marketers must now interact and engage with the consumers to expand and extend the potential reach of outbound messages. This new dynamic calls for the need of a holistic social media message strategy to that mediates a fulfilling experience seamlessly and that captures the interactive aspect within message strategy (Tafesse & Wien, 2018a).

### 2.5.1 Informative, transformative, and interactive message strategies

Informational message strategies (IMS) can be defined as “one which provides consumers with factual (...), relevant brand data in a clear and logical manner such that they have greater confidence in their ability to assess the merits of buying the brand after having seen the

advertisement” (Puto & Wells, 1984, p. 638). Informative messages are cognitively based and should present factual and relevant information that is important for a consumer. As such, informative messages are an important driver for persuading consumers at the lower funnels (buying consideration phase) of advertising (Teichert, Hardeck, Liu & Trivedi, 2018).

Transformative message strategy (TMS) should embody an experience connotated to the product or service that is richer, warmer, exiting, and enjoyable that transforms the value of consuming the brand and separates it from its competitors (Puto & Wells, 1984). Thus, conveying a message that appeals to the consumers emotion (Puto & Wells, 1984) and reflects the products or services hedonic qualities (Laskey et al., 1989). As such, the main thrust of transformative messages is the focus on “a unique set of psychological characteristics which would not typically be associated with the brand experience to the same degree without exposure to the advertisement” (Puto & Wells, 1984, p. 638). New studies also point out that transformative message strategies are better at the capturing the attention of new consumers (Teichert et al., 2018). By these standards, the transformative message strategy captures the attention of the consumer by appealing to their emotions, feelings, image, mood and/or other affect-based ‘transformative values’ (Puto & Wells, 1984).

Rational information provides the consumer with relevant and factual brand data that increase the knowledge regarding the buying merits of the product or service, while the emotion-laden information emphasizes the uniqueness and superiority of the brand. As such, they can match the transformative value of the brand with “consumer aspirations (image), insights and experiences (resonance, experiential), and feelings (emotional including love, sexual desire, fear, guilt, and joy/humor)” (Ashely & Tuten, 2015, p. 18). Though, Puto & Wells (1984) argue that both these message strategies exist within a ‘high-low’, ‘low-high’ relationship and marketers tend to use them in various combinatory manners (Tafesse & Wien, 2018b).

These strategies are created with an emphasis on a one-way communication style that is developed for TV and Print advertisement rather than messages sent over the internet. Interactive message strategy (IaMS), as Tafesse & Wien (2017; 2018b) extends Puto & Wells (1984) dichotomy, “cultivates ongoing customer interactions through the rich interactive affordances of social media” (Tafesse & Wien, 2018b, p. 244). The aspect of interactive messages gives firms the opportunity to communicate with their customers through broadcasting (one-to-many) (Barasch & Berger, 2014). This strategy is increasingly important

for firms as “the online experience is thought to be more active, participatory, and interactive (...) more social in nature, because it can be used for sharing and communicating and it therefore breeds social engagement” (Calder, Malthouse & Schaedel, 2009, p. 323).

A firm may use interactive message strategy to provide “integration and social interaction - gaining insight into the circumstances of others; social empathy; identifying with others and gaining a sense of belonging; finding a basis for conversation and social interaction; having a substitute for a real-life companionship; help carrying out social roles; enable one to connect with family friends and society.” (Calder et al., 2009, p. 323). Furthermore, Tafesse and Wien (2017) present a framework that categorizes the content of brand posts with coherent message strategy. As such, firms use brand post to convey the message strategies on their social media outlets (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to keep up with the trends and maintaining a regular presence on social media (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

## 2.6 Brand posts

Facebook posts, such as ‘brand posts’, are a digital tool used to convey messages to the broader public. For a consumer, this might entail their friends and acquaintances, while brands focus on consumers, customers, and fans, that emphasizes the brand’s online social presence initiatives (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018). The social presence of a brand (on social media) can occur in two primary ways, either as organic (free) advertising through their social media brand pages (Tafesse & Wien, 2017) or as paid advertisements through Facebook’s Social Network Service (SNS) (Gaber & Wright, 2014). A consumer’s perceived difference between the two types of reach on Facebook are miniscule, and often indistinguishable from user content (Wiese et al., 2020). The practicality of brand posts resides within its flexibility, as it supports multiple media types (e.g. text, video, web-links, pictures) and is for this reason apt at communicating a variety of brand messages that affords differing experiences and brand meanings (Tafesse, 2016). As such, brand posts are an essential tool for a brand to connect with its fans, customers, and consumers, and marketers tend to use various types of brand posts interchangeably (Tafesse & Wien, 2017; 2018b).

By being an active presence on social media, brand posts can raise brand-awareness, cultivate long-term brand relationships, (Jahn & Kunz, 2012; A. J. Kim & Ko, 2012) and improve business-related outcomes (Akpinar & Berger, 2017). In sum, informative, transformative,

and interactional message strategies enable the brand to focus a message on important aspects dependent on the brand's desired outcome. The benefits of these message strategies derive as the creation of new and sustainable personal ties (relationships) with the consumers through interaction and aid the firm in achieving the desired marketing outcome.

The following brand post categories below are all extracted from Tafesse & Wien (2017) brand post framework. Whereas the message strategy coherent to the brand posts are based on their recommendations of which brand post is coherent to its respective message strategy (Tafesse & Wien 2017). The categorization is collectively exhaustive, and to the extent that is used (percentage of occurrence in their extracted sample) by fortune 500 companies is disclosed in the segments below.

## 2.7 Categorizing brand posts into message strategies

Tafesse and Wien's (2017) brand post framework consist of twelve categories, in which eleven of them are recommended to represent the aforementioned message strategies (See figure 2.1).

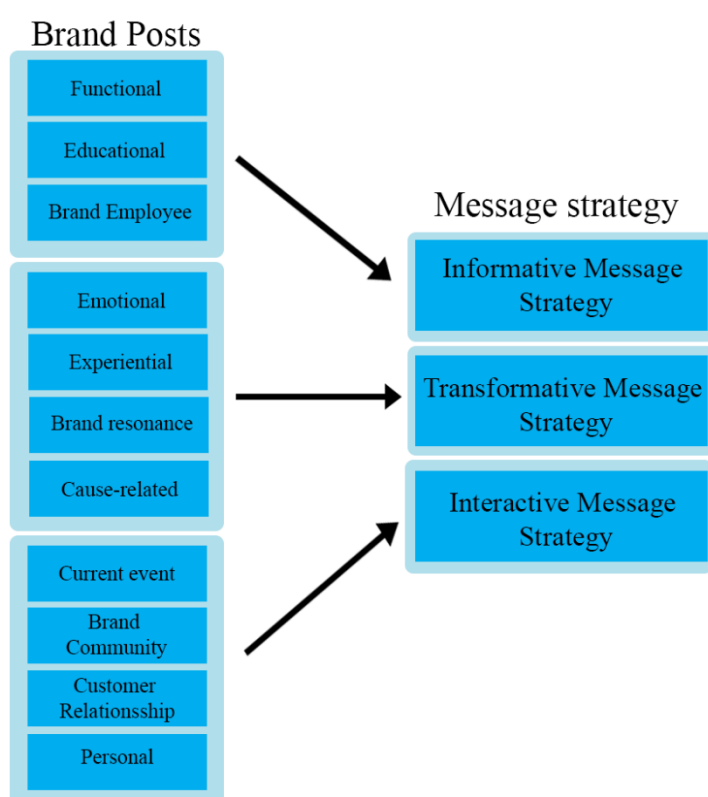


Figure 2.1 – Brand Posts and Message Strategy

Informational message strategy (IMS) brand posts consist of three content types: functional, educational and brand employee posts. The transformative message strategy (TMS) contains four brand post categories: emotional, experiential, brand resonance, and cause-related brand posts. The interactional message strategy (IaMS) brand posts content category contains four types: current event, brand community, customer relationship, and personal brand posts.

The first brand post within IMS is the functional brand posts and these often highlight functional attributes of a product and/or service. The functional posts account for 31% of Tafesse and Wiens (2017) the brand posts within their sample. Typically, these brand posts often inform consumer on aspects such as: product claims, product reviews, awards, and/or green credentials. In which the thrust of the brand post resides within showcasing the product's or service's quality, affordability, performance, design, and style criteria to ultimately aid the consumer in their purchase decision.

The second category is educational brand posts, accounting for 30% of their sample (Tafesse and Wien, 2017) and often occur in three distinct variants. Firstly, these posts inform a consumer and educate them about the brand or product through 'tips and tricks' and/or creative ways of applying the product on a day-to-day basis. Secondly, firms can also utilize 'do it yourself' posts, or other types of instruction to aid a customer in troubleshooting different types of issues. Lastly, educate them through alternative sources published on specialists' blogs or other news-outlets with opinion pieces about their services or products.

The third category is employee brand posts and account for roughly 10% of the brand posts (Tafesse and Wien, 2017). These posts are about a brand's employees and presents the employees perspective on a range of issues. These issues can be those that are trending or those that the brand find relevant to their industry and image. Examples of this can be an employee take on technical or managerial issues, their personal interests, hobbies, or worldviews. These brand posts are mostly used in B2B (Business to business) settings and for technology centered firms.

Within TMS, emotional brand posts intend to evoke a consumer's emotion through emotion-laden language. This first variant use emotional words and symbols to evoke a positive emotional response that is connotated to the brand's products or services. Secondly, emotional post can use inspiring stories centered around the focal brand, such as success stories under unlikely circumstances or in the face of adversity. Thirdly, these posts can use humor and/or trivia to portray the brand's softer side. These posts often picture the focal brand in emotional terms and drive affective responses from the consumers and is estimated to account for 33% of Tafesse and Wiens (2017) brand post sample.

Experiential brand posts use relevant brand cues to evoke a consumers sensory and behavioral responses and is estimated to takes presence within for 27% of the brand posts (Tafesse and Wien, 2017). Firstly, experiential posts can employ gustatory, olfactory, vistal, or auditory brand cues and is often used to enhance the product's or service's characteristic or experience. Secondly, these posts may highlight the focal brand as a part of adventurous and thrilling consumer experience connotated to consuming the service or product. Or lastly, experiential posts can contain those that promote branded events, such as sponsored events, product launches, or live event that provide the consumer with a direct link to the experience of the live event.

Brand resonance posts account for 27% of the brand posts (Tafesse and Wien, 2017), and directs the attention to the brand identity and promise. The first variant focuses on the brand's visual identity (Brand logo, slogan, and character) with the goal of positioning the brand favorably in the mind of the consumer. The second variant of these posts is through showing clean and visually striking photos of a brands products to use celebrities to elevate the status of the product, service and/or brand. And lastly, the post might be in celebration of the brand heritage and often focuses on the brands historical contribution and accomplishments.

Cause-related brand posts accounts for 6% of the observed brand posts, (Tafesse and Wien, 2017) and mainly focus on socially responsive programs and initiatives that encourage consumers and fans to support it. Often, they depict the focal brand in a positive light, which highlight the brand as a contributor to a better functioning society. These posts possess moral and emotional appeal and tries to cement a consumer's emotional bond with the brand.

Interactional message strategy's first category is current event and focuses on timely and relevant events and themes. Often focusing on the populations active talking-points and occurs in 19% of the brand posts (Tafesse and Wien, 2017). Firstly, these brand posts might use popular holidays, anniversaries, and/or other special days to spark a conversation with the consumers. Secondly, the post can focus on cultural events, such as movies or tv-shows releases, and sports events. Thirdly, they might also inform the consumers about the current season or the weather. Whereas the thrust of current event is to start conversations with the consumers about trending topics.

Brand community posts may be used to promote and strengthen a brand's ties with its online community. These posts account for 7% of the brand posts (Tafesse and Wien, 2017). The first variant of this post often occurs by acknowledging members and their contribution to the community with the goal of enhancing community participation. Secondly, these posts contain useful information on where to find them on different social media outlets and aids in recruiting new members. Thus, these posts aid the firm with the ability to foster a sense of community identification that encourage sharing and participation.

Customer relationship brand posts accounts for 6% of the observed brand posts in Tafesse & Wien (2017) sample. The focus of these brand posts is on the issues between the focal brand and its customers, often highlighting and initiating conversations surrounding customer-feedback, services, and testimony. Firstly, these posts provide the focal firm with opportunities to learn about the customers' needs and priorities through their feedback. Thus, seeking to enrich the customer relationship through interactivity. Secondly, the firm might use these posts to remind consumers of their services. Thirdly, they can promote customer success stories by using a customer's testimonial experience with the brands products or services.

Personal brand posts focus on the consumers personal relations and are estimated to account for 15% of the brand posts (Tafesse and Wien, 2017). Firstly, these posts often focus on the aspect of family and friends by alluding to their potential importance in their lives. The second variant often refers to the individual's personal hobbies and interests. Thus, within personal brand posts, the consumer is in focus and the brand encourages them to express themselves or reminds them of the importance of their personal relations.



### 2.7.1 Conceptual research model

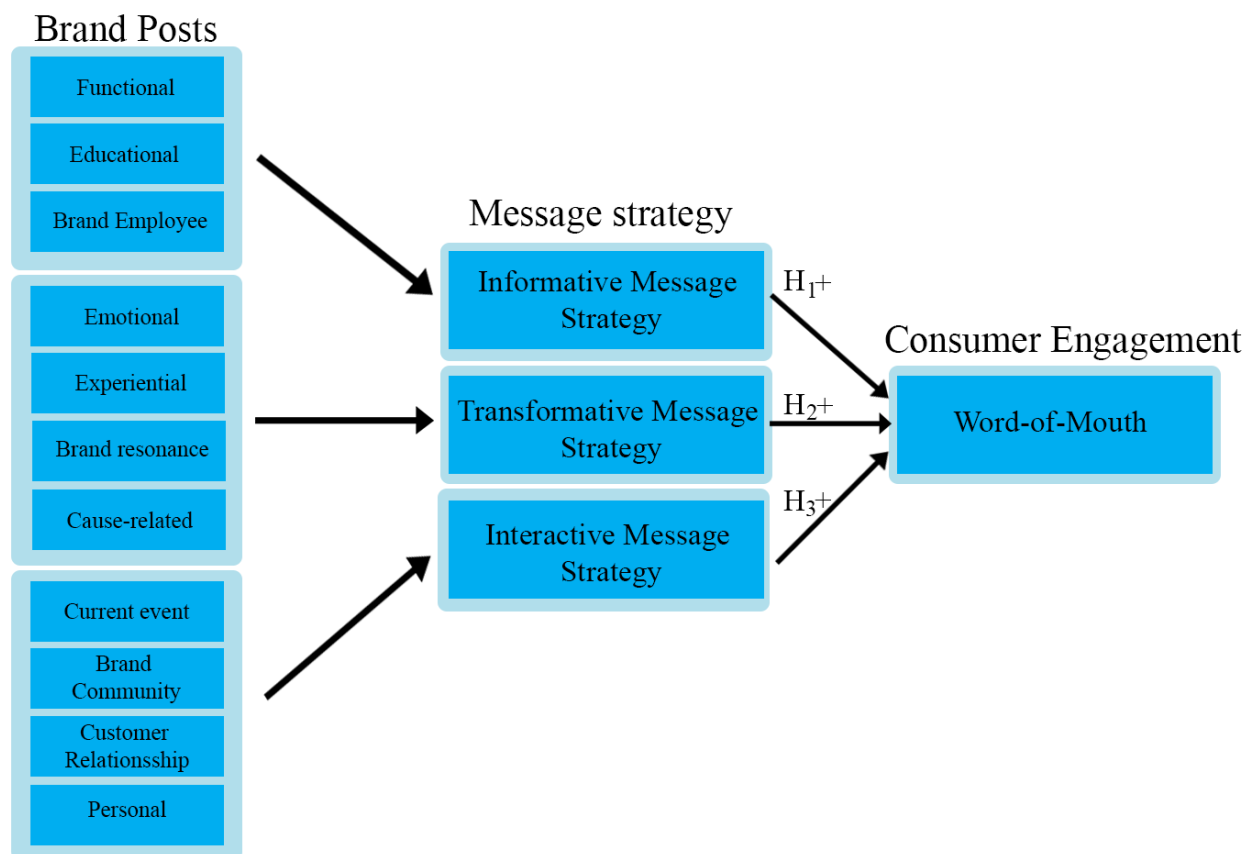


Figure 2.2 – Conceptualization of the research model

In sum, prior literature mainly focuses on content analysis of brand post (Ashely & Tuten, 2015; De Vries et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015; Taecharungroj, 2017; Tafesse, 2015) that are seemingly ad hoc categorized (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). This study builds upon the dichotomy of Puto and Wells' (1984) informative (IMS) and transformative (TMS) advertisements with the added aspect of interactivity (IaMS) as a new trichotomy of message strategies presented by Tafesse and Wien (2017; 2018b). Given that these message strategies are represented through unique brand posts (in figure 2.2), this study provides the opportunity to investigate how a consumer responds to certain message dependent stimuli by whether it evokes their tendencies to WOM. This detailed message-level analysis of brand communications and its effect on consumers WOM contributes to the literature on consumer behavior and message strategies in advertising. In the next segment, each hypothesis is elaborated upon based on the theoretical framework presented in this chapter.

## 2.8 Hypothesis development

This study draws on the research of the innate nature of human's social transmission of information (content) to address how this is affected and stimulated by the different message strategies. Argued by the aspect that people share information about their experiences, events, stories, ideas, and other people throughout their day (Berger, 2014). Coupled with findings from other studies, content that is rich or valuable with either informational, emotional- or social value have an increased chance of being talked about due to it being more able to excite consumers (Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Kim et al., 2019). This creates an effect which makes it more likely that a consumer engages in one or more of the social, emotional, or functional drivers (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Berger, 2014; Lovett et al., 2013) due to the content that can arouse these needs.

To engage a consumer on a functional level and satisfy their need for information, the informative message strategy can be applied. Messages based on the functional, educational or employee brand post would provide the consumer with factual product and service information. U&G's content-oriented, need for information, can be gratified through knowledge enhancing content (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Thus, a consumer can engage with or learn about functional, brand employee and educational brand post to satisfy their knowledge and utility needs.

Berger (2014) argues that individuals are motivated to talk about subjects which may portray them as more intelligent, helpful, and/or smart in a conversation. This can manifest through instances where consumers share informative messages to solve known issues. The issues can be solved through giving or seeking advice to/from friends, family or acquaintances that may be based on recent brand post, given its relevance to their situation (Berger, 2014). In sum, useful 'stories' (information) (Heath, Bell & Sternberg, 2001; Milkman & Berger, 2014), and marketing messages (Chiu, Chiou, Fang, Lin & Wu, 2007) increases the informative messages' likelihood of being shared by the consumer. Therefore, providing the consumer with informative content can increase the potential for them to share the content with their family, friends, or acquaintances

Thus

***H1: Informative message strategy are positively related to WOM.***

To evoke a consumer's affective (emotional) responses, marketers can use the brand posts within transformative message strategies. By appealing to a consumer's emotions, drawing on Lovett et al. (2013) emotional driver, WOM can be activated by the brand message. U&G's self-orientation focus promotes the idea that the consumers' motivation (for consuming media, e.g. brand post) is to satisfy the need to relieve today's stress (Berger, 2014). Brand posts which focus on brand resonance or social causes can yield a positive effect on satisfying this need through the potential gratification obtained by aligning the consumers' self-image with the brand's image (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Secondly, U&G's self-orientation focus on the individuals' need of a diversion from life's everyday struggles. Emotional or experiential brand posts may gratify this need for escapism.

As such, consumers might share their experienced relief from 'today's stress' or engage in entertaining brand content to appear more interesting, funny or in-the-know (Berger, 2014). Consumers might also share content that they relate to or are humorous (Swani et al., 2013; Wien, 2019). Whereby, consumers that experience this transformational brand post might want to share that experience (emotion) with others to potentially provide friends, family or acquaintances with the same satisfaction, excitement, and/or other feelings evoked by the post (Lovett et al., 2013; Wien, 2019).

Thus

*H2: Transformative message strategies are positively related to WOM*

All individuals have some need for conversing with others, being a part of social groups and interactivity (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Berger, 2014). Such a social group can be the community of a brand, where individuals converse with others with similar interests or talks of things which they are part of (Berger, 2014; Brodie et al., 2011). The intention of the interactional message strategy (Tafesse & Wien, 2017) is to engage the consumer through content which appeals to their sense of belonging and interaction. When a firm appeals to the individual consuming their content, the consumers might be more inclined to converse about it to others (Berger, 2014).

By appealing to consumers through messages which focus on their community, current events, involving the consumer and their interests, a firm can appeal to their social motivations (drivers). By involving themselves with the consumer, firms are more likely to foster relationships and increase the depth of this relationship through the growth of- and

incentive for- consumer engagement. These motivations can be fulfilled through content that meets the U&G relationship-oriented social need (Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Katz & Foulkes, 1962) by appealing to their needs and wants, thus inciting word-of-mouth.

Thus

**H3:** *Interactive message strategies are positively related to word-of-mouth*

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Overview

This chapter will describe how this study is conducted, according to relevant method and design based on the philosophical underpinnings thereof. The research question will be presented and discussed in the first segment of this chapter. The sample procedure and data collection will be described and clarified before discussing this study's validity, reliability, and ethical implications.

#### 3.2 Research design and approach

When conducting research, there are many different considerations and choices to make dependent on what or who is involved in the study, and how one would approach the conundrum in question (Johannessen, Tufte, & Christoffersen, 2011). Amongst considerations are those of research philosophy, which reflect the researchers design based on the ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods and techniques (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Jackson, Jaspersen, 2018). The method and design chosen to solve the research question must be reflected in the normative understanding within the philosophical standpoint of how to investigate the phenomenon. As the philosophical knowledge underpinning the research will provide clarity in the researcher's reflexive role in the research method and how to choose apt design (Easterby-smith et al., 2018).

This thesis focuses on the potential effect message strategy can have at engaging consumers in Word-of-Mouth (WOM) behavior. Thus, the study is based in the social sciences as it seeks to answer questions regarding the social reality of human behavior (Johannesen et al., 2011). Research methods and design that allows insight into what content consumers talk about and share with their family, friends, and acquaintances becomes essential to investigate this relationship. Therefore, to answer the research question presented in chapter one, “*What is the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth?*”, a causal design with a cross-

sectional survey research approach is appropriate (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Oppen, Mørk & Haus, 2020).

Survey research is apt at finding patterns and causal relations that would otherwise be inaccessible (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Thus, survey research is useful given that a consumer's WOM, in most instances, cannot be directly observed. The survey is inferential, in that it aims to “establishing relationships between variables and concepts” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018, p. 101). By taking the quantitative approach, the empirical data on message strategies' relationship with WOM can be analyzed in a regression model using the data-analysis tool SPSS (Oppen et al., 2020).

This study's research approach is quantitative, confirmatory, and deductive. Where qualitative methods deal in text, quantitative methods deal in numbers (Johannessen et al., 2011). Statistical procedures applied to these numbers that aid the researchers in investigating a hypothesized relationship between independent (predictor) variables and dependent variable. The confirmatory deductive approach (of this study) set out to test theory through hypothesis based on literature from prior studies (established in chapter two). Using survey research implies the epistemological standpoint of positivism and the ontological belief of internal realism (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018).

To establish causality in a causal research design, there are three demands that need to be met: covariation, temporality, and isolation (Oppen et al., 2020). This thesis focuses on Tafesse & Wien's (2017) brand post framework to operationalize the constructs representing the trichotomy of message strategies. In which prior literature argue for the correlation between the predictors and dependent variables of this study, presented in the theoretical framework.

The temporality between the predictor variables (X) and dependent variable (Y) asserts that the change in the predictor must occur before the change is observed in the dependent variable (Hair Jr et al., 2018). That is, the relationship must be  $X \rightarrow Y$ , and not  $X \leftarrow Y$ . Supported by prior literature (L. De Vries et al., 2012; Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Tafesse & Wien, 2018b), message strategies can be seen as a precursor to WOM.

Assessing the isolation of variables is often difficult, as there might be other variables existing outside of the scope of this study (confounded relationship) affecting the dependent variable

(spurious correlation) (WOM) (Oppen et al., 2020). Other factors such as prerequisite knowledge, experiences, or information obtained from other sources (e.g. negative public relations, a consumer's mindset, consumer characteristics) might affect whether a consumer engages in WOM (Spurious correlation). In most cases, causality between the predictors and dependent variable cannot be established (Oppen et al., 2020), especially for non-experimental designs (Van der Stede, 2014). Though, as a confirmatory approach investigates results from prior studies in new contexts, this study seeks to affirm these results in an offline WOM setting, thus potentially strengthening the notion of causal inference between Message strategies and WOM.

### 3.3 Sampling procedure

#### 3.3.1 Population

Per the fourth quarter of 2019, Facebook has at least 3.454 million users in Norway (Ipsos, 2019), where 83% of the users use Facebook at least once a day (Ipsos, 2019). Statistics from the fourth quarter of 2019 also show that there is a little difference between the number of males and females on the platform, with females making up 52% of users (Ipsos, 2019).

The population of this study are those who use Facebook, live in Norway, and have observed brand posts at least once in the last month (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). These criteria are shaped by which potential respondents are likely to provide useful answers (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018) to answer the research question. The lowest eligible age for participation in the study is 18 years with no upper limit. Respondents who are outside of the criterium for participation are filtered out through the questionnaires filter question.

#### 3.3.2 Sampling strategy

Sampling strategy “sets out the criteria to be adopted by a researcher when selecting a subset (or sample) from a wider population of individuals, organizations, industries” (Easterby-Smith, 2018, p. 104). Since the study is collecting data through a web-based survey on Facebook, sampling is conducted through two non-probability sample techniques (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). The first sample technique used is convenience sampling (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). As the practical context is on Facebook, it is natural to utilize the platform as a distribution hub for the questionnaire. By using convenience sampling, the study achieved better reach towards potential respondents (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The second non-

probability sample technique used is purposive sampling where the criteria is that the respondents are observant of branded content on Facebook (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). The respondents who answer within the criteria set (viewing brand content at least once a month) are accepted and can continue the questionnaire. Setting criteria for participation allow for individuals who are better able to respond to the questions. A quantitative study should have above 100 participants as it will increase the generalizability (Hair Jr, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2018).

### 3.4 Data collection and Development of the Questionnaire/Survey

Web based survey is “a form of survey where a website link is sent to each potential participant, and respondents complete the survey by recording their answers online; answers may be checked for consistency and then stored on a database for analysis” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018, p. 277). The platform used to host the survey is ‘Nettskjema’, as it is a safe way of storing survey data. Often, best practice is to base a questionnaire on pre-existing items derived from prior studies regarding the construct it intends to measure (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Harrison, 2007). Though, to the best of the authors knowledge, prior literature using survey research based upon this framework of brand posts is yet to be done. Thus, a set of items that represent each brand posts as they are described and exemplified by Tafesse & Wien (2017) is created, and categorically measured as the message strategies presented in chapter two.

To device the questionnaire for this thesis, literature regarding the composition of items is followed (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Harrison, 2007; Oppen et al., 2020). The construction of the questionnaire is at first developed by both authors separately before being discussed collectively. This provides the opportunity for two independent first drafts of the questionnaire, whereby the best version for each item is chosen through discussion to create an accurate representation for each brand post. Measures such as question order (General before specific), avoidance of leading questions, double negatives etc. (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Harrison, 2007) and, the web-tool QUAID (*QUAID - Question understanding aid*, n.d.) are used to reduce misconceptions and bring clarity to the comprehensiveness of the questionnaire (Harrison, 2007). The tool QUAID (*QUAID - Question understanding aid*, n.d.) is used in order to recognize and identify vague or technical terms (jargon), which may create incongruence in the understanding of questions (Harrison, 2007).

The introduction of the questionnaire contains all necessary information regarding the study, such as anonymity details, and research objective. Furthermore, some of the technical jargon within the questionnaire is not suited for simplification, as some of its intended meaning might be lost. Thus, within the questionnaire, there are a few definitions of technical jargon (Eng: brand posts; Nor: innhold fra merkevarer) In which, the definitions are presented at the introduction and on the second page of the questionnaire. Given that it is on this page the respondent first encountered a question based on the technical jargon. Following the introduction, the first question (attachment 2) in the questionnaire contains a filter with the purpose to filtering out non-eligible respondents in the initial phase, in which they are sent to the end of the questionnaire.

Questions in the survey are categorized based on the theme, and thus are separated by pages and bundled together by dimension. The questions are also set up so that more sensitive questions such as age group, the daily amount of time spent on Facebook and gender are placed at the back end (Harrison, 2007). The survey is deliberately designed to reduce the amount of questions per page, increasing the feeling of progression. This makes the respondent feel that they are progressing, thus reducing potential for premature exits (Oppen et al., 2020). As this questionnaire is written in English, help from a faculty member at Inland University College is consulted to retain the meaning of questions through translation between languages, from English to Norwegian. Translation of items is necessary to reduce cognitive strain and potential misunderstandings as the population is Norwegian, which may potentially lead to measurement errors.

#### 3.4.1 Measurement scale & operationalization of variables

This study utilizes a seven-point Likert scale (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018) to more accurately measure the dimensions of both message strategies and word-of-mouth. The reason for a seven-point scale is to give the respondents the opportunity to give a more nuanced answers which reflect their opinions and behaviors. The scale ranges from 1= completely disagree and 7= completely agree. The decision to remove the textual categorization of brand content preference and replace them with ordinal values 2-6 are made to reduce contextual bias regarding word association (Harrison, 2007).



All items of the three message strategies (predictor variables) are based upon the brand post variants provided by Tafesse and Wien (2017). In which each item described a distinctive brand post ‘trait’ and/or the value/information it is supposed to convey. All feedback from the pre-tests (elaborated in the next subsection) are considered to create a more cohesive, understandable survey. The full questionnaire, as it is presented on ‘Nettskjema’ (online) is within attachment 2. The items regarding personal brand posts are not present in this study’s pretests due to an oversight in the questionnaire’s creation. Therefore, personal brand posts which are a part of interactive message strategies is added and the knowledge attained through the pretests and relevant literature are applied in the creation of these items. Consequently, the authors developed the items necessary (1: som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie & 2: som treffer mine hobbyer og personlige interesser) and did the same procedure when translating them.

Items for the dependent variable are inspired from two different articles, which are Jahn & Kunz (2012) and Calder, Isaac & Malthouse (2016). The items from these articles are slightly altered to retain continuity within the questionnaire to represent the dependent variable. All items are translated to Norwegian, with the assistance of a faculty member at Inland University College. All questions start with “I like brand posts which....” to set the premise for each individual item within the predictor variables. For the dependent variable, the questions start with “the brand posts that I like....”. All translated items are in attachment 18.

### 3.4.2 Pretests

Pre-tests are conducted to ensure construct validity, questionnaire comprehension, and to eliminate potential issues that can arise, such as misunderstandings (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). All pre-tests can be viewed in attachment 3, 4 and 5. The respondents for the all pretests are gathered through the sharing the questionnaire link with friends through Facebook and students at Inland university college campus Rena.

#### **Pre-test 1**

To represent Tafesse & Wiens (2017) framework accurately, the pre-test is at first done in English. Amongst the feedback received, several comments are made, pointing to the partly confusing language/wording as the survey is written in English, which is the respondents second language. Further probing revealed that there is a need for defining jargon such as

“brand content” and “brand community” and other possible technical terms which might cause misunderstandings. Two out of four constructs tested above the recommended level of 0.7( $\alpha_a$ ) in Cronbach's alpha (Hair Jr et al., 2018) based the data from the 20 respondents (tested in SPSS). The variables with the approved internal consistency are interactive message strategy (IaMS) ( $\alpha_a$ :0,727) and WOM ( $\alpha_a$ :0,878). The variables with an internal consistency lower than 0,7 (Hair Jr et al., 2018) are IMS ( $\alpha_a$ :0,530) and TMS ( $\alpha_a$ :0,635).

## **Pre-test 2**

The feedback and issues pretest 1 presented, deemed the need for alterations for the second pretest. First, several respondents experienced issues in answering all the question due to the fact that it is written in English. Consequently, the questionnaire is translated from English to Norwegian, which is the native language of the respondents. Pre-test 2 contains 18 responses and the feedback from the respondents indicates that the questionnaire gives a feeling of too little progression throughout taking it. Feeling too little progression can make the respondents impatient and therefore may affect their mental state when answering, thus increasing the risk for a premature exit (Oppen et al., 2020). Combining a sense of little progression with complaints of too much text presented the need for some reorganizing. The reorganizing includes clearer definitions so that there less room for misunderstanding. The filter question creates confusion in some instances, thus slightly altered to reduce potential issues and increase comprehension.

IMS has an internal consistency of 0,628( $\alpha_a$ ), thus, item 6 (refers to awards, honors, and green certificates) is removed and the Cronbach's alpha changed to 0,721( $\alpha_a$ ) and has acceptable loadings (Hair Jr et al., 2018). The item is removed because respondents made comments stating that the items are hard to understand, provoking more neutral answers, causing it to be scratched. All other variables got acceptable levels of internal consistency, where the following values are: TMS ( $\alpha_a$ :0,782), IaMS ( $\alpha_a$ :0,872) and WOM had ( $\alpha_a$ :0,963).

## **Pre-test 3**

Pre-test 3 has 15 respondents (n=15). Here, the goal is to create new items for the dependent variable, as well as improving the independent variables to create a better and more cohesive questionnaire. Items describing WOM are not deemed sufficient as they are more suited for eWOM production and that feedback uncovered dissatisfaction with them. The complaints are of them being too similar in that they are hard to tell apart and consequently harder to answer.

As cohesion is important, the items describing WOM are changed from those which Wien (2019) used. Replacing the previously used items are items used by Jahn & Kunz (2012) and Calder, Isaac & Malthouse (2016) for WOM.

Most variables have an acceptable internal consistency and land on the following values: IMS ( $\alpha_a:0,591$ ), IaMS ( $\alpha_a:0,818$ ), TMS ( $\alpha_a:0,846$ ) and WOM ( $\alpha_a:0,890$ ) (Oppen et al., 2020).

Informational message strategy still did not get an acceptable internal consistency in the reliability test. However, the problematic item within informational message strategies (item 6 from pretest 2: Informerer om bransjeutvikling og ansattes tanker om firma-prosesser og teknologi.) is rephrased and transformed into three separate questions based on the variants described by Tafesse & Wien (2017). The informative item which caused issues within pretest two is removed as well (: refers to awards, honors, and green certificates). Item 3 and 4 from pretest 2 are combined into a single item for pretest 3 (item 3: Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger). Moreover, branded content is expanded upon through using examples of how they can appear in a Facebook feed.

As this is the last pretest, contact is made with a faculty member at Inland university college to ensure that the questions are translated to a high-quality level. All items within the transformative message strategy are slightly rephrased based on feedback from the faculty member consulted for the translation. Moreover, the questionnaire is divided into smaller but more sections, increasing the feeling of progression throughout the process of answering. Respondents who pinpointed problematic areas within the study are once again requested to consider the pretest, and the changes are positively reviewed by them.

### 3.5 Validity and reliability

Any set of data cannot be perfectly measured and are victims, to some degree, of measurement error (Hair Jr et al., 2018), which are either systematic or random, and the researcher's goal is to reduce factors might cause errors. In which there are two important characteristics of measurement the researcher must address, namely validity and reliability (Hair Jr et al., 2018). A study's validity is a measurement of whether the study accurately measures what it intends (Hair Jr et al., 2018). Accuracy of measurement does not ensure validity, and the researcher must consider the reliability of the measurements. Whereas the "reliability is the degree to which the observed variables measure the 'true' value and is 'error

free” (Hair Jr et al., 2018, p. 13) and at which greater reliability increases with the consistency of the measurement. The measures of validity are presented in this study in the order Construct-, internal- and external validity, and reliability.

### 3.5.1 Construct validity

A construct is “a psychological process or characteristic believed to account for individual or group differences in behavior” (Strauss & Smith, 2009, p 2). Where the construct validity rests on the “evaluation of the extent to which a measure assesses the construct it is deemed to measure” (Strauss & Smith, 2009, p. 2) Construct validity represents how well the study is able to measure what it intends to measure, based on the operationalization of variables (Oppen et al., 2020).

Construct validity should not be identified on the sole merits of a particular investigative procedure, but rather by the orientation of the investigator (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955) and the researcher must rely on common sense - face validity (Johannesen et al., 2011). The constructs used in the survey of this study, are based on (Calder et al., 2016; Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Tafesse & Wien, 2017). The dependent and predictor variables are translated by an English expert from the Inland University College and adapted to the study’s context and feedback from pre-tests. Whilst the study’s predictor constructs are based on Tafesse and Wiens (2017) framework of brand posts and recommended allocation of brand posts as the message strategies presented in this study. Coupled with how to sequence the questionnaire is followed to ensure that the questions are up to credible standards (Harrison, 2007).

Further tests of validity are conducted in chapter four through two factor analysis. These tests uncover the convergent- and discriminant validity, through the intercorrelation within the constructs (convergent validity) and whether they separate from other constructs (discriminant validity). In which the nomological validity is the “prediction of the relationships confirmed by previous theoretical framework” (Malhotra et al., 2012, p. 839) presented in chapter two. To the extent this is present in this study’s construct will indicate the validity of the inspected construct. Whether one is confident in the statistical calculations depends on the accuracy of the measurement as a coherent construct (Oppen et al., 2020).

### 3.5.2 Internal Validity

Internal validity concerns the existing presence of systematic sources of bias and requires elimination of plausible alternative explanations for the observed differences within a group (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2018). Internal validity is weakened by being affected by systematic errors in the measurement and focus on the degree of confidence one can assert to that the intended measurement reliably can infer causality (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Whilst, the internal validity, referring to the isolation of variables, can be strengthened by using competing theory as a control variable in cross-sectional studies. A control variable can increase the validity of the study through controlling for potential external factors which may influence the variables within the research model (Oppen et al., 2020). Which have a relationship with this study's dependent variable, though none are employed in this study. Consequently, not using a mediating variable can affect the certainty of results (e.g. spurious correlations). This study does not employ control variable, but rather relies on the "combination of strong theory, careful survey design and appropriate statistical tools" (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008, p. 276). Limitations regarding control variable is discussed in this study's limitations (Chapter five).

Within cross-sectional studies there are often concerns about internal validity, such as common-method bias and establishing causal inferences (Van der Stede, 2014). Common method bias occurs when the observed variance in responses are due to instrument bias rather than predispositions of the respondents. In collecting the data for this study, it is essential that the questionnaire measures the underlying concept it intended to, does not measure other concepts, and that the questions communicate the same meaning to all respondents (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Harrison, 2007). There is confidence in that the items measure the constructs they intend to, stemming from the discussion with participants and the results of all pre-tests. Combined with the fact that both authors created the questions for the survey separately before agreeing upon the best candidate for each item together.

Most of the participants in the pre-tests are the same from the first to the last. By using the same respondents, the questionnaire can be developed and improved to a greater degree as the individuals who participate know what alterations are made from the start. Through discussion and feedback, they knew what the meaning is supposed to be and assisted in improving the questionnaire through suggestions and identifying problematic areas. Pre-tests are developed and revised within three weeks from start to end. This gives adequate time to

correct the issues relating to the cohesion, phrasing, translation along with structuring the survey. Recommendations from survey research literature and an electronic questionnaire tool (QUAID) is also used to remove potential systematic sources of bias.

### 3.5.3 External validity

A study's external validity is whether the results are generalizable to the population beyond the focal study (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Implications within external validity, are biases within the sample that are not representable for the population it is supposed to represent. An external threat to the external validity of this study might be that the character traits from a smaller part of the population is overrepresented in the sample for this study. As this study uses a convenience sample strategy, traits prevalent within the Facebook groups where the questionnaire are issued might exist within the sample. That is, a reflection of the individual's social network (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). For instance, various Facebook groups are centered around 'helping others' within a wide array of topics. In which the sample may contain individuals that are more prone to altruistic behavior than what is generalizable for the population. With this strategy "it is impossible to guarantee that any sample achieved in this way represent a specific population that may be of interest" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018, p. 109), but it serves an important purpose of representing of the context this study investigates, social media users (on Facebook).

Other threats to external validity can reside within the study's setting and history. The setting for this study is within the Norwegian population on Facebook, in which there may be differences undisclosed that are culturally dependent, whereas prior literature often stems from America, UK or other. Tafesse and Wien (2018) use top performing brands in various industries, whilst others use specific fan-page communities (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman & Pihlström, 2012; Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Where "socializing opportunities have been extended to the digital world" (Gummerus et al., 2018, p. 862) and the global setting that the digital world exhibit might not be reflected in the Norwegian population. As the top performing brand often has fans and customers that are not limited by country (and culture) borders.

### 3.5.4 Reliability

Reliability is "the degree to which the observed variable measures the 'true' value and is 'error free'" (Hair Jr et al., 2018, p. 13), and is important for deciding whether the results are replicable. A result is often deemed reliable when it is consistent at each tested interval, whereby it assesses if the instrument is consistently producing the same result. (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Measurement errors in a dataset can range from "entry error to the imprecision of measurement" (Hair Jr et al., 2018, p 13). Whereas imprecision of the measurement can occur through imposing a seven-point Likert scale on attitude measurement. The issues can be that the respondents only accurately can respond to, for example, five- or three-point scales. However, the respondents who participates in the pre-tests agree that a seven-point scale is the best to measure their attitudes accurately. Combined with the fact that similar studies use a seven-point Likert scale (c.f. Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Thus, as the data from 'nettskjema' is converted into a .txt file that SPSS can read, and thus, there is less probable that the dataset contains entry errors. A visual inspection is also conducted to investigate the potential for entry errors, in which the visual inspection found no errors.

A constructs reliability can be tested for internal consistency through a Cronbach's alpha test. The Cronbach's alpha value ( $0.0 < \alpha_a < 1.0$ ) assesses whether the construct is within acceptable parameters ( $0.7 < \alpha_a < 1.0$ ) to establish the degree of internal consistency within the construct (Oppen et al., 2020). The goal of testing reliability is to assess whether the findings are generalizable to the population it studies. The final pre-test show promise in that the Cronbach's alpha tests yield sufficient values on all but one variable (pretest-3: IMS  $\alpha_a$ :0.591, TMS  $\alpha_a$ :0.846, IaMS  $\alpha_a$ :0.818 & WOM  $\alpha_a$ :0.890), and the constructs TMS, IaMS, and WOM are internally consistent. However, reliability does not guarantee that the measures only indicate one concept, but high reliability implies that there is a lower degree of measurement error (Hair Jr et al., 2018).

Cronbach's alpha is tested for all variables in the final questionnaire and all got values over 0.7. This indicates that the items measure what they intend to measure (Hair Jr et al., 2018). Furthermore, given that the surveys are handed out electronically, there may be external factors which can influence this study's reliability. For example, there is no way of knowing the state of mind respondents are in when answering the survey. With this said, there is grounds to believe that the data collected is reliable.

### 3.6 Ethical implications

As researchers, there are many ethical implications which need to be accounted for. First, this study is completely anonymous. Therefore, the questionnaire is made in 'Nettskjema' without IP-addresses saved and no e-mails gathered that would be available for the authors. By using this method, the respondents can safely answer the questions truthfully without having to risk being identified. Furthermore, the questions contained within the survey are not enough to identify one individual, as no information can be combined to trace back to the individual's response (Oppen et al., 2020). The respondents are made aware that the data collected from the answers are stored until the thesis is completed. Respondents are also made aware that the survey is completely voluntary and that leaving the survey has no consequence.

In the survey's introduction, all necessary information is made readily available to the respondents. An application to NSD is not sent, as the checklist NSD provided yield results which indicated that an application is not required, combined with the fact that the survey is completely anonymous. The questionnaire is distributed on a diverse portfolio of Facebook groups where there is a range of between '2 000-28000' members. Whilst also using the anonymity extension provided by UiO's questionnaire creation tool (Nettskjema.no), thus ensuring that the authors did not have access to any identifying information that could identify a single respondent (e.g. Email).



## 4. Analysis, results, and discussion

### 4.1 Overview

This chapter includes presentation of the data, the analysis, and the results based on the hypothesis testing and the implications it has for the research question. As such, the methods and results are used to gather insight into the research question. These insights are used in a discussion and with a conclusion at the end of the chapter with implications.

### 4.2 Removal of outliers

Before conducting the factor analysis, tests such as boxplots and visual inspections are performed to assess the dataset for potential outliers (See attachment 6). A box plot analysis indicates that there are some outliers present deemed extreme values (3 x interquartile range) by SPSS. Due to this, a visual inspection is conducted, revealing that three respondents can be categorized as outliers. These three respondents have zero variance throughout the whole dataset and completed the questionnaire within an uncommonly short time frame (<3 minutes, mean: 5m 48sec), indicating that the questions are not thoroughly read and/or answered. Out of the total 214 respondents, ten are removed due to incomplete questionnaire based on the questionnaires filter mechanism. Whereas the aforementioned three outliers are removed due to being evaluated as error outliers (Hair et al., 2018). Thus, 201 respondents are left and used in the data analysis.

### 4.3 Sample

Today, 68 percent of the population use Facebook on a daily basis (Ipsos, 2019), and individuals, arguably, are exposed to 4.000 to 10.000 ads a day (Simpson, 2017). It is thus reasonable to argue that the Norwegian population (and within our sample) have a good idea of their preference of what kind of focus (message strategy) the ad should contain. In total, 214 individuals responded to the survey, of which 204 are eligible for participation (table 4.1). Where 74.1 (n: 149) percent of the respondents' view brand posts daily. 10 respondents are excluded due to not passing the filter question. Whereas the filter question "How often do you notice branded content on Facebook.", where those who answered "don't know" or "never" are excluded from further participation. Hair Jr et al. (2018) points out that at least 50, but preferably 100 or more respondents are needed to do a factor analysis properly with reliable results.

How often respondents see brand posts on Facebook		
	n	Percent
Daily	149	74,1
Atleast once a week	42	20,9
Atleast once a month	10	5
Total	201	100

*Table 4.1 – How often respondents see brand posts on Facebook*

In terms of ratio for observations to variables, the general rule is to have a 5:1, or preferably 10:1 ratio (Hair Jr et al., 2018). As this study has 201 respondents who answers satisfactorily, there is enough data to do the necessary analysis. The questionnaire has a wide range of age groups participating, where most respondents are female, with 71,1 % in total (table 4.2), which is a deviation from the expected gender ratio of the population. This can be due to sampling bias (derived from convenience sampling). Overrepresentation of the female population can reduce the accuracy of conclusions drawn from the sample (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). There is a good diverse distribution when it came to the amount of time respondents used on Facebook each day (attachment 1). Age groups are also diverse, with a relatively even spread throughout the age groups dedicated within the questionnaire except 55+.

Sample		n	Percent
Age demographic	18-24	42	21
	25-34	51	25
	35-44	36	18
	45-54	58	29
	55+	14	7
	Total	201	100
Sex	Female	142	71
	Male	54	27
	Not disclosed	5	3
	Total	201	100

*Table 4.2 - Age groups & Gender*

## 4.4 Descriptive statistics

### 4.4.1 Factor analysis

This study makes use of a formative model, as there are three predictor variables which all have a measurable effect on the dependent variable (Hair Jr et al., 2018). In a formative measurement model, all predictor variables should not correlate (Hair Jr et al., 2018). However, this study is based in the social sciences and correlation between the predictor variables are not uncommon (Matsunaga, 2009). Though, this can affect construct validity and the outcome within the multiple regression analysis (Hair Jr et al., 2018).

An exploratory factor analysis is done in order to measure the construct validity with the goal of “specifying the unit of analysis, achieving data summarization and/or data reduction” (Hair Jr et al., 2018, p. 127). The extraction method used is PCA (Principal component analysis) with an oblique rotation. Whereas an orthogonal rotation might cause some implications for social sciences (Matsunaga, 2009) through its locked perpendicular rotation, whereas oblique rotation allows for the correlation between the factor loadings.

The general rule to establish confidence in a construct is that each item should load On the same factor (component 1 in table 4.3) of at least  $(+/-) 0.3 <$ , and preferably  $(+/-) 0.5 <$  (Oppen et al., 2020; Reker & Cousins, 1979). In attachment 7, the original factor matrix shows that some of the constructs load on two factors, rather than one. Ellis (2017, p. 48) argue “items that load low on each other, or that load high on several factors, must be removed”. Thus, some items are removed from the constructs. This is elaborated upon after the discriminant analysis.

Convergent Factor analysis		$\alpha^a$	Convergent Factor Analysis Component 1	Total Variance Explained			KMO	
				Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Sampling Adequacy	Sig.
Informative	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste 2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste 3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger 4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten 5. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv	0,856	0,793 0,863 0,794 0,844 0,765	3,301	66,021	66,021	0,793	0,000
Transformative	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser 2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier 4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot) 6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser	0,801	0,872 0,792 0,765 0,737	2,518	62,943	62,943	0,735	0,000
Interactive	1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager 2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer 3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde 5. Bemerket en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren 7. Fremhever gode kundehistorier og opplevelser 8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester 9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie 10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.	0,884	0,665 0,755 0,749 0,703 0,800 0,700 0,791 0,790	4,446	55,572	55,572	0,901	0,000
WOM	1. Snakker jeg om med familie, venner og bekjente 2. Anbefaler jeg til familie, venner og bekjente 3. Introduserer jeg til familie, venner og bekjente 4. Snakker jeg positivt om til familie, venner og bekjente 5. Tar jeg opp i samtaler med familie, venner og bekjente	0,958	0,930 0,945 0,917 0,952 0,901	4,317	86,332	86,332	0,894	0,000

*Table 4.3 - Convergent factor analysis*

The convergent analysis within the remaining brand posts (table 4.3) show that the items load above recommended levels and illustrates that that they are mathematically similar (correlate) and apt at measuring the construct. Whilst each component explains most of the total variance within the construct, and a KMO Bartlett's test shows the data is adequate for a factor analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha is within the upper echelon of recommended levels,  $0.8 < \alpha^a$  (Oppen et al., 2020). Thus, each construct has a high degree of internal consistency as the indicators are highly intercorrelated (Hair Jr et al., 2018).

Discriminant analysis uncover the predictor variables validity as it “demonstrates that a measure of a construct is unrelated to indicators of theoretically relevant constructs in the same domain” (Strauss & Smith, 2009, p. 6). Ideally, the number of factors should be divided into the number of variables utilized in the study and the absence of cross loadings indicate high precision within the construct (Oppen et al., 2020, p. 333). Though, as showcased in attachment 8, the various constructs did not load separately (Cross-loading). The finalized analysis is shown in table 4.4.

	Discriminant Factor Analysis	Pattern Matrix			Total Variance Explained			KMO						
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Sampling Adequacy	Sig.					
Informative	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste		-0,765		1,578	9,282	55,056	0,907	0,000					
	2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste		-0,958											
	3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger		-0,780											
	4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten		-0,708											
	6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv		-0,511											
Transformative	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser			0,795	1,203	7,078	62,134							
	2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier			0,749										
	4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot)			0,494										
	6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser			0,765										
Interactive	1. Markerer helligdager, markeder og / eller offentlige dager	0,610			7,782	45,774	45,774							
	2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer	0,865												
	3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde	0,781												
	5. Bemerket en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren	0,560												
	7. Fremhever gode kundeforhold og opplevelser	0,554												
	8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester	0,685												
	9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie	0,690												
	10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.	0,724												
	Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.													
	Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.													
a Rotation converged in 6 iterations.														

*Table 4.4 - Discriminant factor analysis*

The results of the discriminant factor analysis show that the constructs load on their respective factor and has an apt sample adequacy of 0.907( $p < 0.001$ ). The eigenvalues of 7.7 with a vast majority of the variance (45.74%) residing within factor 1 (items of IaMS). The discriminant analysis shows that each of the predictor variables measure the construct they intend and above comfortable values. Though, TMS item number ‘four’ is marginally below the preferable limit of  $(+/-).5 <$  but well above  $(+/-).3 <$  minimum threshold (Oppen et al., 2020).

The removal of items can increase the precision of measurements within each of the constructs (Summary of items removed from the final questionnaire: IMS: 5, 7, 8, 9, TMS: 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, Inter: 4, 6) (Attachment 9 shows the removed questions). This has some implications for the brand posts coherent to the allocated item. Whereas, the removal of an item might lose some theoretical aspects regarding the brand posts and message strategy, but with the benefit of reduced measurement error and potential systematic biases (Ellis, 2017). The removal of items is done in a step-by-step process, where one item is removed at the time and reassessed in a new factor analysis to find the optimal combination of high precision items. TMS lost seven (out of eleven) items. The two remaining brand post content types of TMS are emotional (33%) and brand resonance (27%), in which are two of the most prevalent brand posts within TMS (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). Whereas the brand posts social cause (6%) and experiential (27%) within TMS is removed due to cross loadings within the discriminant analysis.

Furthermore, within IMS, there are three arguments for removing the employee brand post. First, the items load on a separate factor in the convergent analysis (table 4.3), setting it apart from the rest. Second, Tafesse & Wien (2017) state in their article that employee brand posts

are popularly used by B2B (business to business) brands (Tafesse & Wien, 2017), thus not focusing their efforts solely on B2C (Business to consumer). Third and final, Tafesse & Wien (2018b) left this brand post category out of their content analysis, but rather included it as a common theme under educational brand posts. While, experiential and social cause (of TMS) are also removed due to cross-loadings (Attachment 8). Table 4.5 shows the brand posts that remains in this study.

Brand posts		Retained brand posts in this study		Percent of occurrence in Tafesse and Wien (2017) sample
		Included	excluded	
Informative	Functional	x		31 %
	Educational	x		31 %
	Brand employee		x	10 %
Transformative	Emotional	x		33 %
	Experientail		x	27 %
	Brand Resonance	x		27 %
	Social Cause		x	6 %
Interactive	Current events	x		19 %
	Brand community	x		7 %
	Customer Relations	x		6 %
	Personal	x		15 %

*Table 4.5 - Brand posts*

The remaining two brand posts are those most recurrent in Tafesse and Wien (2017) sample within their coherent message strategy. Thus, the results are satisfying, in that they are theoretically meaningful and contain interpretable factors (Matsunaga, 2011).

#### 4.4.3 Regression assumptions

A detailed elaboration of the regression assumptions can be found in attachment 10.

Table 4.6 show that ‘the whole’ Likert seven-point scale is used, and the number of eligible respondents is 201(N). The skewness levels on the items indicate that the data might be skewed with a right-bound tail (negative value). The standard deviation of all items is below 2, indicating that there is little deviation amongst the respondent's response (Oppen et al., 2020). Whereas the variance shows the extent that there is variance within the dataset that are greater than 0 on the respective items (variance values between 2.050-3.758). In which, it is

important that the respondents have variation in their responses to adjudicate a potential relationship amongst a dependent and predictor variable (Oppen et al., 2020).

Descriptive Statistics		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis		Variance
		Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Informative	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste	201	1	7	4,24	1,713	-0,293	0,172	-0,657	0,341	2,933
	2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste	201	1	7	4,36	1,744	-0,371	0,172	-0,717	0,341	3,042
	3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger	201	1	7	4,06	1,929	-0,24	0,172	-1,112	0,341	3,721
	4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten	201	1	7	4,51	1,778	-0,479	0,172	-0,635	0,341	3,161
	6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv	201	1	7	4,72	1,85	-0,552	0,172	-0,715	0,341	3,422
Transformative	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser	201	1	7	3,54	1,746	0,17	0,172	-0,965	0,341	3,05
	2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier	201	1	7	3,34	1,893	0,374	0,172	-0,925	0,341	3,585
	4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot)	201	1	7	3,59	1,607	0,109	0,172	-0,695	0,341	2,583
	6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser	201	1	7	2,32	1,432	0,861	0,172	-0,068	0,341	2,05
Interactive	1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager	201	1	7	3,22	1,79	0,361	0,172	-0,923	0,341	3,205
	2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer	201	1	7	3,83	1,629	-0,038	0,172	-0,687	0,341	2,655
	3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde	201	1	7	4,51	1,597	-0,484	0,172	-0,381	0,341	2,551
	5. Bemerker en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren	201	1	7	3,43	1,63	0,152	0,172	-0,95	0,341	2,657
	7. Fremhever gode kundehistorier og opplevelser	201	1	7	4,17	1,741	-0,217	0,172	-0,818	0,341	3,031
	8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester	201	1	7	4,04	1,823	0,013	0,172	-1,038	0,341	3,323
	9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie	201	1	7	3,96	1,661	0,011	0,172	-0,74	0,341	2,758
	10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.	201	1	7	5,26	1,724	-1,069	0,172	0,37	0,341	2,973
	1. Snakker jeg om med familie, venner og bekjente	201	1	7	4,33	1,804	-0,225	0,172	-0,932	0,341	3,253
	2. Anbefaler jeg til familie, venner og bekjente	201	1	7	4,31	1,873	-0,224	0,172	-1,075	0,341	3,506
WOM	3. Introducerer jeg til familie, venner og bekjente	201	1	7	4,09	1,831	-0,178	0,172	-0,994	0,341	3,352
	4. Snakker jeg positivt om til familie, venner og bekjente	201	1	7	4,49	1,839	-0,351	0,172	-0,891	0,341	3,381
	5. Tar jeg opp i samtaler med familie, venner og bekjente	201	1	7	4,15	1,857	-0,116	0,172	-1,072	0,341	3,448
	Valid N (listwise)	201									

Table 4.6 - Descriptive statistics

Due to the skewness and kurtosis levels indicating non-normality, visual inspection of the probability plot & histogram (attachment 11 & 12) and a z-scores calculation is necessary (see attachment 13). The calculated z-score reveals that the indexed variables are non-normal (distribution) according to Hair Jr et al., (2018) recommendations of (+/-) <1,96 (skewness) and (+/-) <2.58 (Kurtosis). The remedy for negative non-normality (either squaring, cubing, or log of the variable (Hair Jr et al., 2018)) are applied (attachment 12), whereas the squaring of informative and interactive message strategy yields acceptable results (See table 4.7).

Normal Distribution	Skewness				Kurtose		
	N Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Z-Score	Statistic	Std. Error	Z-Score
Informative x2	201	0,105	0,172	0,612	-0,713	0,341	-2,088
Transformative	201	0,157	0,172	0,913	-0,821	0,341	-2,404
Interactive x2	201	0,131	0,172	0,763	-0,496	0,341	-1,453

Table 4.7 - Normal distribution, z-scores

The p-plot and scatterplot show that there seem to be a linear relationship between the predictor variables used (IMS x<sup>2</sup>, IaMS x<sup>2</sup> & TMS) and the dependent variable (See attachment 12 and 14). Thus, the correlation between the variables are considered linear. Precautions are taken to reduce measurement error by conducting three pre-studies and it is

based on relevant literature. The constructs yield sufficient internal consistency of  $0.7 <$  (Table 4.3), and the variables are dichotomous with variance (see table 4.6) (Oppen et al., 2020).

The bivariate correlations matrix relating to the independent variables show that all variables are  $<.8$  (Pearson's R) (Oppen et al., 2020), though all variables exceed .5 and are thus strongly correlated (See attachment 15). The VIF values are below the 5.5 threshold and the tolerance values are above 0.10, indicating that the variables are without multicollinearity (Attachment 16) (Oppen et al., 2020; Hair Jr et al., 2018). The Levene's test and scatter plot show that the data has approximately equal variance (no heteroskedasticity) (attachment 17 and 14). In table 4.8, a summary of the accepted regression assumption is presented in accordance with Berry's (1993) BLUE OLS.

	Regression Assumptions Summary	Accepted	Declined
A1	Dichotomous, quantitative continuous and unbounded variables	x	
A2	All independent variables have non-zero variance	x	
A3	Absence of multicollinearity	x	
A4	Mean of error term is zero	x	
A5	Each independent variable is uncorrelated with the error term		x
A6	Conditional variance of the error terms is constant	x	
A8	Normal distribution	x	

*Table 4.8 - Regression assumptions summary*

Seven regression assumptions are checked, where the results show that six of these are met, with the exception of A5, 'each independent variable is uncorrelated with the error term', due to the absence of control variable. Thus, the results of the regression analysis are not in accordance with BLUE (Best linear unbiased estimate). In which, the confidence of this study's results regarding unbiased estimates are not the best possible coefficient estimates. Though, the use of various control variables is not without its implications (c.f Becker et al., 2016) and are discussed in this study's limitations.

#### 4.4.4 Independent T-Test

An independent T-test is done to test for potential differences between two groups in the dataset. Here, results indicate that there is a significant difference between men and women on how they perceive informative message strategies, as shown in table 4.9. The test indicate that women have a slightly higher preference for informative messages compared to men, with a 0.5-point higher mean (Table 4.10). No significant difference is observed on IaMS, TMS or WOM.



Independent T-test	T-test for Equality of Means		Difference between Male and Female	
	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	std. Error
Informative x2	194	0,019	4,354	1,840
Transformative	194	0,075	0,375	0,210
Interactive x2	194	0,083	2,570	1,498
WOM	194	0,111	0,432	0,270

Table 4.9 – Independent T-Test

Preferance for IMS		
	Female	Male
Mean	4,6	4,1
Median	4,8	4,2
Mode	5	3,6a
N	142	54
Missing	0	0
a Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown		

Table 4.10 – Preference for IMS

## 4.5 Test of hypotheses

### 4.5.1 Correlations matrix

The correlations matrix is used to measure the statistical strength and linear relationship amongst this study's variables (Oppen et al., 2020). The assessment is based on the output value of Pearson's R, in which can be measured at an interval of 1 to -1, where (+/-) 1 is perfect correlation. If the values exist within the 1 - 0.500(+/-) interval, it is considered to exhibit strong correlations, where 0.499-0.300(+/-) equals moderate correlation, and 0.299-0(+/-) equals weak correlation (Oppen et al., 2020). At zero, there are no correlations present.

Correlations		Informative x2	Transformative	Interactive x2	Word-of-Mouth
Informative x2	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	201			
Transformative	Pearson Correlation	,538**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0			
	N	201	201		
Interactive x2	Pearson Correlation	,582**	,648**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		
	N	201	201	201	
Word-of-Mouth	Pearson Correlation	,577**	,470**	,635**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	
	N	201	201	201	201
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Table 4.11 - Correlations Matrix

In this correlation matrix, IMS and IaMS both have correlations that are (+) 0.5 or higher, while TMS has a moderate effect on WOM (table 4.11). All variables are significant at the 0.01 level, with moderate to high effect, indicating that there is a strong (bivariate) correlation in the relationship between the predictor and independent. In which the variable IaMS yields the strongest correlation to WOM with the greatest predictive accuracy (Hair Jr et al., 2018).

#### 4.5.2 Regression model

The total explanatory power of the model is 46% with the adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.460 (Table 4.12). In other words, message strategies on Facebook explain close to half of the variance of word-of-mouth within this study's dataset.

Regression	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics		Model Summary	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
Informative x2	0,045	0,010	0,310	4,684	0,000	0,617	1,622	0,468	0,460
Transformative	0,021	0,091	0,016	0,226	0,821	0,541	1,847		
Interactive x2	0,080	0,013	0,444	6,068	0,000	0,503	1,986		
a Dependent Variable: Word-of-Mouth									

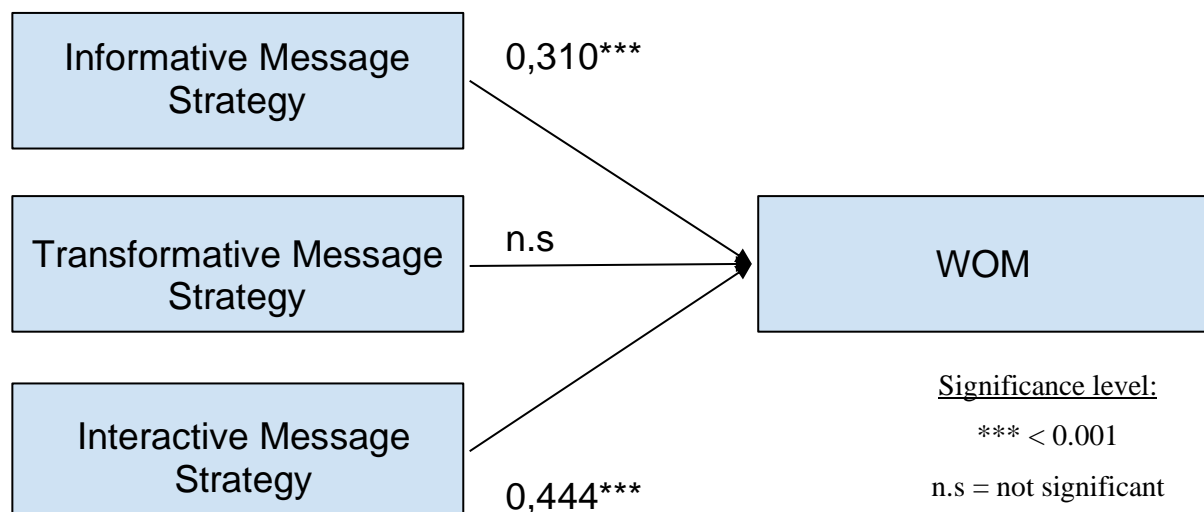
Table 4.12 - Multiple regression results

*Hypothesis 1* state that the informative message strategy has a positive effect on word-of-mouth. First, the result is significant. Second, the beta coefficient gave support for a positive moderate effect ( $\beta = 0.310$ ) and a t-value of 4.684 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, H1 is supported.

*Hypothesis 2* state that the transformative message strategy is positively related to consumers' word-of-mouth. The results of the OLS multiple regression analysis show that the results are insignificant with a low explanatory power ( $\beta=0.016$ ) and a t-value of 0.226 ( $p=0.821$ ). Thus, H2 is not supported.

*Hypothesis 3* states that interactive message strategy is positively related to word-of-mouth. This hypothesis is significant with a t-value of 6.068 ( $P\text{-value}<0.001$ ) and has a moderate effect ( $\beta=0.444$ ). Thus, indicating that the interactivity of this strategy yields the strongest positive effect on word-of-mouth in the multiple regression analysis. Thus, hypothesis 3 is supported.

#### 4.5.3 Discussion of each hypothesis



*Figure 4.1 - Research Model, results*

Results show that both IaMS and IMS have a moderate positive effect on WOM, while IaMS has the highest standardized beta coefficient out of the two significant predictors. In contrast, transformative messages give insignificant results, indicating that TMS is not positively related to word-of-mouth when measured in this study's multiple regression. As seen in the correlation matrix, interactive-, informative, transformative messages all had a moderate to strong significant correlation with WOM. In the multiple regression analysis, IaMS and IMS seem to dominate the explanatory power out of the three. Whereas, the correlation matrix shows that there is a moderate correlation (0.470) between TMS and WOM, indicating a relationship.

	Hypothesis summary	Significant	Insignificant
H <sub>1</sub>	Informative message strategy are positively affect a consumer's WOM	x	
H <sub>2</sub>	Transformative message strategies are positively related to WOM		x
H <sub>3</sub>	Interactive message strategies are positively related to WOM	x	

Table 4.13 - Summary of hypothesis, results

## 4.6 Discussion

The research question posed at the start of this thesis is developed to create a broader understanding of the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth. As such, the aim of this study is to assess: *‘what is the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth?’* To answer this research question, three hypotheses are put through analysis (with the result in table 4.13) and are discussed in the following section.

This study utilizes Tafesse & Wien’s (2017) framework for brand posts to categorize the items regarding the constructs, that is the informative (IMS), transformative (TMS) and interactional message strategy (IaMS). Differing from prior literature conducting content analysis (Ashely & Tuten, 2015; De Vries et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015; Taecharungroj, 2017; Tafesse, 2015), this study employs survey research to investigate WOM. Thus, focuses on gathering the consumers view of the message strategies, how they respond to the message strategies in an offline WOM context.

Prior literature is mainly focused on investigating the behavioral engagement in an online context, where likes, shares and comments (eWOM) are measured (c.f. De Vries et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015; Tafesse, 2015; Yuki, 2015). Less is done in terms of investigating WOM in an offline context, in which is argued to account for 90 percent ‘all’ WOM occurs in the offline context (Keller, 2007; Keller & Libai, 2009; Lang & Hyde, 2013). Consequently, the differentiated approach this study takes compared to previous studies gives more insight into a consumer’s offline WOM and contributes to the literature on the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth. The next sections of this chapter discuss the message strategies in the following sequence: TMS, IaMS and IMS.

TMS are often related to an emotional (affective) response (Puto and Wells, 1984), often achieved through various form for entertaining, interesting and humorous content (L. De Vries et al., 2012; Tafesse & Wien, 2017). As such, the content that provide the consumer with relief from ‘today’s stress’ such as, a temporary escape from reality can be shared easily

with peers through the internet. As such, Tafesse and Wien (2018) found that TMS is the most powerful strategy of the three. On the other hand, De Vries et al. (2012) finds no correlation between entertaining content and the number likes and comments.

As in the study by De Vries et al. (2012), this study does not affirm the relation between the values connotated to TMS and WOM. Though, both De Vries et al. (2012) and Tafesse and Wien (2018) conducted their studies based on eWOM, whereas the focus of this study is WOM. One of these differences is the audience size (Berger, 2014). When an individual broadcasts (eWOM), they tend to have a self-focus, whereas narrowcasting (WOM) encourages 'other-focus', thus reducing the self-presentational focus (Berger, 2014). Messages directed towards the individual might not translate into what consumers talk about with other consumers. As the consumer, in an offline context (narrowcasting), tend to focus on topics relevant for the conversation and the shared interests amongst the actors partaking in the conversation. TMS' individual focus and experience with the brand might not translate into a conversation with a 'other-focus'.

Furthermore, Berger (2014) argues that narrowcasting is better suited for acquiring nuances and detailed information, while broadcasting better serves the purpose of advices or solutions to ones' problems. In which, narrowcasting is also better apt at facilitating social bonding and allow for deeper conversations. As such, the self-focus reflected by the individual preference for entertaining content or the emotional experience with a product, service or brand (TMS) (Puto & Wells, 1984) is based on the self-oriented need of the individual (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Thus, a focus on others (IaMS) and being able to convey more nuanced and detailed information (IMS) might be the ideal approach in engaging consumers in WOM (narrowcasting) rather than the individual (TMS), as supported in this study's findings.

The results of this study support the theories and articles findings and suggestions which consist of the notion that IaMS aim at engaging the consumers, and encouraging social interactivity (Berger, 2014; Tafesse & Wien, 2018b). By being an active participant in online content (Dolan et al., 2016; Hanna et al., 2011), consumers can satisfy relationship-oriented needs (Jahn & Kunz, 2012) through socializing with others who are like-minded or through conversations (Brodie et al, 2013). The IaMS (Tafesse & Wien, 2017) encourage word-of-mouth by inviting new members and promote social content that meets the consumers social drivers (Berger, 2014; Brodie et al., 2011; Dolan et al., 2016).

This is substantiated by Alexandrov et al., (2013) as they state that social drivers are important facets of why individuals engage in word-of-mouth. The intention of the IaMS, (Tafesse & Wien, 2017) along with the ease of interactivity through digital platforms (Mäntymäki et al., 2019), lay the groundwork for easier facilitation of social interactivity (Berger, 2014). Thus, IaMS guides a consumer by illuminating the online brand community through the brand post. In which, the consumer can socialize through “non-functional interaction (...) acquire and/or develop attitudes, norms and/or community language (Brodie et al., 2013, p. 111). Thereby engaging the social drivers for word-of-mouth (Alexandrov et al., 2013) by fulfilling the need for social interactivity and bonding (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Berger, 2014; Berger & Schwartz, 2011).

Furthermore, this study strengthens the notion that there is a positive relationship between IMS and word-of-mouth. By being exposed to messages which address utilitarian and informative needs (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019), consumers receive help in either their search for advice or being able to help others (Berger, 2014; T. Kim et al., 2019). Informative messages may provide the consumer with new or enhanced knowledge. In which this knowledge can provide them with the information necessary of being perceived as more helpful, intelligent, and/or smart in a conversation (Berger, 2014). Thus, informative messages that provide educational and/or functional information (as brand posts) can increase the likelihood of them in engaging in WOM behaviors. The results substantiate theories presented by Tafesse & Wien (2017;2018b), Kimmel & Kitchen (2014), Jahn & Kunz (2012) by affirming this relationship.

Thereby, the consumers' perceived value of IMS reside within it factual and relevant product and/or service information (Puto and wells, 1984). Thus, focusing the product's or service's utility in their day-to-day life. While transformative messages affect their emotions and appeal to their desires, often reflecting the value of a brand in their day-to-day life and their aspirations (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Whereas, IaMS emphasizes and cultivates the ongoing interaction amongst the consumers themselves, and with the brand (Tafesse & Wien, 2018b). As such, within the IaMS the consumers are in focus, such as social empathy and identifying others (Calder et al., 2009), rather than the product, service (IMS), or the individual (TMS). As the online experience is social in nature and breeds social engagement (Calder et al., 2009), the IaMS fits neatly into this experience by providing content that aim to bolster the already present social interactions online. This might explain why the results of this study

indicate that IaMS yields the strongest effect on WOM. In which, the strategy seems to be the most prevalent in an online environment that already breeds interactivity and social interaction.

In sum, H<sub>1</sub> & H<sub>3</sub> are supported in this study, while H<sub>2</sub> is not. Thus, this study's aim to answer '*what is the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth*' can support the notion that informative and interactive message strategies yield a positive moderate effect on consumers word-of-mouth.

#### 4.7 Theoretical implications

Prior studies on social media marketing have researched how to engage consumers on social media on fan pages (Jahn & Kunz, 2012), with firm-generated content (Kumar et al., 2016), and the social presence of brands (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018). Advertising literature has, since mass-media marketing days, researched message strategy (Laskey et al., 1989; Puto & Wells, 1984; R. Taylor, 1999), and how these affect consumer cognitive and emotional behavior (Taylor, 1999). Yet, while the social presence of firm has shown to aid in business-related outcomes (Akpınar & Berger, 2017), raise brand-awareness and cultivate long-term brand relationships (Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Kim & Ko, 2012) there are still gaps regarding the relationship between a brands message strategy and consumers behavioral response in the digital environment.

This study adds to the literature through new insights by using a questionnaire instead of content analysis to test the framework of Tafesse & Wien (2017). Being able to gather data based on the consumers own opinions gives the opportunity to test out previous literature in an offline word-of-mouth setting. The study indicates the importance of IaMS & IMS for encouraging behavioral engagement (WOM) amongst the consumers. Most interestingly, the results for the IaMS is, as this is as far as the authors know, the least researched message strategy out of the three studied in this thesis with the strongest effect on WOM. In which, prior literature suggests that TMS should be the strongest motivator for eWOM (c.f. Tafesse & Wien, 2018b), this seems not to be the case for offline WOM. Reaffirming the notion that more research needs to be directed towards WOM. This study's results suggest that IMS and IaMS may encourage the consumer to participate in the media process (Hanna et al., 2011) through satisfying their content needs (Katz & Foulkes, 1963), and ultimately, promoting WOM behaviors.

This study extends on the existing literature by bridging the gap between advertising's message literature and social media marketing. By building upon the framework presented by Tafesse and Wien (2017), brand post bring clarity to both academia and practitioner. Rather than ad-hoc created categories to explain brand posts, this framework builds upon the well-established literature within advertising and tests its utility in creating consumer engagement, or more specifically, word-of-mouth. The content that people enjoy on Facebook increases the incentives to share the message with friends, family and/or acquaintances. Thus, this study contributes to the suggested avenue of future research by Tafesse & Wien (2017) and Osei-Frimpong & McLean (2019) request of how IMS vs TMS vs IaMS shape engagement on social media.

This study confirms parts of the prior findings within message strategy (L. De Vries et al., 2012; Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Tafesse & Wien, 2018b), resulting in increased consumer engagement. It also builds on the theory of how brand messages online affect offline word-of-mouth, through the three distinct strategies. Whereby IMS and IaMS display the greatest promise in this regard. The results in this study underscore the importance of including various message strategies in creating WOM. Informative, as well as interactive message strategies seem to influence WOM positively.

#### 4.8 Practical implications

For practitioners, this study affirms that IMS and IaMS may have a significant effect on WOM. Consequently, informative messages can be useful for marketers as a strategy to provide content that is useful and practical information (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Whereas 'do-it-yourself' or new functional aspects of products can be beneficial in instances to relieve stress, or provide solutions to complex situations (Berger, 2014) potentially alleviate through the sharing of knowledge (through WOM). By which, a potential outcome can be an increased brand awareness and appreciation. While interactive messages can be useful in building upon the relationship with their customer. By focusing on relation-oriented content, the brand 'persona' can provide "a substitute for a real-life companionship; help carrying out social roles" (Calder, Malthouse & Schaedel, 2009, p. 323). Thus, interactive message strategies can be an important 'tool' in customer relationship building that also leverage a consumer's voice for business building outcomes.



Managers focusing on messages that either promotes the social aspect (IaMS) of their initiatives, through elements such as the ‘current events’, ‘customer relations’, ‘brand community’ or an individual's personal relations. Or, a focus on a product’s (IMS) functional attributes, and/or educational content that might help a consumer through ‘do-it-yourself’ methods, shows promise in engaging a consumer’s WOM behaviors. In which this social buzz (WOM) can amplify the brand’s concurrent marketing initiatives.

#### 4.9 Conclusion

The objective for this thesis is to create a broader understanding of what the relationship is between message strategies and word-of-mouth. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to answer the research question ‘*what is the relationship between message strategies and word-of-mouth*’. In testing this relationship, three separate hypotheses are presented. First, the main objective of the study is completed, as shown the regression analysis model. The regression model indicated that the informative, transformative, and interactive message strategies seem to explain 46% of the variance within the word-of-mouth.

The second objective is to see whether ‘*informative messages are positively related to word-of-mouth*’. The regression analysis done in the analysis chapter finds that in this study, informative message strategies have a significant moderate effect on word-of-mouth. Thus, this hypothesis is supported. The findings indicate that informative messages can be used as an engager for word-of-mouth. Messages which are functional or educational promote social transmission between the consumer and their friends, family, and acquaintances.

The third objective is to understand whether ‘*transformative messages are positively related to word-of-mouth*’. The regression analysis finds that there is no significant effect between transformative message strategies and word-of-mouth. Thus, it seems that messages which aim to promote entertainment, emotions, brand resonance and experiences within the consumer are not able to incite and encourage social transmission with others.

The fourth objective is to research whether ‘*interactive messages are positively related to word of mouth*’. Shown in the regression model, interactive message strategies have the largest explanatory power with a significant moderate effect on word-of-mouth in the aftermath of consumption. The findings indicate that messages which incite dialogue and interactivity through are the most adept at engaging the consumer and promoting social transmission.

The interactive and transformative message strategies have the highest correlation within the correlation matrix. They are interrelated and thus it seems as though interactive and informative message strategies dominate the transformative message strategy in the regression analysis, leaving it insignificant. Thus, there is still need for being able to separate the two into more distinct categories.

With regards to theoretical implications, this study adds to existing literature on the subject with the findings. There are diverging findings within the literature, whereby the results can only support some of the previous theories which are reviewed. However, the results of the study have strengthened the existing literature relating to how informative and interactive message strategies encourage word of mouth. In the regression analysis, interactive messages are shown to have the highest effect out of the three measured. Thus, there is reason to believe that it is effective when promoting and inciting word of mouth.

Results of the analysis show that firms should use their Facebook accounts to leverage consumer voices through word-of-mouth. Not only will this potentially create a better relationship between firm and consumer, but it can create a situation where the brand is talked about. Even though the study did not set an objective as to find differences between men and women, some difference is found. As shown in the independent t-test, there is significant variation between how men and women respond to informative message strategies, while there is no significant difference for the other message strategies. Results indicate that women have a slightly prefer informative message strategies more than men, firms can use this knowledge when targeting consumers with their online content on Facebook.

As far as the authors know, there has been done little research on this relationship, especially with online messages on Facebook and offline word-of-mouth. The thesis builds on the literature of previous work and adds to it by researching IaMS alongside two more established message strategies through a different methodology. Results indicate that focusing on interactive and informative messages will encourage a consumer's tendency to talk about the content. In addition, the thesis sheds light on why the less established IaMS can be useful to promote word-of-mouth. In total, the study adds to the literature on advertising and social media marketing by shedding light on how message strategies relate to consumer word-of-mouth.

## 5. Limitations and future research

This study has some limitations. For example, this study is not able to replicate the earlier findings of TMS on word-of-mouth in an offline context as they are found in online contexts (eWOM) (De Vries & Carlson, 2014; Gummerus et al., 2012; Jahn & Kunz, 2012; Kim et al., 2019; Tafesse & Wien, 2018b). As far as the authors know, there is little research conducted on message strategies effect on word-of-mouth in an offline context. Coupled with Berger (2014) argument that there are differences between narrow- and broadcasting, future research might focus on the differing affects these message strategies have on both online and offline WOM (broadcasting vs narrowcasting).

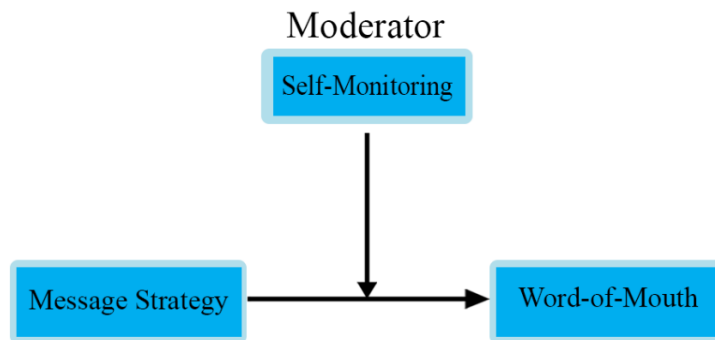
Cross-sectional surveys often carry concerns regarding the common method variance (CMV), that is, “systematic method error due to the use of single rater or single source” (Rindfleisch et al., 2008, p. 261). And Causal Inference (CI), that is, “the ability to infer causation from observed empirical relations” (Rindfleisch et al., 2008, p. 261). Future research can use different approaches to the data collection strategy such as (1) multiple respondents, (2) multiple data sources, or (3) multiple periods (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). The first strategy employs multiple respondents where one set of respondents answer the predictor variable, while the second set answer the dependent variable. The second strategy uses multiple sources that where the one sample source answers the predictor and second sample source answer the dependent. Where these methods are not feasible or desirable, one can employ the third strategy (Longitude). Whereas these strategies for data collection can increase CI and reduce CMV bias (Rindfleisch et al., 2008).

This study’s questionnaire is not run as a full two step CFA-SEM approach in its development (Malhotra, Mukhopadhyay & Liy, 2012). In which, this approach can reveal better combinations of brand posts to the respective message strategy and potentially arrive at a better model fit. This might have alleviated some of this study’s issues of discriminant validity. The authors of this study based the constructs of this study on the theoretical framework of Tafesse and Wien (2017), and their recommended setting of brand posts and coherent strategy. Whereas, the authors advice future research to investigate if a full two step CFA-SEM approach to develop a model fit that can confirm or alter the relationship between the respective brand posts and the coherent message strategy.

Though, it may be that a collection of brand posts  $\neq$  a (singular) message strategy. As Puto & Wells (1984) state, message strategies are not mutually exclusive, and marketers tend to use these strategies in combination (Tafesse and Wien, 2018b). Alluding to that a given set of brand posts might not exist as an individual strategy, but rather a ‘high-low, low-high’ relationship. In other words, brand posts such as brand resonance might be high in transformative and low in informative value. This begs the question, what does this mean for the interactive value? Our examination of discriminant validity points towards that there is a higher degree of mathematical correlation between transformative and interactive brand posts. Thus, alluding to the potential of intercorrelated effects these two strategies might yield. Future research might want to focus on the theoretical understanding underpinning the relationship within the trichotomy of message strategies and brand posts.

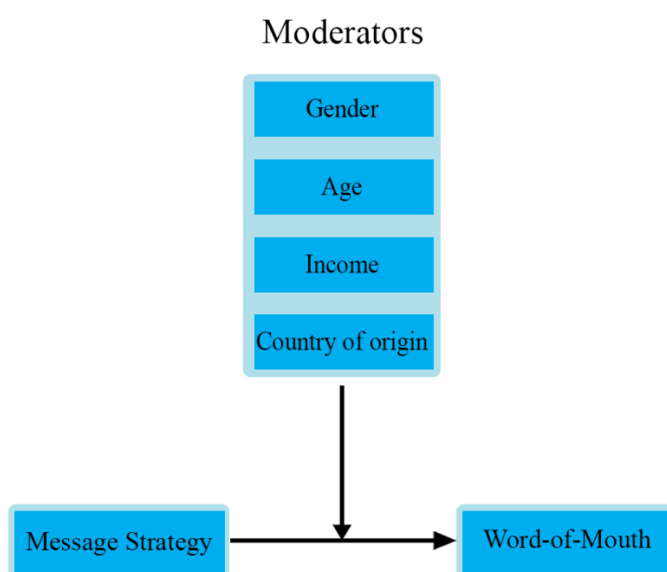
Issues of non-experimental designs are that extraneous (i.e. a third) variable(s) may exist (Bernerth et al., 2018). This variable can produce distortions in the observed relationship through influence or ‘contaminating’ measurements of interest by altering how individuals respond to an item (Bernerth et al., 2018). A third variable may also produce a confounded relationship, that is a spurious relationship between predictor and criterion. In which the relationship correlates due to common cause and not because there is a true causal connection between them (Bernerth et al., 2018). Thus, it is common to use control variables in attempt to reduce the concerns by removing any distortions of this third variable. Though, there exists a number of complications with the use of control variables, amongst them are that it reduces the available amount of degrees of freedom, lowers statistical power (e.g. empirical suppression) (Bernerth et al., 2018), uninterpretable parameter estimates, cause inferential errors, hinder replication of results (Becker et al., 2016). This study does not contain a control variable, and future research can identify specific, conceptually meaningful control variables (Bernerth et al., 2018) that matches the study’s purpose (c.f. Becker et al., 2016).

As the data is based on self-reported measures, issues can derive of inaccuracies through the individual’s introspective abilities or self-presentational limitations. For instance, Wien (2019) found that self-presentation is an important driver of eWOM, and self-monitoring as a moderator on the relationship between self-presentation and eWOM production. Future research might focus on the mediating role of self-monitoring to assess the relationship between how self-presentation might affect WOM based on the different message strategies (see figure 5.1).



*Figure 5.1 – Proposed research model*

Lastly, future research can focus on whether the results differ based on digital platform and/or population characteristics. The results of the T-test indicate that there are differences between male and female ( $p=.019$ , mean: 4.354) within the IMS (Table 4.9), but not the other message strategies. Keiningham, Rust, Lariviere, Aksoy & Williams (2017) found that character characteristics (gender, age, income, and country of origin) can have a large impact on WOM behaviors. Whilst Xiang, Zhang, Tao, Wang & Ma (2019) found that there are trade-offs based of which message strategy the brand utilizes based on the demographics of the consumer (IMS and TMS). Thus, future research may assess how customer characteristics moderate the relationship between message strategies and WOM. And/Or, the potential tradeoff associated with the choice of message strategy and the brand's target audience, and how these moderate the relationship of MS and WOM. Future research can use the proposed research model in figure 5.2.



*Figure 5.2 – Consumer characteristics*

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## 7. Attachments

### Attachment 1 - Time spent on Facebook

Time spent on Facebook		
	n	Percent
0-20 Minutes	37	18,4
20-40 Minutes	57	28,4
40-60 Minutes	48	23,9
60 Minutes or more	59	29,4
Total	201	100

### Attachment 2 - The survey

#### Spørreundersøkelse - Merkevarerinnhold på Facebook

Side 1

Hei!

Takk for at du deltar i vår spørreundersøkelse til masteroppgaven! Her er det noen hovedpunkter som kan være greit å få med seg før du starter.

- Deltakelse i spørreundersøkelsen er frivillig og anonym. Dersom du svarer, har du gitt samtykke til å delta. Dersom du ikke vil delta, kan du la være å svare. Dersom du ombestemmer deg underveis i utspørringen, lar du være å levere inn skjemaet. Etter at skjemaet er levert, kan svarene ikke trekkes tilbake fordi de er levert anonymt og kan ikke spores tilbake til deg, heller ikke via indirekte opplysninger eller skjulte elektroniske spor som IP-adresse.
- Det vil ta ca 6-12 minutter å gjennomføre undersøkelsen.

Denne studien utføres av:

Jonas Bruun & Michael Pedersen

I denne undersøkelsen vil vi undersøke din holdning til en merkevares (Apple, Kiwi, XXL, McDonalds, Komplett) publikasjoner på facebook. Dette omtaler vi som 'innhold fra merkevarer'.

**Innhold fra merkevarer:** ALT av innhold en merkevare publiserer på Facebook.

Eksempler på dette kan være:

- Reklamer
- Sponset innhold
- Innlegg merkevarer har lagt ut på Facebook
- Innlegg du ser via andres aktivitet (kommentarer, likes, delinger) på Facebook



Sideskift

Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook? \*

- ☐ Daglig
- ☐ Minst en gang i uken
- ☐ Minst en gang i måneden
- ☐ Aldri
- ☐ Vet ikke

**Innhold fra merkevarer:**

ALT av innhold en merkevare (for eksempel: Apple, Kiwi, XXL, McDonalds, Komplett) publiserer på Facebook:

- Reklamer
- Sponset innhold
- Innlegg merkevarer har lagt ut på Facebook
- Innlegg du ser via andres aktivitet (kommentarer, likes, delinger) på Facebook



Sideskift .....



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som:

	1 - Helt Uenig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Deler meninger, innlegg og kommentarer lagt ut på nyhetssider og blogger. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>







Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som:

	1 - Helt Uendig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Setter søkelys på de ansattes meninger om teknologier og praksis i bedriften *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Tar hensyn til de ansattes tanker om forretningsdrift og utfordringer *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Setter søkelys på de ansattes personlige hobbyer, interesser, meninger og prestasjoner *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Sideskift



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som:

	1 - Helt Uendig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Bruker spøk og uhøytidelig/morsom informasjon *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Viser til bilder av merkevarens produkt(er). *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Sideskift



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som:

	1 - Helt Uendig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Feirer merkets historie og arv *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Viser bilder eller lyd til å fremheve egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Viser merkevaren som en del av en eventyrlig og spennende opplevelse *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Tilbyr meg innblikk i sponset arrangementer, produktlanseringer og direktesendte arrangementer *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Setter søkelys på sosial ansvarlighet og tilhørende aktiviteter *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Sideskift



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som:

	1 - Helt Uendig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Deler nyttig informasjon om hvor man kan kommunisere med merkevaren *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Bemerker en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Definisjon av **tilhenger**: Person som kjemper for eller er enig med (et merkevare).



Sidskift



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som:

	1 - Helt Uendig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
6. Påminner om merkeverens tjenestetilbud *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Fremhever gode kundefortellinger og opplevelser *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Sideskift



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Her skal du svare etter hvilken grad du er enig i påstanden.



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

Det jeg liker av innhold fra merkevarer...

	1 - Helt Uendig	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Helt Endig
1. Snakker jeg om med familie, venner og bekjente *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Anbefaler jeg til familie, venner og bekjente *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Introduserer jeg til familie, venner og bekjente *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Snakker jeg positivt om til familie, venner og bekjente *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Tar jeg opp i samtaler med familie, venner og bekjente. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Sideskift

Hvor mange minutter bruker du på Facebook per dag? \*



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

- ☐ 0-20 minutter
- ☐ 20-40 minutter
- ☐ 40-60 minutter
- ☐ 60 minutter eller mer

[Jeg tilhører følgende aldersgruppe: \*



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55+

Jeg er: \*



Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Minst en gang i måneden», «Minst en gang i uken» eller «Daglig» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte legger du merke til innhold fra merkevarer på din Facebook?»

- ☐ Mann
- ☐ Kvinne
- ☐ Ønsker ikke oppgi

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Tusen takk for at du deltok i spørreundersøkelsen vår, det settes veldig stor pris på.

## Attachment 3 - Pretest 1

Pretest 1	
	I like brand post content that focuses on...
Informational	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A product and/or service attribute claimed by the company</li> <li>2. A product and/or service attribute claimed by external critic</li> <li>3. Tips and tricks that educate me on a product or service</li> <li>4. Information about opinion pieces, and industry development</li> <li>5. Employee's opinions on company technologies and processes</li> <li>6. Employee's personal hobbies, interests, opinions and achievements</li> </ol>
Transformational	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Includes words and symbols that express feelings</li> <li>2. Includes emotional stories</li> <li>3. Includes jokes and trivial knowledge</li> <li>4. shows the brand symbol, slogan, and/or brand character</li> <li>5. show photos of brand products</li> <li>6. features famous people and/or other people with influence</li> <li>7. has a vivid media experience</li> <li>8. Shows the brand as a part of adventurous and thrilling consumer experience</li> <li>9. Includes brand events (Sponsored events, live events, or product launches</li> <li>10. focus on promoting worthy social causes and initiatives</li> </ol>
Interactional	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Involve cultural events, movie releases, or television shows</li> <li>2. Mention popular holidays, anniversaries or other public days</li> <li>3. Includes weather or season</li> <li>4. Shares useful information about the brand community</li> <li>5. Acknowledge members of the brand and their contributions to the brand community</li> <li>6. Focuses on customer service and common service announcements</li> <li>7. Focuses on customer success stories</li> <li>8. Focuses on customer testimonies experiences (good/bad)</li> </ol>
WOM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce new brand content to my friends and relatives</li> </ol>
I like to...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Talk to people about my brand content experiences</li> <li>3. Share information about new brand content with people other than my immediate friends and relatives</li> <li>4. Tell people about new brand content on a regular basis</li> <li>5. Share brand content information regularly with other people</li> <li>6. Spend a lot of time on sharing my knowledge about brand content</li> </ol>



## Attachment 4 - Pretest 2

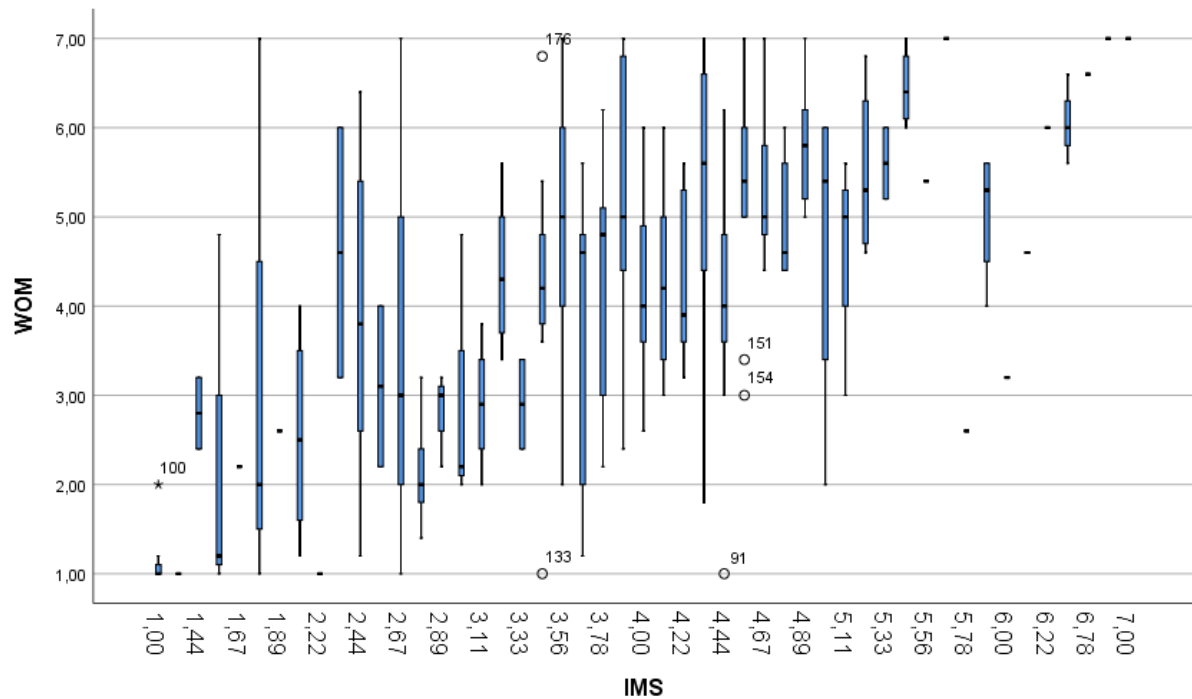
Pretest 2	
	Jeg liker merkevareinnhold som:
Informational	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fremhever egenskaper til produkter og/eller tjenester</li> <li>2. Fremhever nye produkter og/eller tjenester</li> <li>3. Hjelper meg å ta velinformerte beslutninger</li> <li>4. Hjelper meg å løse produkt- eller tjenesterelaterte problemer</li> <li>5. Fremhever tips og triks som hjelper meg å benytte tjenesten eller produktet</li> <li>6. Informerer om bransjeutvikling og ansattes tanker om firma-prosesser og teknologi</li> <li>7. Viser til utmerkelser, anerkjennelser og grønne sertifikater</li> </ol>
Transformative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fremhever morsom, beundringsverdig, eller feirende språkbruk og symbolikk</li> <li>2. Omtaler inspirerende historier</li> <li>3. Benytter humor, vitser og triviell kunnskap</li> <li>4. Fremhever eller viser til merket/logoen og slagordet</li> <li>5. Inneholder kjente personer</li> <li>6. Fremhever produkter ved bruk av bilder</li> <li>7. Har en visuell og/eller lydbasert mediaopplevelse</li> <li>8. Fremhever merkevaren sammen med spennende kundeopplevelser</li> <li>9. Inkluderer sponset, direktesendte arrangementer og/eller produktlanseringer</li> <li>10. Fokuserer på samfunnsengasjement og gode formål.</li> </ol>
Interactional	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Benevner kulturelle begivenheter, film og tv-programmer.</li> <li>2. Referer ferier, helligdager eller merkedager.</li> <li>3. Bruker været eller årstidene i en relevant sammenheng</li> <li>4. Inkluderer nyttig informasjon om merkesamfunn og deltagere</li> <li>5. Anerkjenner medlemmer av merkesamfunnet og deres bidrag.</li> <li>6. Fokuserer på kundeservice, kunngjøringer og andre beskjeder</li> <li>7. Fokuserer på kundenes suksesshistorier med produktet eller tjenesten</li> <li>8. Fremhever kundenes tilbakemelding.</li> </ol>
WOM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jeg liker å introdusere nytt merkevareinnhold til mine venner og familie</li> <li>2. Jeg liker å fortelle om mine opplevelser av merkevareinnhold med andre</li> <li>3. Jeg liker å dele nytt merkevareinnhold med andre enn mine venner og familie.</li> <li>4. Jeg liker å fortelle andre om nytt merkevareinnhold til vanlig</li> <li>5. Jeg liker å dele merkevareinnhold med andre til vanlig.</li> <li>6. Jeg liker å bruke en del tid på å dele mine kunnskaper om merkevareinnhold.</li> </ol>
Til hvilken grad beskriver påstanden deg?	

## Attachment 5 - Pretest 3

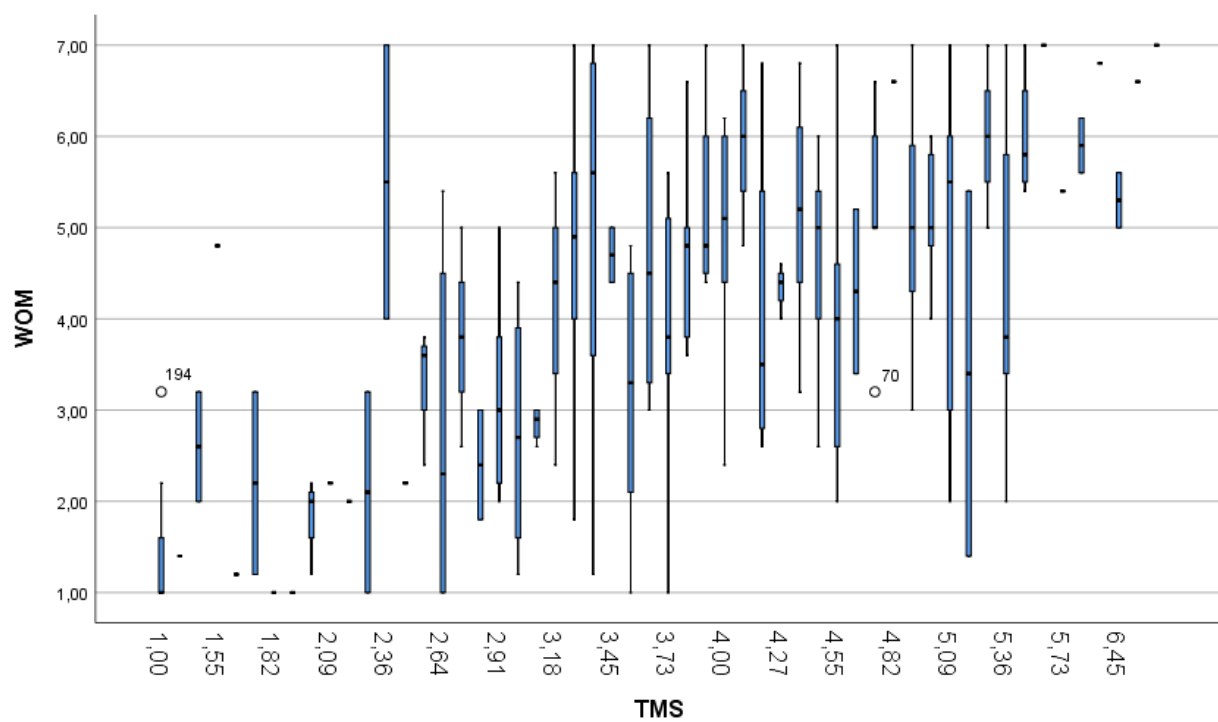
Pretest 3	
	Jeg liker innhold fra merkevarer som
Informative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste</li> <li>2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste</li> <li>3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger</li> <li>4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten</li> <li>5. Deler informasjon om meninger, innlegg og kommentarer som er lagt ut på andre nettsider</li> <li>6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv</li> <li>7. Setter søkelys på de ansattes meninger om teknologier og praksis i bedriften</li> <li>8. Tar hensyn til de ansattes tanker om forretningsdrift og utfordringer</li> <li>9. Setter søkelys på de ansattes personlige hobbyer, interesser, meninger og prestasjoner</li> </ol>
Transformative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser</li> <li>2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier</li> <li>3. Bruker spøk og uhøytidelig/morsom informasjon</li> <li>4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot)</li> <li>5. Viser til bilder av merkevarens produkt(er)</li> <li>6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser</li> <li>7. Feirer merkets historie og arv</li> <li>8. Viser bilder eller lyd til å fremheve egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste</li> <li>9. Viser merkevaren som en del av eventyrlig og spennende opplevelse</li> <li>10. Tilbyr meg innblikk i sponset arrangementer, produktlanseringer og direktesendte arrangementer</li> <li>11. Setter søkelys på sosial ansvarlighet og tilhørende aktiviteter</li> </ol>
Interactional	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager.</li> <li>2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer</li> <li>3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde</li> <li>4. Deler nyttig informasjon om hvor man kan kommunisere med merkevaren</li> <li>5. Bemerker en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren</li> <li>6. Påminner om merkevarens tjenestetilbud</li> <li>7. Fremhever gode kundehistorier og opplevelser</li> <li>8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester</li> </ol>
WOM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Snakker jeg om med familie, venner og bekjente</li> </ol>
Det jeg liker av innhold fra merkevarer...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Anbefaler jeg til familie, venner og bekjente</li> <li>3. Introduserer jeg til familie, venner og bekjente</li> <li>4. Snakker jeg positivt om til familie, venner og bekjente</li> <li>5. Tar jeg opp i samtaler med familie, venner og bekjente</li> </ol>

## Attachment 6 - Boxplot

Boxplot - WOM & IMS

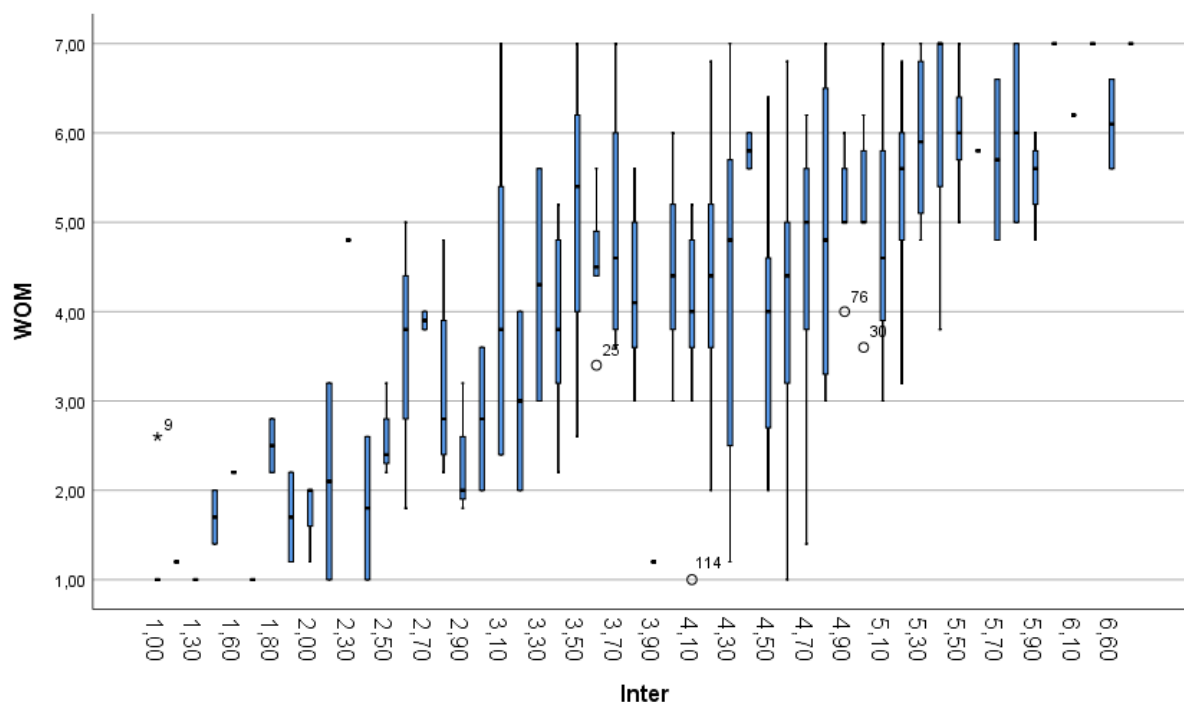


Boxplot - WOM & TMS



## Boxplot - WOM & IaMS

### Boxplots



## Attachment 7 - Factor analysis

Convergent Factor analysis		Convergent Factor Analysis	
		$\alpha^*$	
Informative	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste	0,860	0,816
	2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste		0,902
	3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger		0,808
	4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten		0,823
	5. Deler meninger, innlegg og kommentarer lagt ut på nyhetssider og blogger		0,337
	6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv		0,677
	7. Setter søkelys på de ansattes meninger om teknologier og praksis i bedriften		0,892
	8. Tar hensyn til de ansattes tanker om forretningsdrift og utfordringer		0,901
	9. Setter søkelys på de ansattes personlige hobbyer, interesser, meninger og prestasjoner		0,902
Transformative	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser	0,886	0,771
	2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier		0,689
	3. Bruker spøk og uhøytidelig/morsom informasjon		0,693
	4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot)		0,769
	5. Viser til bilder av merkevarens produkt(er)		0,655
	6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser		0,629
	7. Feirer merkets historie og arv		0,612
	8. Viser bilder eller lyd til å fremheve egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste		0,755
	9. Viser merkevaren som en del av en eventyrlig og spennende opplevelse		0,799
	10. Tilbyr meg innblikk i sponset arrangementer, produktlanseringer og direktesendte arrangementer		0,544
	11. Setter søkelys på sosial ansvarlighet og tilhørende aktiviteter		0,591
Interactive	1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager	0,903	0,642
	2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer		0,719
	3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde		0,771
	4. Deler nyttig informasjon om hvor man kan kommunisere med merkevaren		0,720
	5. Bemerket en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren		0,701
	6. Påminner om merkevarens tjenestetilbud		0,745
	7. Fremhever gode kundeforhistorier og opplevelser		0,805
	8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester		0,693
	9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie		0,755
	10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.		0,778

## Attachment 8 - Discriminant factor analysis

	Discriminant Factor Analysis	Pattern Matrix			
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
Informative	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste		-0,760		
	2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste		-0,949		
	3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger		-0,735		
	4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten		-0,725		
	5. Deler meninger, innlegg og kommentarer lagt ut på nyhetssider og blogger.		-0,323		0,548
	6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv		-0,530		
Transformative	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser			0,734	
	2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier			0,678	
	3. Bruker spøk og uhøytidelig/morsom informasjon		-0,481	0,396	
	4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot)		-0,351	0,414	
	5. Viser til bilder av merkevarens produkt(er)		-0,573		-0,434
	6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser			0,657	
	7. Feirer merkets historie og arv	0,482			-0,421
	8. Viser bilder eller lyd til å fremheve egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste		-0,305		-0,429
	9. Viser merkevaren som en del av en eventyrlig og spennende opplevelse	0,396		0,370	
	10. Tilbyr meg innblikk i sponset arrangementer, produktlanseringer og direkte sendte arrangementer	0,621			
	11. Setter søkelys på sosial ansvarlighet og tilhørende aktiviteter	0,720			
Interactive	1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager	0,605			
	2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer	0,826			
	3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde	0,727			
	4. Deler nyttig informasjon om hvor man kan kommunisere med merkevaren	0,593	-0,444	-0,374	
	5. Bemerket en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren	0,600			
	6. Påminner om merkevarens tjenestetilbud	0,472	-0,349		
	7. Fremhever gode kundehistorier og opplevelser	0,567			
	8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester	0,682			
	9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie	0,649			
	10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.	0,547			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. a Rotation converged in 13 iterations.					

## Attachment 9 - Items

Items			Retained items in this study	
Message strategy	Brand Posts	Items	Included	excluded
Informative	Functional	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste	x	
		2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste	x	
		3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger	x	
	Educational	4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten	x	
		5. Deler meninger, innlegg og kommentarer lagt ut på nyhetssider og blogger. 6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv	x	x
	Brand Employee	7. Setter søkelys på de ansattes meninger om teknol og og praksis i bedriften 8. Tar hensyn til de ansattes tanker om forretningsdrift og utfordringer 9. Setter søkelys på de ansattes personlige hobbyer, interesser, meninger og prestasjoner		x x x
Transformative	Emotional	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser 2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier 3. Bruker spøk og uhøytidelig/morsom informasjon	x x	
	Brand resonance	4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot) 5. Viser til bilder av merkevarens produkt(er) 6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser 7. Feirer merkets historie og arv	x x x	x x x
	Experiential	8. Viser bilder eller lyd til å fremheve egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste 9. Viser merkevaren som en del av en eventyrlig og spennende opplevelse 10. Tilbyr meg innblikk i sponset arrangementer, produktlanseringer og direktesendte arrangementer		x x x
	Cause-related	11. Setter søkelys på sosial ansvarlighet og tilhørende aktiviteter		x
Interactive	Current event	1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager 2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer 3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde	x x x	
	Brand Community	4. Deler nyttig informasjon om hvor man kan kommunisere med merkevaren 5. Bemerker en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren	x	x
		6. Påminner om merkevarens tjenestetilbud		x
	Customer relationship	7. Fremhever gode kundehistorier og opplevelser 8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester	x x	
	Personal	9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie 10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.	x x	
Word-of-Mouth		1. Snakker jeg om med familie, venner og bekjente 2. Anbefaler jeg til familie, venner og bekjente 3. Introduserer jeg til familie, venner og bekjente 4. Snakker jeg positivt om til familie, venner og bekjente 5. Tar jeg opp i samtaler med familie, venner og bekjente	x x x x x	

## Attachment 10 - Regression assumption (elaborated)

First and foremost, to increase the confidence of this study's reliability and validity, Berry's (1993) recommendations of BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator) for OLS are followed to the degree possible. Therefore, the authors decided to test the external validity (generalizability) of the data through assessing the normal distribution curve (Hair Jr et al., 2018). After suspicions derived from the descriptive statistic provided by SPSS, the authors decided to test skewness' and kurtosis' z-score value. Hair Jr et al. (2018) recommends a z-score value of (+/-)1,96 (skewness) and (+/-) 2.58 (Kurtosis) (p. 96). Further inspections are also done visually at the probability plot (see attachment 12), whereby the plots look approximately normally distributed. The z-score is calculated as followed for both skewness and kurtosis:

Skewness,  $z = \text{Statistic} / \text{Std. error}$

Kurtosis,  $z = \text{Statistic} / \text{Std. error}$

(Hair Jr et al., 2018).

A closer analysis of the data's' skewness and kurtosis (see attachment 13) reveal that the variables are skewed to the right (negative) (Skewness; IMS: -3.487, TMS: 0.913, Inter: -3.426). Thus, new expressions are indexed to see whether it can remedy the normality (Hair et al., 2018) and the results are assessed by their z-scores. Only three possible expressions kept the Z-score within the (+/-) 1,96 range (Hair Jr et al., 2018).

The new expressions within acceptable ranges are TMS(Original), IaMS  $x^2$  (Squared) and IMS  $x^2$  (Squared) (see table 4.5). TMS had a slight positive skewness (0,913) with a tail to the left and a kurtosis which seemed platykurtic (-2,404) (Hair Jr et al., 2018). IaMS  $x^2$  is slightly positively skewed (0,763) with a tail to the left and kurtosis which is platykurtic (-1,453). The last variable, IMS  $x^2$  is also slightly positively skewed (0,612) with a tail to the left and looked to be platykurtic as well (-2,088) (Attachment 13). As we see from table 4.5, the data is now within acceptable parameters of normality (Hair Jr et al., 2018).

To test for potentially non-linear correlations, the squaring and cubing of variables is undertaken, and the P-plots are inspected (Oppen et al., 2020). However, since regression assumption A8 (normality) shows that the only expressions that are within the limits of

skewness are TMS, IaMS  $x^2$  and IMS  $x^2$ . However, they are approximately linear, which is shown through both scatterplots and through p-plots in attachment 14 & 12.

The next regression assumption is to reduce the chance of measurement errors, which can either be random or nonrandom (Oppen et al., 2020; Berry, 1993). Steps taken to reduce the probability of measurement error are pre-testing the questionnaire and using previous literature as a foundation for the study. All the variables have an internal consistency above 0,7 (table 4.1) and are at least dichotomous within the independent variables and the dependent variable must be (and are) quantitative (table 4.4) (Oppen et al., 2020).

Checking for a potential error can be done through checking the variance statistic (Oppen et al., 2020). As shown in the table 4.4 all items have a variance above 0.0 and thus, there is variation within the dataset on all variables. Because there is variance within the dataset, tests for covariance can be done, and potential significant findings can be assessed within the regression (Oppen et al., 2020).

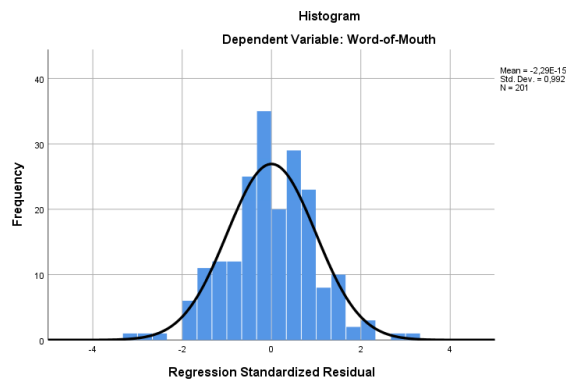
To do a multiple regression analysis, there should not be too much correlation between the predictor variables, also known as a lack of multicollinearity (Oppen et al., 2020). The correlations matrix uses Pearson's (R) correlations to measure the statistical strength and the linear relationship between two variables. A correlations matrix is made, and all predictor variables had a strong correlation exceeding (+/-) 0.5 at the significance level of  $<0.001$  (Oppen et al., 2020). Though, none of the variables had correlations exceeding 0.8, which Oppen et al., (2020) argues is the limit for problematic multicollinearity (attachment 16).

Linear regressions where the dependent variable is alternated between the independent variables to check for potential high VIF or tolerance values. All VIF values are under the recommended 5.5 limit (Oppen et al., 2020; Hair Jr et al., 2018) and the tolerance values are above 0.10 and thus problematic multicollinearity is not present (attachment 17). Although not very problematic, a strong correlation can affect the regression analysis as all the variables are correlated.

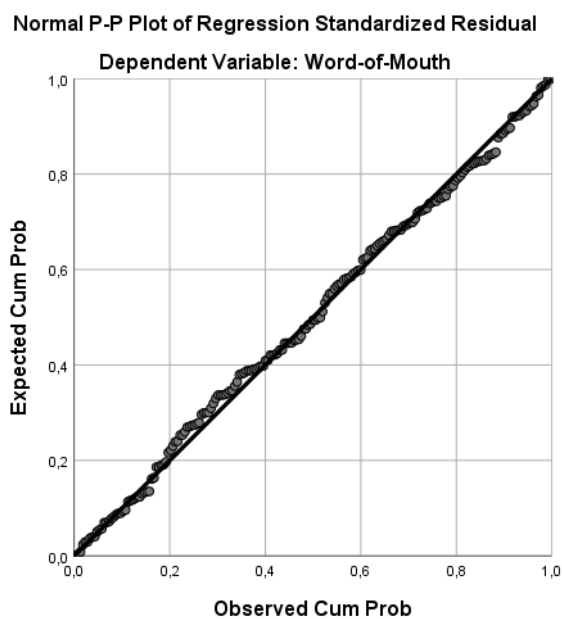


Levene's test and a scatterplot are used to assess whether the data are equal in variance or not (Hair Jr et al., 2018; Field, 2018). Levene's test shows that all of the predictor variables are insignificant. Thus, the data are not heteroscedastic (Field, 2018) (attachment 18). The scatter plots (attachment 15) show that the data are fairly equal in variance as they are insignificant.

### Attachment 11 - Normal Distribution Histogram



### Attachment 12 - P-Plot

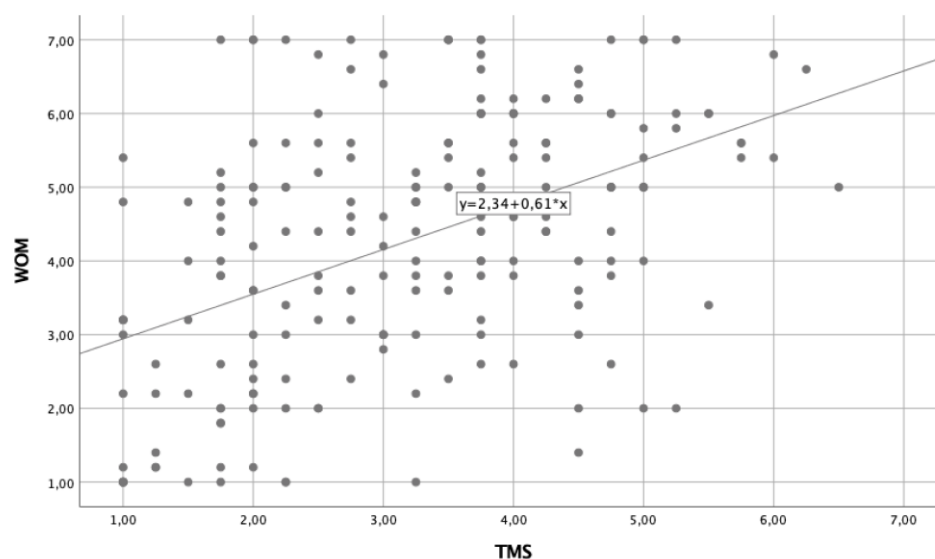


## Attachment 13 - Z-scores calculations

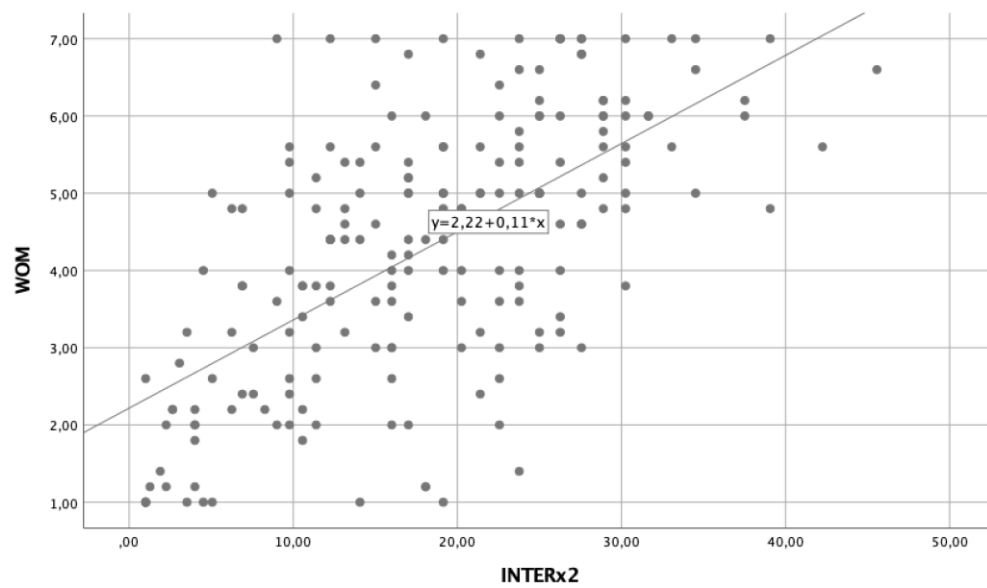
Normal Distribution	N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
		Statistic	Std. Error	Z-Score	Statistic	Std. Error	Z-Score
Informative	201	-0,598	0,172	-3,487	-0,305	0,341	-0,893
Informative x2	201	0,105	0,172	0,612	-0,713	0,341	-2,088
Informative x3	201	0,650	0,172	3,789	-0,190	0,341	-0,556
Transformative	201	0,157	0,172	0,913	-0,821	0,341	-2,404
Transformative x2	201	0,866	0,172	5,048	0,264	0,341	0,773
Transformative x3	201	1,564	0,172	9,119	2,638	0,341	7,729
Interactive	201	-0,588	0,172	-3,426	-0,186	0,341	-0,544
Interactive x2	201	0,131	0,172	0,763	-0,496	0,341	-1,453
Interactive x3	201	0,736	0,172	4,291	0,436	0,341	1,278
TMS Square Root	201	-0,223	0,172	-1,298	-0,823	0,341	-2,412
TMS Log10	201	-0,633	0,172	-3,691	-0,396	0,341	-1,159
Valid N (listwise)	201						

## Attachment 14 - Scatterplot

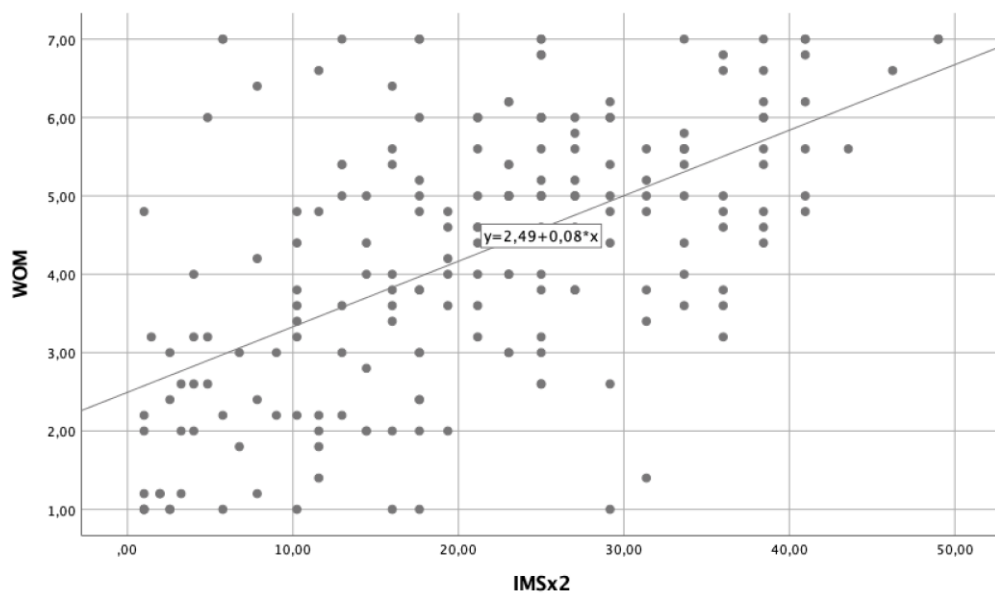
WOM-TMS (Transformative Message Strategy)



*WOM-IaMS  $x^2$  (Interactive Message Strategy)*



*WOM-IMS  $x^2$  (Informative Message Strategy)*



#### Attachment 15 - Predictor variable correlation

Correlations		Informative x2	Transformative	Interactive x2
Informative x2	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	201		
Transformative	Pearson Correlation	,538**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		
	N	201	201	
Interactive x2	Pearson Correlation	,582**	,648**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	
	N	201	201	201
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

#### Attachment 16 - VIF and TOL

Collinearity Statistics		
	VIF	TOL
Informative x2	1,622	0,617
Transformative	1,847	0,541
Interactive x2	1,986	0,503
Dependent variable	Word-of-Mouth	
Transformative	1,74	0,575
Interactive x2	2,271	0,44
Word-of-Mouth	1,693	0,591
Dependent variable	Informative x2	
Informative x2	1,689	0,589
Interactive x2	1,898	0,527
Word-of-Mouth	1,881	0,532
Dependent variable	Transformative	
Informative x2	1,737	0,576
Transformative	1,487	0,672
Word-of-Mouth	1,585	0,631
Dependent variable	Interactive x2	

## Attachment 17 - Levene's Test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		F	Sig.	t-value
Informative x2	Equal variances assumed	1,868	0,173	3,012
	Equal variances not assumed			3,209
Transformative	Equal variances assumed	0,325	0,570	2,349
	Equal variances not assumed			2,302
Interactive x2	Equal variances assumed	0,006	0,936	2,269
	Equal variances not assumed			2,317

## Attachment 18 – Question translations

Informative message strategy		
QUAID	Translated to Norwegian	Brand post
1. Contains product or service attributes	1. Inneholder egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste	Functional
2. Provides me with detailed product or service information	2. Gir meg detaljert informasjon om produkt eller tjeneste	Functional
3. Helps me make informed purchase decisions	3. Hjelper meg med å ta innsiktsfulle kjøpsbeslutninger	Functional
4. Educate me through tips and tricks about the product or service	4. Informerer meg om tips og triks om produktet eller tjenesten	Educational
5. Shares opinion pieces, articles and commentaries published on news-sites and specialist blogs	5. Deler meninger, innlegg og kommentarer lagt ut på nyhetssider og blogger	Educational
6. Shows me creative ways of applying a service or product in my daily life	6. Viser meg kreative måter å bruke en tjeneste eller produkt i mitt daglige liv	Educational
7. Focuses on employee's opinions on company technologies and processes	7. Setter søkelys på de ansattes meninger om teknologier og praksis i bedriften	Employee
8. Contain employees' broader take on business issues	8. Tar hensyn til de ansattes tanker om forretningsdrift og utfordringer	Employee
9. Focuses on employee's personal hobbies, interests, opinions and achievements	9. Setter søkelys på de ansattes personlige hobbyer, interesser, meninger og prestasjoner	Employee

Transformative message strategy		
QUAID - Approved	Translated to Norwegian	Brand post
1. Include words and symbols that express feelings	1. Bruker ord og symboler som uttrykker følelser	Emotional
2. Employ Inspiring or moving stories	2. Benytter inspirerende eller rørende historier	Emotional
3. Include jokes and trivial knowledge	3. Bruker spøk og uhøytidelig/morsom informasjon	Emotional
4. Focuses on brand image	4. Viser merkesymbol, slagord og merkekarakter (Maskot)	Brand Resonance
5. Show photos of brand products	5. Viser til bilder av merkevarens produkt(er)	Brand Resonance
6. Feature the product or service with a famous people	6. Viser produkt eller tjeneste med kjendiser	Brand Resonance
7. Celebrates brand heritage	7. Feirer merkets historie og arv	Brand Resonance
8. Portray visual effects or sound effects to emphasize product or service characteristics	8. Viser bilder eller lyd til å fremheve egenskaper til produkt eller tjeneste	Experiential
9. Shows the brand as a part of adventurous and thrilling consumer experience	9. Viser merkevaren som en del av en eventyrlig og spennende opplevelse	Experiential
10. Provides me with the experience of sponsored events, product launches and live events.	10. Tilbyr meg innblikk i sponset arrangementer, produktlanseringer og direktesendte arrangementer	Experiential
11. Focus on promoting worthy social causes and initiatives	11. Setter søkelys på sosial ansvarlighet og tilhørende aktiviteter	Cause-related

Interactive message strategy		
QUAID - Approved	Translated to Norwegian	Brand post
1. Mark holidays, anniversaries and/or public days.	1. Markerer helligdager, merkedager og / eller offentlige dager	Current Event
2. Makes appropriate references to cultural phenomenon's of today	2. Gjør passende referanser til populærkultur, idretts- eller andre arrangementer	Current Event
3. Comments on the weather or season in a product or service context	3. Bruker været eller årstiden til å fremheve produktets eller tjenestens bruksområde	Current Event
4. Shares useful information where one can communicate with the brand on different social media outlets.	4. Deler nyttig informasjon om hvor man kan kommunisere med merkevaren	Brand Community
5. Acknowledge members of the brand and their contributions to the brand and its community	5. Bemerker en tilhengers bidrag til merkevaren	Brand Community
6. Focuses on service announcements and reminders	6. Påminner om merkevarens tjenestetilbud	Customer Relationship
7. Promote customer success stories	7. Fremhever gode kundehistorier og opplevelser	Customer Relationship
8. Asks about your opinion of the product or service	8. Spør om mine meninger om produkter og tjenester	Customer Relationship
9. Makes me think about friends and family	9. Som får meg til å tenke på venner og familie	Personal
10. That appeals to my hobbies and personal interests.	10. Som treffer til mine hobbyer og personlige interesser.	Personal

Word-of-Mouth		
Questions	Translated to Norwegian	Source
1. I talk about with friends and relatives	1. Snakker jeg om med familie, venner og bekjente	Calder, Isaac & Malthouse (2016)
2. I recommend to friends and relatives	2. Anbefaler jeg til familie, venner og bekjente	(Jahn & Kunz, 2012)
3. I introduce to friends and relatives	3. Introduserer jeg til familie, venner og bekjente	(Jahn & Kunz, 2012)
4. I say positive things about to friends and relatives	4. Snakker jeg positivt om til familie, venner og bekjente	(Jahn & Kunz, 2012)
5. I bring up when relevant in conversation friends and relatives	5. Tar jeg opp i samtaler med familie, venner og bekjente	Calder, Isaac & Malthouse (2016)