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Building a Brand Through Niche Social Networks
For Daylight Dreamer Society

Degree Program in Innovative Business Services
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BUILDING A BRAND THROUGH NICHE SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR DAYLIGHT
DREAMER SOCIETY

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The purpose of this thesis was to build Daylight Dreamer Society's brand and to position it into a newly formed niche social network. This study bridges the gap by proposing a branding strategy in the context of online social media platform. The brand will be the guiding principle of the company and will help in implementing the business strategy.

The theory part of this work is divided in two. First one is regarding to branding while the second part reveals the main aspects of niche social networks. In terms of branding, relevant aspects were examined; brand meaning and basic branding principles as one of the most valuable asset of a firm. This dissertation has found that branding has a large impact on the process that takes place during user's purchasing activities. As a direct result, users form meaningful links to a brand image, brand name or company that leads to the creation of user-brand relationship. The theory also discussed the premises of niche social networks and the strategies to position a brand as a niche social network based on a lifestyle. The final product was then to apply the theories found on both relevant topics to the newly formed online service.

TABLE OF CONTENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 About Daylight Dreamer Society

Daylight Dreamer Society also referred in this thesis as DDS is a web based community formed around a lifestyle for people who is seeking for personal development. The online platform offers features and contents such as forums, articles, videos and eBooks that result relevant to help people to pursue their dreams and goals while keeping track of their process. It also enables users to find like-minded people who share the same lifestyle and are aiming to achieve similar goals allowing them to exchange ideas, tips, and experiences.

1.2 History of Daylight Dreamer Society

DDS is the result of a project that started out as Yumeyo.com, which was an online organizer for ideas and tasks. It allowed people to catch, browse, share, discuss and work out ideas. Moreover, it helped people to get more good ideas implemented and stay focused on their goals.

The web application allowed users to post their ideas in text form and to easily find these posted ideas back. It also offered the option to share these ideas in order to receive feedback.

Throughout the thesis process it was decided to shift the focus from an online tool to a niche social network based on a lifestyle formed by people who share the same values, needs and motivations. The decision was made after reviewing a second brand community with a specific lifestyle and the way it was monetized. This community, aimed at an entirely different lifestyle called betches.com revolves around a snobbish lifestyle inspired by Paris Hilton. However, the underlying aim is still the same which is to create a community based on a certain lifestyle.

2 BRANDING

2.1 Understanding branding

Tracing some of the historical origins of branding, the word brand derives from the principle of branding, a principle of general understanding for centuries. It was firstly used by producers and owners of livestock to mark their animals as a mean to distinguish the goods of one producer from those of another. A farmer with a good reputation for the quality of his animals would have a more requested brand, while the brands of farmers with not so positive reputation were to be avoided or treated with caution. This principle was the base for (Kellner, 1998, p.2) which suggests that brand itself is any word or illustration that enables people to establish and distinguish one seller from another. Thus, the utility of brands as a guide of choice was formed; a guide that has remained unchanged to the present day.

Another few underlying logic perspectives were identified in the academic literature that explores the conceptual foundations of brand; a broader suggestion on branding where the term is represented by any name, term, sign, symbol or design, or any formed combination of them intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition (Keller P., 1998, p.2). Keller's logic implies that the key to creating a brand, according to his definition, is to choose a name, logo, symbol and package design and additional attributes that identifies and brand and distinguished them from another. (The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English.1934) defines brands as particular kinds of goods, as an indelible mark and stamp; suggesting that brands are there to create an indelible impression.

Up to now, the above-mentioned literature references restrain the effects of branding to the consumer's interpretation of how a brand is related to themselves and their personality based traits. From the consumer's perspective, brand names are just as fundamental as the product itself as it not only simplifies the purchase process by allowing them to identify which brands satisfy their needs and which do not but also is a

basis of self-expression. Branding represents the creation of a deep bond between the company and the consumer; stating that companies should not only market a brand name just as name as this action leaves out the entire purpose of product branding (Kotler, 1999, p. 89). Expanding Kotler's definition of branding, the same introduces the additional element of brand essence, which he defines as being the soul of every reasons for being of a company; this theory infix a profound type of bond with consumers to the branding concept.

2.1.1 Brand Equity

One of the most popular and potentially important marketing concepts that rose in the 1980s was the concept of brand equity. The emergence of brand equity has however been defined in many different ways for many different purposes. To help the brand equity concept, some experts have tried to emerge to a common point where brand equity is defined as a set of associations earned due to a strong brand name that has permitted the brand to gain a greater volume of customers; this, relating to the fact that different outcomes result from the marketing of a product or service because of its brand name or some other brand element that has marked differentiation, as compared to outcomes if that same product or service did not have that valuable brand equity (Chieng Y.L 2011, p.34). A second analogy suggests that brand equity is the willingness for someone to continue to purchase one's brand or not (Keller P., 2006). Thus, the measure of brand equity is strongly related to loyalty created not only on the value of the product but also on its set of associations.

2.1.2 Consumer-Based Brand Equity

The consumer-based brand equity is defined as the unique effect that brand knowledge has on consumers and the way they respond to the marketing of the brand. A brand is said to have positive customer-based brand equity when customers react more favorably to a product and the way it is marketed and when the brand is generally identified. Work on customer-based brand equity implies that it occurs when the consumer has a high

level of awareness and familiarity with the brand, holding strong, positive and unique brand associations in memory (Keller, 1998, p. 45).

The most comprehensive brand equity model available in the literature is found in Keller's (1998; 2001; 2003). The CBBE model, figure 1, identifies four steps for building customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1998, p. 69). This branding ladder, starts from brand identity to brand meaning, brand responses and finalizes with brand relationships. Each of these steps consists of six brand building blocks - salience, performance, imagery, judgments, feelings and most importantly, resonance. The ultimate aim is to reach the pinnacle of the pyramid which Keller has denominated as resonance, where a strong relationship between the consumers and the brand is then created.
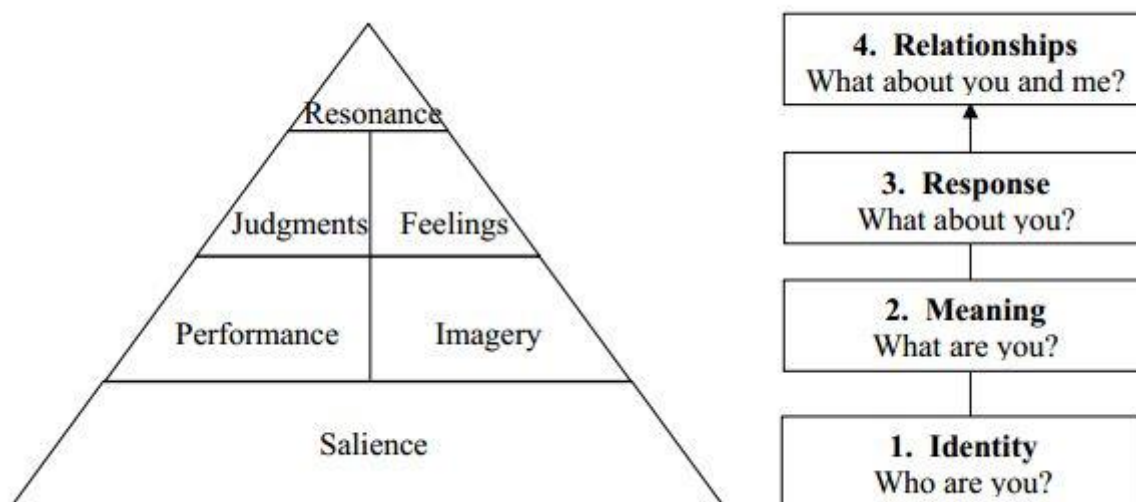
Figure1. Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity Framework

The main step in building brand equity is to create the initial brand elements that form brand identity in terms of brand performance and brand imagery, ensuring a high level of awareness and familiarity with unique brand associations; the right identity can bring as results attached customers who believe in the brand and perceive it as "my kind of product" (Keller, 1998, p. 82). The second step represents brand meaning by connecting tangible and intangible brand associations such as quality, reliability, performance and service. Brand response is the third step in the Keller's consumer-based brand equity

framework which is then divided into two categories, judgments and feelings where brand association could be created by linking the brand to another previous nodes of information already established in people's memory focusing on the functional and emotional benefits of the brand. The fourth and final step is brand relationship which refers to forging the appropriate brand relationship with customers; the nature of this relationship between the customer and the brand being based on the four following elements: behavioral loyalty, attachment, sense of belonging in a community and active engagement; step in by which brand resonance is achieved creating a deeper bond with the brand.

The basic idea of the customer-based brand equity framework is that the measurement of the strength of a brand is based on consumer's feelings, acts and thoughts with respect to that brand. To achieve the ultimate aim of brand resonance is necessary to secure the proper cognitive appraisals and emotional reactions that customers have towards the brand.

2.2 Branding Influence on Consumer Behavior

In this highly competitive market, the idea of commercializing goods or services alone seem to be no longer enough in order to attract a new market or to even maintain the existing one. Brands have now the necessity to consider the emotional aspects of their products and the way they are being distributed which will be the key difference on consumer's purchase decision. According to (Mooney K. 2008. p. 18), these emotional aspects are the way a brand engages consumers on the level of their senses and emotions and how a brand comes to life for people and forges a deeper and lasting connection.

The influence of branding on consumer's behaviors is related to their relationship to a brand; these are factors that can influence the level of customer engagement, which in turn into a certain level of behavioral loyalty and the spread of word-of-mouth communication. Businesses have come to realization that in order to successfully commercialized their goods and services they will need to change their way of looking

at the customer by integrating the concept of engagement as the way to create deeper and more lasting customer brand relationships. (Mooney K., 2008. p. 19)

2.2.1 A Conceptual Relationship, Consumer and Brand

The concept of engagement has been used in various disciplines including organizational behavior, psychology, sociology and political science. Different studies have been exploring various sub-forms of engagement e.g. civic engagement and social engagement, which led to a variety of approaches to interpreting the concept. Engagement can be viewed as a process characterized by interactions and/or experiences between an engagement subject such as student and an engagement object such as course or organization (Brodie R., 2011, p. 32). The exploration of available marketing literature reveals several engagement sub-forms; in purpose to this current matter, the sub-form of customer engagement is only being taken into account and is defined as the psychological process that customers move through to become loyal towards a brand; a type of loyalty which requires not only to be developed but maintained for both, existing and new customers (Brodie R., 2011, p.32).

To achieve a certain extent of loyalty it is necessary to understand the personal characteristics of the targeted consumer; who they are, what do they want and how can we give them what they want. By creating unique and personable links between the brand and the consumer it is essential that these links are induced on the attributes that stem from the appearance of the brand such as the product, the design and the general identity created by the brand itself in concordance with the personal characteristics of their consumers.

The relationship between consumer and brand can be measured using the methodology developed and enhanced by Millward Brown based on practical experience and academic research. The brand dynamics pyramid. Figure 2 illustrates the five key stages that customers go through while encountering a brand. The process starts with basic awareness and finishes with complete loyalty.
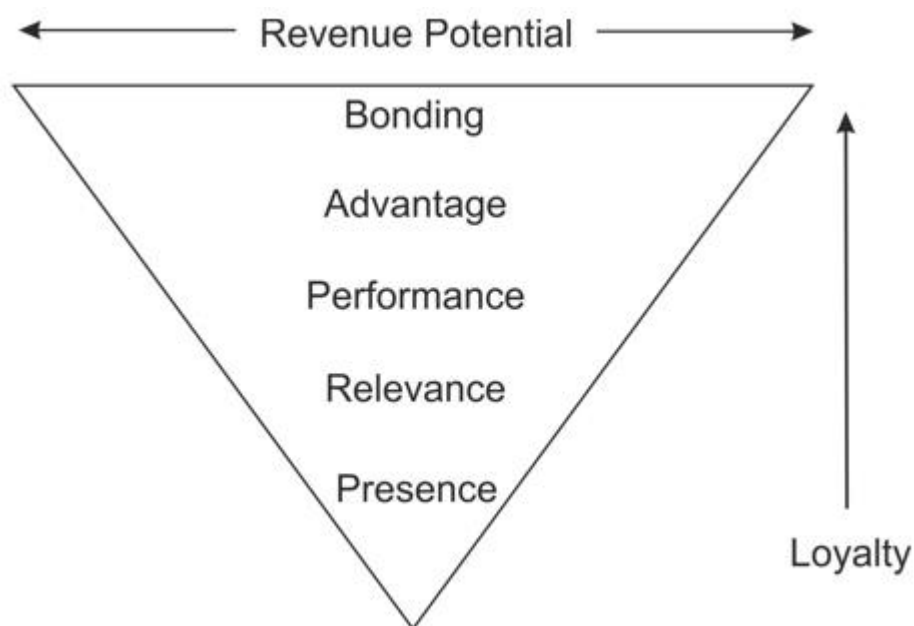
Figure 2. Brand Dynamics Pyramid (Millward Brown)

At the bottom of the pyramid; presence indicates the number of consumers whose contact with the brand extends no further than knowledge of its existence. At the top of the pyramid; bonding, indicates the number of consumers who have a relationship with the brand that runs deep and long enough to inspire loyalty. Relevance is where customers start to think about whether the brand meets their needs, this is a direct consequence of the ability to better satisfy the desires of a customer that main competitors do. Performance is where customers have began to compare the brand with others, to see whether it delivers what it is promised to and what is expected. Advantage is when customers have determined that there is a distinct advantage of using the brand, compared with others and they are also beginning to associate the brand with their emotions and with their sense of self.

In managing brands and consumer-brand relationship the term of brand identification is defined as a social construction that involves the integration of perceived brand identity into self-identity. Brand identity refers to the set of brand associations from which a person derives functional, emotional, and self-expressive benefits (Wirtz J., 2013 p. 224). This infers that a strong relationship with a brand can drive consumers to look for and interact with like-minded people who share their enthusiasm, interest, goals and

skills. Moreover, beginning to identify themselves more strongly with the brand and promoting bonding among the members.

2.2.2 Impact on the consumer's perception of the brand

In a market where branding is used, products are no longer only purchased for their functional characteristics, but mainly for the social and even psychological identity they express; the role of emotions, the influence of personality, the direct effects of the environment affect the insights of purchase and consumption: also when consumers are unable to discriminate among the available brands, they start to seek information in order to reduce their high brand ambiguity and engage in extensive deliberations before purchasing, considering many brands before deciding which to buy (Gobe M. 2001 p. 68).

The consumer's perception of brands is as crucial for the marketer as for the customer. By providing relevant information to the consumers, marketers enable the creation of links between the consumer and the brand image. Thus, consumers will have the necessary knowledge needed to distinguish between the brands on offer and therefore be persuaded in their selection. In the case of the consumer being new user with no product experience, the same will not be able to make relevant decisions based on the actual product (Gobe M. 2001 p. 68). Thus, the brand image is then becoming a vital part which will direct the consumer to a specific product.

2.3 Customer engagement in online brand communities

Since the nineteenth century, a dramatic change in the societies and economies has affected the development of modern communities; these communities, based on consumerism, have raised with the introduction of mass media and the so called modern marketing bringing as a result, a society which bases their social identity on their consumptive role and the brands they consume developing strongly defined consumer identities (Wirtz J., 2013, p.224).

Brand Communities, are then, according to (Wirtz J., 2013 p. 225), the network of relations between providers and brand consumers who attach a certain value to engaging in a relationship with both the provider and with the brand's other consumers. The following three factors suggest that brand communities are created when:

1. A common sense of consciousness is created, that is, the connection members feel with one another until they point of feeling that they "sort of know each other" at some basic level, even if they have never met.

2. There is a sense of culture and consciousness that impart certain behavioral norms and values that are typically a center on shared consumption experiences with the brand.

3. Members have motivational drivers to use the brand, they feel a certain sense of moral responsibility to the community and to the individual members that contribute and promote group cohesion. This suggests that members are interested in helping other members, keen to participate and engage other behaviors such as word-of-mouth recommendations, blogging and writing reviews.

Currently, consumers' tendency to cultivate long and strong communities where members associate their personal identity with certain brands and with each other has risen. This has been seen even in brands that have not reached a so-known status but yet have managed to influence many people to join the brand based uniquely on a personal-identity approach. These brands can then build a whole community around a marketing campaign for a certain cause, where members decide to join because they identify themselves with the cause more than with the brand itself. For instance, if the consumer identity is health-oriented, they will associate their interest with the brand that expresses the same value that they are claiming for; a brand that promotes for instance walkathons such as the Color Run would then be highly associated and reinforced on the value of the consumers' association with the brand. From a consumer point of view, these induced engagement behaviors are motivated merely on the satisfaction of their needs and the gain of benefits from the behavior itself. Recalling (Wirtz J., 2013, p.235), consumer engagement is directly and positively related to the outcomes that consumers

get from the brand including satisfaction, trust, commitment and more importantly, loyalty.

Many brands have already both on and off-line Brand Communities; an example brand could be Lego; they have developed online environments for the many Lego fans that already existed offline; facilitating the creation of networks and relationships between providers and consumers who are united by the value of engaging in a relationship with Lego, or any other brand.

The most defining dimension of a brand community in times where the internet and social media continues to develop rapidly will be the constant stretching between online and offline presence. Table 1 contrasts the key differences between online and offline communities (Wirtz J., 2013, p.227).

Dimension	Offline brand community	Online brand community
Main mode of interaction	Face-to-face Has social implications and members bring their true identity to the community and to the consciousness of kind and moral responsibility Formal organizational structures are beneficial and roles such as president, treasurer, secretary often become necessary	Virtual Virtual identity possible, anonymity possible, possibly with less consciousness of kind, and less moral responsibility Informal, less hierarchical structures are common, allowing for a variety of designs and modes of interaction Interaction is unconstrained by location and time Community can be structured along any dimension besides geography
Geography and time dimensions	Geographically and time constrained; members typically have to be present at the same location and same time to interact Community can be global but requires a local chapter structure to facilitate face-to-face interaction where value creation takes place	

| Costs to community members (time, effort and expenses) | Time and location constraints impose time and effort costs; location and hospitality requirements incur (financial) costs
Threshold costs cut off low involvement members from participating in the community | Low cost of joining and being part of the community
Low threshold and hence a wider range of engagement levels and forms of the members, possibly affecting consciousness of kind and moral responsibility
Involvement can range from very low to very high |
| Involvement with brand, firm and community | Brand often elicits high levels of involvement, loyalty and emotion among members; members are frequently motivated to help others
Intrinsic benefits (e.g. wanting to feel connected) tend to prevail | Many members may seek primarily functional benefits from an OBC (e.g. getting help with using, maintaining and repairing a product)
Many members may be passive and only access content but do not contribute to the OBC
Firms may use extrinsic benefits (e.g. discounts, lucky draws, loyalty points) to engage OBC members and motivate desired behaviors (e.g. post contributions, recruit new members, provide word-of-mouth, or give feedback to the firm) |

Table 1. Key differences between online and offline brand communities

The key observations from table 1 are:

a) The consumer's engagement with an online-brand community generates a mutual, as for producers and consumers beneficial level of interactivity mostly between users; it is then, of mutual benefit for producers as they won't have the need to focus on continuous interaction, thus, allowing them to focus in another key activities while members get to actively engage in the form of participation and interaction with other members.

b) On the one hand, the online-brand Community allows members to reveal as little or as much they want of the identity, only passively engaging in limited relationships of any kind if preferred so.

c) Is of low cost and of global reach for producers as for consumers; opposed to offline-brand communities.

2.4 The Branding Process

According to the model of customer-based brand equity suggested in (Keller K. 2001, p.7), to build a strong brand involves the four following steps:

1. Establish proper brand awareness: According to (Keller K. 2001, p.8) brand awareness refers to consumer's ability to recognize certain brand. To establish a proper brand awareness ensures that the customer is aware of the brand; create associations on consumer's mind with a specific product or need. To build brand awareness, analyze the following statements:

   a) The extent to what the brand is in the top of consumer's mind
   b) The type of reminders available for consumers to remember the brand
   c) The strength of brand awareness

And more importantly, know the answer to who you are.

In the CBBE model this is referred as brand salience. Brand awareness also involves the process in which consumers link the brand to a certain logo, symbol or other associations in memory.

2. Create an appropriate brand meaning: Establish brand meaning in the mind of your consumers; what the brand is characterized for and what does it stand for in the mind of consumers within the two following categories: Performance and imagery, related to consumer's experience and the depiction of the brand created in advertising. Brand meaning responds to the question of what you are.

3. Elicit a positive brand response: Answers to the question of what you are feeling and thinking. This refers to how the consumers respond to brand, what they are thinking and what they are feeling. These consumer's personal opinions and evaluation regard to the brand's:

a) Quality, the consumer's perception of the brand's value and satisfaction.

b) Credibility, the extent to what a brand is seen as competent, trustworthy and likeability.

c) Consideration, the likelihood of consumers actually including the brand into their lives.

d) Superiority; extent to which consumers see the brand as superior, better than others.

4. Forging brand relationships with customers: find an answer to the kind of connection you have with the customers. In the CBBE model, this is the final and more relevant step. It focuses on the relationship and level to which consumers identify themselves with the brand and the extent to which they feel synchronized with it. In psychological terms this is referred as bonding and loyalty (Keller K. 2001, p.15). Brand resonance is divided into the four followingcategories:

a) Behavioral loyalty: reflects how often and to what amount consumers purchase the product and/or service.

b) Attitudinal attachment: the positive attachment to the brand; expressing "love" for the brand describing it as one favorite and necessary element.

c) Sense of community: the connections that involve the brand's fellow users with each other.

d) Active engagement: the strongest affirmation where consumers are willing to invest their money, time and energy and the other necessary resources in order to consume the brand.

3. NICHE SOCIAL NETWORKS

In the last two decades, the emergence and rise of the Internet as a communications medium has enabled geographically-dispersed individuals with shared interests to gather online culminating new forms of customer/firm interactions; the virtual world not only connects companies, but also consumers providing full time access to online

content and communication through this medium . (Hoffman and Novak., 2003, p5). Whatever today's consumers are seeking, they want it - and often get it "right now". Overwhelmed by choice on and offline, time-starved consumers demand prompt, accessible and immediate products and services.

Directly related to the concept of customer brand engagement, now on the online social media context using the different available platforms where substantial interaction can enrich customer's experiences with the brand; virtual interaction and communication tools such as discussion forums, bulletin boards, publication of blogs, chat rooms, newsgroups, email, personal Web pages, social networks and blogs enable and facilitate new and extended forms of interactive consumer experiences, which may contribute to the development of customer and/or consumer engagement with specific brands.

Web has proved itself as a serious channel for brand-building and sales, the online landscape remains the province of the people, not companies. People online leave behind traces of their unique personalities; preferences and behaviors through clicking, surfing and active sharing. These unique individuals negate the old idea of target markets broadly marketed by only age, gender, income or education level; a brand must be more open than that; a brand must get personal; doing so by building relationships through consumer dialogue that brings the brand closer to each consumer's needs and expectations (Mooney K., 2008, p.33).

3.1 Understanding Niche Social Networks

Before introducing Niche in the relation to social networks, is of high importance to approach the concept of niche in consideration to marketing. Niche marketing is a popular concept among academics and practitioners and is commonly accepted as an important tool in the marketer's toolbox today being applied to a variety of industries.

However, there is no such a defined and well accepted theoretical basis for niche marketing, there are, in fact, multiple approaches to niche marketing and its execution. Some of the applied definitions found in distinctive niche marketing researches describe the concept as the positioning into small, profitable and homogeneous market segments

ignored or neglected by others (Dalgic T., Leeuw M., p.40). Moreover the author deepens that niche appeals to the unique preferences and needs of a small but yet well-defined group of buyers.

The increasing diversity in consumer's taste and habits and the changing needs of business and organizational markets are likely to favor firms that can better tailor their offerings to this fragmented market (Kjell and Toften, 2002, p.273). Thus, niche marketing enables customers to demand for products which match up their unique needs and, as a result, marketers now know what exactly their consumers want and do not need an expensive and somehow ineffective mass marketing but a more high-valued personal one. A more precise and concise attempt is found in (Dalgic T., Leeuw M.,p.40) where niche is defined as a formed small market consisting of a small group of customers with similar characteristics or needs in pro to identify and satisfy those unique needs that have not yet been fulfilled.

According to (Kjell and Toften, 2002, p.274) the key suggestion to achieve niche marketing involves positioning a product into small and homogeneous market segments that have neglected by other marketers. Moreover, this suggestion also incorporates the following aspects for successful niche marketing:

a) Use of specialization: mainly related to the product knowledge and the ability to create unique and differentiated products.
b) Relationship marketing: The necessity of developing long-term and strong relationships with both customers and suppliers, in accordance with relationship marketing literature, the relationship a bran builds with their customer has long been regarded as a key to niche marketing.
c) Building protective barriers: These barriers being based on strong relationship and dynamic capabilities.

Niche marketing is beneficial for firms in terms of increased profits, higher growth, increased market shares and increased competitiveness. In addition, niche marketing can be applied to different situations, such as a variety of industries, firms of various sizes, domestic and international markets and new and established markets. Further,

successful niche marketing appears to require the use of specialization, relationship marketing, developing internal dynamic capabilities and building protective barriers.

Having reviewed the concept of niche in relation to marketing, the following attempts to bring together both the conceptual and practical aspect of niche marketing towards social networks. Social media platforms have become a crucial element for companies and brands seeking to forge a relationship with their customer on the online context. They have, alternatively, become a tool that helps strangers to connect based on shared interests, political views, or any other kind of hobbies and activities (Boyd D. & Ellison N., p. 214). Social sites are aiming to diverse audiences, while others are aiming to attract and connect with people based on multiple factors such as common language, race, genre, religion or nationality-based identities.

The most successful brands are those that foster a sense of distinctive community around their products for that certain niche group. Now, before, during and after the purchase, consumers are seeking to connect with each other through blogs, ratings and reviews, tagging and other interactive methods. They are now sharing opinions, riffing off each other's creativity and seizing control of the messages and values that brands once generated and propagated. These peer-to-peer communications have begun to force brands to engage the tribal tendencies of online consumers by creating communities of their own (Mooney K., 2008, p. 19).

According to (Mooney K., 2008, p. 17), a brand becomes part of social networks by marketing to the niche of communal consumers who interact with other like-minded people; thus, propagating the network effect of online word-of-mouth where "the more a brand works the network, the more the network works for the brand" (Mooney K., 2008, p. 18). Based on the basic premise of social media with its ability to connect individuals and firms creating a whole community of sellers and customers where the customer is highly involved in content generation and value creation in order to better serve themselves and satisfy their needs as no one knows better what the customers want than themselves.

Marketing a brand in the online market space differs in multiple aspects to the conventional one. In terms of pricing for example where clients are now able to easily

make comparisons. Also, the relationship between buyer and seller is mediated throughout computers and the purchase decisions are based on the information about the product rather than on its physical appearance (Mooney K., 2008, p. 18). Moreover, it offers more flexibility, requires less time and is an inexpensive way to become part of marketing for all kind of products around the world.

3.2 Identifying a Niche Market

Being able to identify the niche market allows companies to gain a strategic advantage in comparison to those who market massively. Correctly identifying their customers, their attitudes and needs differentiated them from the divergent segments will translate into the opportunity for creating an actionable plan. (Shani D. & Chalasani S., 1992, p.34) states that the attractiveness of a niche depends on the following criteria:

- Sufficient market size, estimated number of potential consumers
- Purchasing and-or participation willingness
- The potential of the market
- Negligible interest to competitors

The most appropriate variables for identifying niche markets are those that yield the most distinct criteria. The product offered must be of high value and intend to offer as unique attributes as possible. Secondly, market research is needed to identify the target segment and estimate their interest of the offered value. Finally, competition, in which case of DaylightDreamers, (Bucket-list bloggers, productivity development gurus, entrepreneurial spirit, etc,) must be analyzed in order to differentiate from the online tool's already available on the market.

3.3. Online Consumer Behavior

Research in the area of consumer behavior has shown that consumers go through the five following stages when making a purchase decision: problem recognition, search for

information, evaluation of different brand alternatives, purchase decision and post purchase evaluation (Gebauer J. & Ginsburg M., 2003, p. 59). The online consumer buying behavior is as well influenced by the following variables that play a role when the customers go through the decision process of acquiring a product or being part of an online community: First, internal variables such as motivation, perception, learning capacity and attitudes; the so called, the goal-directed buyer, who makes his decision specifically based on convenience , accessibility and the availability of accurate information on a broad selection of products; this, the kind of buyer in congruence with this thesis. Second, by socio-cultural variables such as culture, social class, social groups and family (Santos J. and Ribeiro J., 2012, P.294)

Gaining the consumer's trust in the online environment is crucial as when it comes to online products and transactions their perception of risk in very high. There are uncountable risks of exposing themselves to an online environment.

3.4 Social Networks

To gain a clear insight into the definition of Social Networks, the term must be broken into each of the separated words that construct it. Firstly, the term social or sociability refers to the ability to interact with others, or to socialize. Secondly, interdisciplinary theoretical lenses emphasize the word networks to be the relationships between users within a group. A social network is, therefore a social structure created from the configuration of individual nodes into a larger web (Keenan A., Shiri A., p.440).

Distinctive researches on social networks sites describe the first social network launched that supports the niche concept in terms of distinctions communities and demographics was Facebook. Facebook was designed to support distinct college networks only; beginning in early 2004 as a Harvard-only Social Network. To join, the user was required to have a Harvard email address. As Facebook began to support other schools, the new users were also required to have university email addresses associated with their home institutions in pro of keeping the site relatively closed and form the users' perceptions of the site as an intimate, private and exclusive community (Boyd D.

& Ellison N., p. 213). Since then, social network sites as web-based services have allowed individuals to form a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, to be able to develop a list of contacts with whom they share a certain connection and to view and share what is made by others within the system.

Social websites have become a major medium for interaction. Facebook, MySpace and emergent sites like Twitter, are increasing exponentially in user numbers day by day. These social websites facilitate the socialization on the internet thought out a variety of features where users can share elements of their interest such as public musings, private messages, photos, videos and any other standard form of expression. (Keenan A. and Shiri A., 2009, p. 439) discusses that social networks are primarily organized around people, not interests. Moreover, these social websites want people to join their community and experience the social web; to do so, they have developed different designs, focuses and features for their users.

The growth in social media in terms of consumer-brand engagement is related to peer and friend recommendations, user's content and product reviews which are increasingly playing a central role in building a consumer-brand relationship (Keenan A. and Shiri A., p.443).

Currently, social media is the richer media with greater reach. Its interactive nature allows companies to easily approach and connect with customers and allows customers to share and exchange information with each other (Sashi C., 2012, p255). Through the use of social media, organizations are able to establish relationships with existing as well as new customers and form interactive communities that collaborate to not only identify and understand problems but to develop solutions for them. This is the reason being of why companies are now seeking to better understand to which extent social media can and should play a role in customer engagement.

3.4.2 Peer-to-Peer Media Opportunities

The term peer-to-peer communication is described as a form of consumer-based (or peer-to-peer) promotion. The old-fashioned word-of-mouth occurs when consumers

pass information from one person to another in (Graham C. 1996, p. 49). This specific communication "device" is one with the highest impacts in such an evolved, fragmented marketplace. There is a high value for this communication technique where consumers receive advice from friends, family members, colleagues, etc. while ignoring or resisting the multiple forms of advertising targeted to them. (Graham C. 1996, p. 50)

The content of the peer-to-peer message, the person initiating its transmission and its distribution are in most cases enough to imbue the brand with co-created symbolic value (Graham C. 1996, p. 58).

The following table 2 displays the classification of the major methods of peer-to-peer communication. The left column contains the means of the promotion and its alternative forms followed by the seven attributes that distinguish the consumer-based promotion (Graham C. 1996, p. 57).

To serve the purpose of this thesis, the branding methods of most importance; stickers, clothing, and logo-bearing products are the result of branding that consumers use to identify each other and their peer group. An example of this, a teenage boy who puts a band's logo sticker on his skateboard, showing to others a glimpse of who he is and what he likes; a clear result of branding the consumer.

Medium	Consumer Commitment	Consumer Risk	Visibility	Ease of Use	Initiation	Who Pays?	Recruitment Method
Word-of-Mouth	Low	Very Low	Low	Very High	Hybrid	NA	Conversion
Postcards	Medium					Brand	Brand	
Paper		Low	Very Low	Medium			Passive
Electronic		Medium	Low	High			Conversion
Tattoos			High				Consumer
Temporary	Medium	Low		High	Brand		Conversion
Semi-Permanent	High	Low		Medium	Hybrid	(Brand)*	Active/Conv
Permanent	Very High	Very High		Low	Consumer		Conversion
Graffiti	High		Very High				Brand
Temporary		Medium		Medium	Hybrid		
Permanent		High		Low	Hybrid		
Auto Wraps	Very High	High	Very High	Very Low	Brand	Brand	Passive/Conv
Stickers					Brand		Passive
Giveaway	Low	Low	High	Very High		Brand	(Active)
Purchase	Medium	Low	High	Very High		Consumer	
Bumper Stickers	High	Medium	Very High	High		Consumer	
Clothing						Consumer	
Brand-name	High	Very Low	Medium	Very High	Brand		Conversion
"Message"	High	Low	High	Very High	Hybrid		Active
Branded gift- or purchase-with-purchase			Low		Brand	Consumer	Active
Concurrent Acquisition	Low	Low		High			
Subsequent Acquisition	Medium	Medium		Low			
Logo-bearing Products	Variable	Very Low	Medium	Very High	Brand	Consumer	Active/Conv
Internet					Hybrid	NA	NA
Email	High	Low	Low	High	Either		(Active)
Chat Rooms	High	Medium	High	High	Either		
User-Rating Systems	Very High	Medium	Very High	Medium	Hybrid		(Passive)
Product-Related Sites			(Very)High				
Official	Low	Low		Very High	Brand		(Active)
Consumer-run	(Very) High	Med./High		Low	Consumer		(Passive)
Online Graffiti	Medium	High		High	Consumer		(Conversion)
Weblogs ("Blogs")	High	Medium		Medium	Consumer		(Conversion)
Podcasts/Skypecasts	High	Medium	Variable	Low	Either		
			Variable				
Consumer-generated media	High	High	High	Low	Brand	Brand	Active
Online				(Medium)			(Conversion)
Offline			(Medium)			(Either)	

Table 2. Elements of consumer-based promotional methods.

3.4.3 Lifestyle Marketing

The notion of lifestyle branding is relatively new. However, it has much in common with other existing types of brands (e.g., pioneering brands, niche brands, iconic brands, authentic brands). Lifestyle marketing is, however, differentiated on a deeper reflection of people's ways of living highlighting the key aspects of their behaviors (Graham C. 1996, p. 7). These consumers who are core users help to define the brands' meanings to those for whom the lifestyle is aspirational.

Lifestyle brands, more than a high quality product, offer multifaceted products which are appealing to their customer's interest, feelings and needs. These display a strong set of essential values that resonates deeply with the desired segment of the general market.

This is a reciprocal, symbolic, interpersonal relationship between producer-self, producer-other and the brand as the trigger for consumers' process of (re)consideration of their lifestyles, consumption choices and value system (Graham C., 1996, p.7).

The factors that influence the development of lifestyle branding are self-brand identification and symbolic interaction. A two-way symbolic relationship between oneself, other and a brand is the proper attempt to build a lifestyle brand while using consumers as their message-bearers by sending messages in the marketplace when consumers use their favorite lifestyle brand, this public display makes brands more prominent in the cultural landscape (Graham C. 1996, p. 8).

To achieve a successful lifestyle brand, customers should then be empowered to disseminate the marketing information from their behalf; their needs and their values (Graham C. 1996, p. 79). This would allow marketers to create a unique and authentic brand identity.

Table 3 displays examples of lifestyle brands within similar product categories using brand names followed by the attributes that lifestyle brands represent (Graham C. 1996, p. 57),

a) Market perception, refers to the popular opinion of the brand
b) Indicators of authenticity, include the brand's connections to places, engaged users, and events.
c) Marketing innovations, the key source of differentiation for many brands, especially for lifestyle brands.
d) Expressed brand values, those values must correspond with consumers' values.
e) Producer communications refers to peer-to-peer communication related to each brand.

Lifestyle Brands					
Name	**Market perception**	**Indicators of authenticity**	**Marketing innovations**	**Expressed brand values**	**Produser * communications**
Subaru: international brand	Rugged, efficient, durable, fun, beloved	In mountain towns and snowy places, for outdoors lovers, at rally car races	Small AWD cars, zero landfill plant*	Resource conservation, superior engineering, safety, durability, love of nature	Fan websites and blogs, online forums, homemade videos and ads, clubs, unofficial contests
Clif Bar: energy bars, gels, and drinks	Wholesome, nourishing, convenient, delicious, friendly	For hikers, backpackers, kayakers, cyclists, in the backcountry, at races, using wind and biodiesel energy	Organic foods and sports drinks, women-specific foods, recyclable packaging	Organic farming, conservation, love of nature, women's health, pleasurable consumption	Branded clothing items, local cycling clubs (i.e., Luna Chix), blogs, podcasts, pro and amateur ambassadors
Cloudveil: Clothing	Innovative, cool, stylish, high performance, high quality	Tied to Jackson Hole, employee users, pro fishermen, skiers & climbers	New fabric technologies, performance clothing design	Quality, technological innovation, resource conservation, durability, style, utility	Online forums and blogs, homemade videos, unofficial contests, branded clothes, pro and amateur brand ambassadors
Jones Soda: niche beverage	Cool, fun, friendly, stylish, delicious, independent, "the little guy"	Found in small shops (e.g., skateboard), consumer input on web and packaging, alternative sports venues, tied to Seattle	Consumer-generated package designs, unique soda flavors, interactive website	Supporting the everyman, uniqueness, beautiful design, independence	Fan websites and blogs, online forums, consumer submissions of art, writing, and music, branded products, amateur brand ambassadors
Jittery Joe's: franchised coffee shop	Hip, friendly, small, inviting, sporty, local	Tied to Athens, GA, and other college towns, domestic cycling team, beans distributed in bike shops	Personal distribution and promotion of beans, cycling team	Local support, beautiful design, healthy living, positive social spaces and interaction	Fan websites and blogs, online forums, homemade photos and videos, fan art at races, consumer-team interactions, Patron program

Table 3. Lifestyle Brands.

3.5. Choosing a Niche Strategy

According to (Dalgic T. and Leeuw M., p.49) a niche strategy is chosen under the following conditions:

a) If the brand is able to approach a niche segment in a better and different manner than others.
b) If the company is determined to create a considerable amount of goodwill in a relatively short period as well as establish a strong relationship with his customers.

The key attributes of a niche strategy are labeled to be: uniqueness, quality, high value, facilitation and/or necessity (Dalgic T. and Leeuw M., p.49). Moreover implies that a marketing strategy should be employed for the following reasons:

a) To avoid competition with larger competitors;

b) To devote its energy to serving an unique market;

c) To enhance an opportunity;

d) Survival;

It is of high relevance to avoid the so called hyper-segmentation; selecting niches which are too small. This can, however be countered through contra-segmentation; joining several niches (Dalgic T. and Leeuw M., p.49). The following criteria are to be defined in order to select the niche.

3.5.1 Defining Main Value

In order to define your brand's main value it is important to know your company's strengths and weaknesses, uniqueness, competitive advantages and distinctive competences. By recognizing who you are and what you have, affects heavily on brand performance (Dalgic T. and Leeuw M., p.52).

Defining your brand's values is one of the key aspects to build a strong culture as it helps to create the foundation from which the culture can be built; without clearly defined values, consumers will have different ideas about what the culture of the brand is supposed to be, and what is expected of them. When a customer is buying a service or product, his decision criteria will be based on the ideas that derive from the brand name itself.

In lifestyle brands, managers should focus on involving the customer and themselves to the developing process of adding the main value to the brand; value will be then based on consumer relationship.

It is vital to take into account the following values for achieving a better positioning and high acceptance from customers:

- Quality

- Word-of-mouth references
- Brand perception
- Company image
- Uniqueness

3.5.2 Defining Target Group

One of the main variables to be able to succeed in such a fragmented market is to focus on a specific niche or customer group; instead of opting for mass marketing; and extract the information on these customers. It is important to know the market and know it better than competitors. The key to getting to know consumers is through having them involved; talking and listening to them; this symbolic interaction between consumers and brand is a key component of successful marketing as consumers and producers both reflect and affect a brand's meaning. This can be the key to success as it will provide the necessary information on which to focus facilitating the final decision on what kind of product to sell customizing the product to fulfill the existing demand based on the needs of a defined audience.

When segmenting a target group for a lifestyle brand is recommended to start by selecting the group according to the commitment to the lifestyle itself. This is based on the idea of self-brand identification (Graham C. 1996, p.113).

Consumer who have high affinity for the brand are more likely to support the brand's values, more likely to feel that the brand expresses his identity and more likely to consider the brand as a friend (Graham C. 1996, p.108).

3.5.3 Identifying Key Partners and Competitors

One of the main steps in developing a successful niche strategy is identifying and analyzing fellow partners and competitors. The difference between the two being: Partners are those who play an essential role on the brand's business model while

competitors are any business offering a substitute or similar product than yours (Investopedia).

Understanding who the competitors are and what are they offering can help to make your product or service stand out. This knowledge can be used to create marketing strategies that overtake your competitors' weaknesses while improving your own business performance.

To determine who the key competitors are, one must find out:

1. The reasons why customers do not use your product but use competitor's.
2. Brand's most competitive advantage.
3. The way to persuade customers to purchase your products.

As a business owner, relying on partners symbolized risk and cost reduction as they could supply they key resources for business development; this could be either capital or expertise. It is invaluable to find someone who understands and supports your brand's goals. To determine who the potential partners could be, companies should first evaluate what the benefit of relying this partner includes, and who are the key suppliers and how can they improve your performance.

3.5.4 Applying differentiation

Position by differentiation on the chosen niche market. Develop a clear product image; determinate the values that customers claim for and appeal to them better than anyone else and finally communicate how your product can fulfill the key buying motives. (Dalgic T., Leeuw M., p.52)

> "Be differentiated, not just different"
> (Dalgic T. and Leeuw M., p.52)

4 APPLICATION

4.1 Current Position of the Brand

DaylightDreamerSociety.com (DDS) is a web based community and brand around a lifestyle of actively chasing one's dreams and personal development. Next to a basic forum and relevant articles and videos it offers tools to help people to keep track of their goals and their ideas on how to achieve them. It also enables people to find other people who are aiming to achieve similar goals so that they can exchange ideas, tips, and experience. The website is under construction at the time of writing this.

4.2 Consumer-based Brand equity model for DDS

The basic premise with the consumer-based brand equity is that the power of a brand lies in the minds of consumers and what they have experienced and learned about the brand over time. A critical application of the consumer-based brand equity model lies in planning and implementing brand strategies. Using the CBBE model will provide the brand, Daylight Dreamer Society, the opportunity to assess its progress in brand-building as well as a guide for marketing research initiatives.

A critical application of the consumer-based brand equity model lies in planning and implementing brand strategies. Next the illustration of the CBBE framework applied to DaylightDreamerSociety.com. See figure 3.

Figure3. Consumer-based Brand Equity Model applied to DDS.

4.2.1 Identity

On the consumer-based brand equity framework, step 1, "identity" is a necessary condition for achieving a high level of brand awareness. Towards that goal, brand elements can be chosen that are inherently memorable and therefore facilitate recall and/or recognition in purchase and/or consumption. In other words, the intrinsic nature of certain names, symbols, semantic content and visual look that makes the brand memorable.

Brand name is perhaps the most central of all brand elements; is a fundamentally important choice as it often captures the central theme or key suggestion and association of a product. Previously, the brand was under the name of "Yumeyo", name which was not so closely tied to the service in the minds of consumers. Moreover, the word Yumeyo lacks of meaning for those who are not aware of what exactly the service is and was not very transferable to other cultures due to translation problems. A third aspect, pronounceability, which is critical to obtain valuable repeated word-of-mouth exposure that helps to build strong memory links and the willingness of consumers to request and/or refer to the brand orally for the risk of embarrassment of mispronouncing a difficult name. Reasons for which, the name was changed to Daylight Dreamer Society.

Daylight Dreamer Society, a name rather concrete than abstract, is a brand name which would be easily remembered, highly suggestive of both, the product class and the particular benefits that serve as the basis of its positioning, inherently interesting and with creative potential. Therefore, links can be more easily formed to the object name and product increasing memorability.

The Daylight Dreamer expression creates a strong suggestion of the brand category. A Daylight Dreamers is someone who has an active commitment to achieve one or more goals on his or her bucket-list and actively looks for way to improve him- or herself in order to increase the chance of success. Daylight Dreamer Society not only being memorable, it offers a broader meaning to consumers than just its products category; there is an explicit meaning that consumers can extract from the name.

Although the brand name typically is the central element of the brand, visual brand elements often play a critical role in building brand equity, especially in terms of brand awareness. Logos and symbols have meaning and associations that change consumer perceptions of the company.

Daylight Dreamer Society has not yet acquired a defined logo but due to the branding advantage of logos and its versatility, they can be updated as needed over time and generally transferred well across cultures. DDS has, however, acquired a visual identity

in order to link in memory the brand name and its service. This visual identity is based on a combination of colors where sky-blue and white represent the daylight and the speech balloon or thought bubble that indicates words spoken out loud and thought and/or dreams respectively. These visual aspects are to be used on the website, Facebook page and promotional videos.

4.2.2 Meaning

As described in chapter 2, the process of branding according to the consumer-based brand equity model follows by step2, brand meaning. Creating meaning for the brand is to decide what it is and how is it different from other brands through product design or performance representing how well does the brand meet the consumer's needs and brand image defined by the perceptions about the brand.

Performance, the product itself is at the heart of brand equity, as it is the primary influence of what consumers experience with the brand. In terms of product performance, the perception of the overall quality or superiority of the service cannot yet be measured due to the productization of the service where the tool is not yet available to be used. However, in product related attributes, DDS as a social network intends to allow users to organize their ideas and tasks. Moreover, it allows people to catch, browse, share, discuss and work out ideas.

To achieve a satisfactory level of perceived quality is suggested that DDS implements continual product improvements over the years to heighten consumer expectations of product quality including the following general dimensions:

- Features, secondary elements of the service
- Reliability, consistency of performance over time
- Durability, expected economic life of the service
- Style and design, appearance or feel of quality

Imagery, DDS's brand imagery is enhanced by its commitment to inspire people to take full responsibility over this one life we have by chasing their dreams rather than just sitting it out and wasting the little bit of precious time we have. It aims to build both a brand and a community around this lifestyle and create a profitable business around it. The philosophy behind DDS is heavily inspired by the existential movement's main idea that it is up to us to give our live meaning since there is no a priori meaning or reason for it.

4.2.3 Response

Judgments are the personal opinions and evaluation with regard to the brand cannot be measured at the stage of what DDS currently is. Generally, the desired aspects of judgment that DDS is aiming for are good value, uniqueness and innovativeness. Moreover, in purpose of forming a strong brand equity; the following aspects are particularly important:

Quality for DDS and any other business, quality is a necessary offering in order to stay in business; is expected and it better be delivered. It is important for the future development of DDS to remember that quality for the right price is a given; but preference creates the sale. Preference is the real connection to success. In order to improve the perceived quality of the brand, quality must be reflected in every company activity, not only on the actual tool. Quality for DDS also requires employee commitment and high quality partners. When it comes to product-related concerns, DDS product quality should consider factors such as the speed, accuracy and care of product delivery.

Consideration, according to the CBBE model, this how customers judge how relevant DDS is to their unique needs. Apart of functionality, DDS intends to be about human solutions; intends to help people to achieve their goals and realize their dreams. Idea is that daylight dreamers consider the brand as appropriate and meaningful tool of their personal interest in order to facilitate their lives.

Feelings, Daylight dreamers' response to the brand is according to how the whole concept makes users feel. According to the CBBE model, the six positive brand feelings are: warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval, and social approval. DDS's desired emotional responses are warmth as a level of affection towards the brand, fun, excitement the sense of elation of being alive and energized, security and social approval but as a result of from other´s acknowledgment of the consumers using the brand. To enhance these feelings the features offered where users get to organize, share and interact with other like-minded people throughout content offers them the warmth from the need to belong and the need for self-representation. Moreover, sharing and interacting represents fun and excitement under a safe-closed environment offering the possibility to interact with whom they want and share as much content as desired.

4.2.4 Relationship

The final step of the model focuses upon the relationship users have with DDS and the extent to which they feel synchronized with it.

Having not yet achieved brand resonance, DDS following step is to engage their customer in a level of activity engendered by loyalty. For DDS to achieve brand resonance the following three categories must be taken into consideration:

1. Brand Loyalty measured in terms of use; the following recommendations for DDS to encourage behavioral loyalty are: offer premium versions of the tools with especial features that other not so active users do not have, articles and tips on productivity and motivation and a prize for sharing the brand and encouraging others to use it as seen in the file hosting service of Dropbox where users get extra storage space when they have successfully invited others to use the brand.

2. Attitudinal Attachment measures how consumers see the DDS as an especial service. The idea is that consumers go beyond simply having a positive attitude to view DDS as being something special, something that offers a broader

content. The ideal attitudinal attachment for DDS is that users love the brand for is uniqueness since, until now there are not quite the same social networks available online, social networks in which instead of sharing what you ate and what you did during the weekend, once can share its goals and the adventure of executing them while interacting with like-minded people.

3. Having a sense of community takes the brand into a broader meaning to customers. DDS is formed to be a brand community whereby customers feel a certain level of affiliation with people associated with the brand. To enhance this affiliation DDS will focus on developing features which facilitate the communication and interaction that involve fellow brand users. These features include a forum for people to discuss their goals and challenges and Facebook groups in which people are integrated by invitation only where they can get to meet more personally each of the community members.

4. Active Engagement is the strongest affirmation of brand loyalty will occur when daylight dreamers are willing to invest their time, energy and other resources into the brand. For DDS, users who are actively engaged to brand are those who are actively participating in the community; a user who follow the brand in social media, publishes content, have a sense of community interacting with other users and proposes and organizes other kind of activities to carry on among other users. These strong attitudinal attachments are the necessary for DDS to actively engage brand resonance.

4.3 Measuring consumer-brand relationship

The key to build a market segment driven by loyalty is to create a relationship between the brand and the consumer. The theory previously mentioned highlights that this relationship can only be understood by looking to the broader context of the consumer's life to be able to see what exactly drive them to this relationship.

4.3.1 DDS' Brand Dynamics Pyramid

The relationship between consumer and brand is measured by applying the brand dynamics theory. The brand dynamics pyramid presents a complete picture of the current competitive position of DDS. Moreover, offers a detailed assessment of the relationship that consumers have, until now, with the DDS brand.
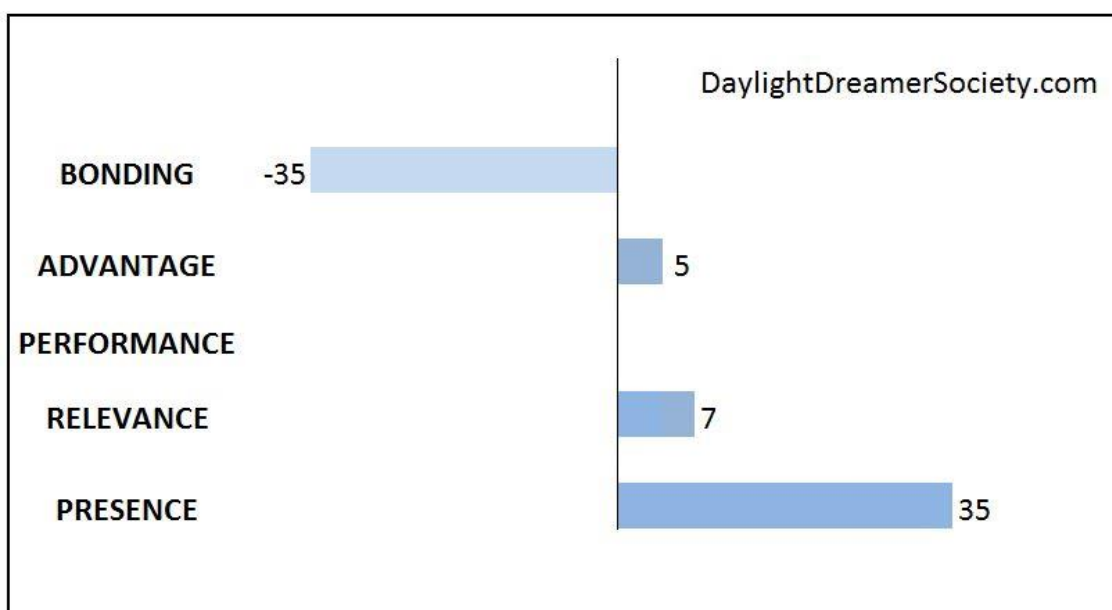
Presence measures the number of customers who are aware of the existence of DDS. These customers have a very basic knowledge and no emotional attachment to the brand. In terms of presence, DDS has, until now, two weeks after launching, scored a 35 number of users who have had a minimal contact with brand. This number, based on the number of visits on the landing page www.daylightdreamersociety.com extracted by the internal web counter that tracks the hit stats on the landing page and the number of likes on Facebook summed up.

Relevance is the stage where customers have not only had vain contact with the brand but also start to think if the brand really meets their needs. At this level, DDS customers have visited the webpage and additionally, they have subscribed themselves to get notified when the page is ready to use. According to the number of subscriptions, DDS's database shows a number of seven users.

Performance is the stage where users start to compare DDS with other similar services. In this phase, users are most likely to compare the functionality of the tool and other available features and see whether it delivers or not in its potential. Performance results have not yet been obtained. It is recommended to DDS to implement surveys in order to find out if comparisons are being made and if so, in which aspects and with whom. This could also reveal the names of potential partners and/or consumers. Moreover, in order to reach this stage, DDS should focus on showing what makes this brand different and better than other similar brands ensuring that marketing material gives users the necessary information to compare the brand with another.

At this stage, DDS users have determined there is an advantage on using the brand compared to others. Secondly, users are beginning to associate the brand with their personality and emotions. The advantage measurements are based on the results from Facebook likes. According to the counters, the numbers of user who have reached this stage are five.

The final stage of the pyramid, bonding, represents the customers who have established a bond with the brand; the advantages of using DDS are already determined at all levels. Moreover, these users have forged a strong and emotional relationship with the brand to a point where it has become an integral part of themselves as it represents who they are. Customers at the level of bonding are most likely to share the brand within their social circle. DDS' results to bonding are still clear. For DDS to reach the final stage it is recommended to communicate the perceived advantages of the brand and to enhance the emotions to which customers might feel identified with in order to reach customers in a personal level.

4.4 Using Social Networks

The interactive nature of social media allows DDS to easily approach and connect with potential users. By using Facebook as main channel to firstly find, gather, connect and finally form an interactive community that collaborates with each other based on goal achieving principles represents a valuable advantage for DDS. Reason why DDS has first started by creating a Facebook page and group where users are gather based on the basic peer-to-peer communication where consumers pass information from one person to another; also called friend recommendations. According to the theory, it is a more valuable communication technique where users receive advice from friends, family members, colleagues, etc. while ignoring the multiple forms of massive advertising.

The Facebook page, now available, is being updated daily with previously planned status updates that can result of interest to the target audience. This status updates include videos made by DDS about bucket-list and instructions of how to use DDS's niche social network, links to YouTube videos of bucket-list by famous people, links to relevant blogs, inspirational quotes and book recommendations. The status update plan has been developed to be carried out for 30 days and with the purpose of keeping the page interesting by subscribers and visitors.

A second use of Facebook includes a group where a more personalized interaction occurs by facilitating users to visualize each other's profiles, posts and already start exchanging ideas and comments.

4.5 Proposed Consumer Behavior

According to the online consumer behavior theory, there are variables that play a role when consumers go through the decision process of being part of an online community. These variables, of internal character are motivation, perception and attitudes formed by the goal-directed buyer. Potential users are encouraged to fulfill the following requirements in order to be a daylight dreamer:

A. Motivation, a daylight dreamer motivation to belong on the community, to increase his/her own personal development by achieving its life goals and boosting its productivity. A daylight dreamer should be motivated by the idea of meeting and sharing its success and new ideas with like-minded people.

B. Perception, it is never enough to tell consumers why one brand is the best; what matter is what consumers think of the brand and the way they perceive it after using it. During the further development of DDS as a brand, it is recommended to continually deliver content that supports and perpetuates the brand perception. However, DDS is currently designed to be perceived as a convenient, time saving and safe environment.

C. Attitudes, networks that target a special group are often composed by guidelines. DDS invites users to have respect, use a certain tone and language on the site and to avoid behaviors like harassment and spamming. Moreover, DDS suggests that used should be active and have a sense of belonging to the community. These guidelines have been written on the official website of DDS.

4.6 DDS as a Niche Social Network

Niche social networks, according to the theory, enables to select a segment of the general population and connect them based on interest, hobbies and personal associations. DDS saw an opportunity to then gather all those people lost in the shuffle of the so grown sharing social networks by offering an online space where they can come together around similar values and interest.

Previously, the whole business idea consisted of an online tool where people share their ideas. The business intention started to transform due to the need to connect with like-minded people for strategic networking and create a niche channel with more passionate and dedicated people to goal achievement matter. Some niche social networks that cater to groups with more focused interest were analyzed and represented a relevant example to inspire DDS to build its own niche.

In order to create a niche market, it is recommended to define the company's value, target market and partners & competitors.

4.6.1 Main Value

In order to define a brand's main value it is important to identify who you are and what you have. A clearly defined value will help users of DDS to know about the culture of the brand is and what does it represent. The defined value for DDS is then: an online community of ambitious individuals that helps them to realize their goals and dreams and to boost their productivity.

According to the theory, to define the brand's main value is necessary to recognize its strengths, weaknesses and uniqueness'.

Daylight Dreamer Society's greatest strength is the network of subscribers; that is each of the users that contribute to form a customer base and the whole niche social network principle where the running of the service is mainly carried out by the users and not by the developers allowing it to be a less of time consuming service for its developer. Other great strengths are that is new innovative service, is online therefore is easy to access and with each feature added, DDS is able to impart the highest value to its psychographic.

Currently its biggest weakness is the lack of appeal of the website in general which might not be the most attractive for users considering that then cleaner and classy it looks when possible users have a glance to it the more the chances they will want to use it. Secondly, the prevailing wisdom on the net is that is very difficult to monetize social networks especially when it comes to advertising as social networks sites in general suffer from extremely low click-through-rates on their ads (Clark W. and Loksha I., p.2)

DDS has been designed to be a user-created content network based on goals, ideas and personal development; niche social network which does not yet exist on the online market. Moreover, apart of bringing users with similar lifestyles, it offers them a number of features that make the use of the platform more useful and interactive.

4.6.2 Target Group

Daylight Dreamer Society's consumer segmentation bases are mainly psychographic; those consist of values, opinions, attitudes and lifestyle. This involves selecting a homogeneous group of consumers who share similar interest, values and needs; people under a great sense of ambition, responsibility, goal-oriented, commitment and the lifestyle of a pursuer. This user will be then called a Daylight Dreamer.

According to the theory, the more finely defined market, the greater the likelihood that DDS will be able to meet the needs of consumers. However, Daylight Dreamers will not be segmented under demographic bases. Therefore, factor such as income, sex, race and age will not be taken into account. However, there is an underlying reason that affects the age group meaning that everyone is able to join DDS even at early ages but user within 20 to 35 years old are more of an attractive market segment because they are particularly heavy users of the service and are most likely to seek the benefit that DDS is best able to deliver.

4.6.3 Partners and Competitors

According to the theory perspectives, it is necessary to identify who the main competitors for DDS are, their advantage over DDS's service and what makes consumers to prefer their service. The following names in table 4. are examples of bucket-list bloggers, development gurus and goal achievement online services that could be considered as possible partners and/or competitors.

Name	Type	Advantage
The Bucket-List Society	Goal achievement blog	Innovative goal tracking tools (charts)
My life List	Goal achievers community	Website development expertise
Julian Sherman	Motivational Speaker	Well-known blogger
Project light to life	Bucket-list blogger	Well-known blogger

Table 4. Potential Partners

DDS has been provided with a longer list with more relevant names that also include contact details of each of them in order to approach them.

While analyzing each of the above mentioned services, DDS perspective is to see them more as partners instead of competitors. Decision based on the high possibility that they could support DDS on a content base. Based on the theory, it is of high value to find someone who understands, supports and supplies with the key resources for business development. A content base support partnership will enable DDS to gain more brand awareness through advertising and to share highly relevant content for users equally shared and published on both sites.

5 CONCLUSION

Daylight Dreamer Society is currently working towards forging positive and stronger brand equity from a user perspective where understanding the needs and wants of the consumers and devising the online platform is the goal of the whole process.

DDS is still on the journey to find an insightful way to develop brand knowledge in consumer's memory and to take on special meaning based on experiences with the

service and its marketing program over the time. Once this knowledge and experiences are acquired, DDS intends to forge a relationship between the brand and the consumers seen as a type of bond where consumers offer their trust and loyalty with the implicit understanding that the brand will behave in certain ways and provide them utility through consistent product performance. In terms of how DDS uses branding to influence consumer's preference for the service, it has been set that DDS is choosing to focus on the meaning exhibiting by brand benefits, brand values and brand identity.

As a niche social network, DDS is currently building its platform in which, slowly, the specified target group increases. Reaching the targeted audience has, however, represented a challenge due the brand's weak peer-to-peer promotion activities which, according to the business model of the brand, cannot be bought but incentivized by users themselves.

The newly formed social network can already be found on the web under the name of Daylight Dreamer Society.

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