

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

ECOLE SUPERIEURE DE COMMERCE-Kolea-

**A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master's degree in
Commercial Sciences**

Specialty: MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

TOPIC:

The impact of social media on consumer's decision making

Case study:

Taiba Food Company

Submitted by :

LALALI Wail Abdarraouf

Supervised by:

DR. SELOUGHA Fayrouz

Place of training: Taiba Food Company -Rouiba-

Period of training: From 13/02/2018 to 29/08/2018.

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Dedications

On a personal level I would like to express my great gratitude to *my family*,

Particularly to My dear

Mother & Father

Who have always believed in me and in my work

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Abstract

Nowadays, consumers are often exposed to various means of communication. The evolution of technology and the appearance of the Internet have changed the world in a general way and various daily practices in a particular way. Consumer behavior has been considerably affected by these great technological changes.

Several platforms have emerged significantly: social media, social networks, search engines, etc, which have become an important part of our daily lives.

The appearance of these different means gave new opportunities to different companies in the market to reach their target and moreover the possibility of achieving several objectives such as improving visibility, awareness, strengthening links with consumers.

Our study will therefore focus on the impact of social media on consumer decision making.

Keywords

Social media – Means of communication - decision making – Ramy – consumer behavior

Résumé

De nos jours, le consommateur est souvent associé aux différents outils de communication. L'évolution de la technologie et l'apparition d'internet ont bouleversés le monde tel que nous le connaissons. Nos différentes pratiques journalières de manière globale et notre comportement personnel en particulier se sont vus considérablement affectés par ces multiples changements.

Plusieurs plateformes ont vu le jour de manière significative : médias sociaux, réseaux sociaux, moteurs de recherches, etc. Tous représentant une part importante de notre quotidien.

L'apparition de ces différents outils ont données de nouvelles opportunité aux différentes entreprises sur le marché afin de toucher leur cible et de surcroit la possibilité d'atteindre plusieurs objectifs comme l'amélioration de la visibilité, de la notoriété, le renforcement des liens avec les consommateurs, etc.

Notre étude va donc porter sur l'impact des réseaux sociaux sur le comportement des consommateurs.

Mots-clés

Médias sociaux – Outil de communication - Prise de décision – Ramy – comportement du consommateur.

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List of abbreviations

WWW	World Wide Web
SM	Social Media
CDM	Consumer Decision Making
URL	Uniform Resource Locators
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language
BBS	Bulletin Board System
BHI	Beverly Hills Internet
SEO	search engine optimization
TFC	Taiba Food Company
RFC	Ramy Food Company
RBC	Ramy Beverage Company
ZF	Zine Food Company

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General Introduction

General introduction

The internet is currently the largest network on our planet. It is no longer limited to universities, industries or governments. Today it is used by all people in society. The internet allows exchange of information. At the same time, the dynamic development of social media is becoming more popular and used. As a result, companies are introducing new means of promotion by taking advantages of new technologies and especially social media.

Social media is all about facilitating people to express and share ideas, thoughts, and opinions. It is also about enabling people to connect with others. And this has changed the way consumers think and the vision of companies on how to affect customers buying decision process.

By using social media customers will make their own research which will have an effect on their decision making. First, they have an open source to look for actual consumer trends and what friends are doing and thus indirectly and directly get influenced in their decision. Next to that and secondly, customers also have the opportunity through social media usage to examine competing products offering better offers and make more informed decision about their consumption.

1. Importance of the subject

The interest of making research on this theme: « The impact of social media on consumers' decision making» is to understand the usefulness of social media within the company Ramy.

2. Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to explore the impact of social media on consumer decision making with particular focus on Ramys' products. To achieve this aim, the study focuses on the followers of Ramy's social media.

Following the identification of the research aim, the following objectives have been formulated:

- 1- To explore social media use and its impact on consumer decision making.
- 2- To reveal the functions and importance of social media.

General introduction

3- To provide a deeper understanding of social media platform and the consumers' decision making process.

3. Problematic

Our research problematic revolves around this main question:

«**What is the impact of social media on the consumers' decision making?** ».

To answer this question we asked the following sub-questions:

Q 01: What are the consumers of Ramy looking for on the official pages of the company?

Q 02: At which stage of decision making process lies the impact of social media?

Q 03: Do opinions and comments on social media affect the purchasing decision of consumers?

To answer our sub-questions, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H 01: The majority of customers inquire about offers when consulting the company's official pages and social media ads.

H 02: The consumer depends on social media when searching for information and evaluating alternatives.

H 03: It is for sure that opinions and comments of other on social media affect the purchasing decision of consumers.

4. Research structure

To demonstrate the impact of social media on consumer decision making, our study will be structured in three chapters. The first and the second chapter will discuss our two principal variables which are: social media and consumer decision making, and the third chapter will study the impact of the first variable on the second one.

A. Chapter 1: The Internet and Social Media

We will put in place an introductory base by treating the different elements related to the understanding of social media through three sections:

- World Wide Web: in this section we will explain its definitions, emergence and importance.

General introduction

- Web 2.0: this second section consists also of definitions, history, emergence, importance and characteristics.
- Social Media: it provides definitions of social media, its development, importance and the types of social media.

B. Chapter 2: Consumer decision making

This chapter will study the decision making of consumer through three sections:

- Decision making: deals with related definitions, process and online decision making.
- Types of decisions: this section illustrates the types of consumer decision.
- Influencing factors on decision making: it explains the factors influencing the decision of consumer.

C. Chapter 3: Empirical Research

In this third and last chapter, we study the impact of the variables discussed in the first and second chapters. We will therefore affirm or refute our hypotheses. This chapter will be subdivided into three sections that will be:

- Presentation of the TFC Company: it presents its history, missions, products, organizational chart and the marketing department.
- Research methodology: it will present the methodology followed to answer our problematic.
- Data analysis: it begins by analyzing our questionnaire and then concluding the results and finding of the analysis.

5. Methodology

The methodological approach adopted was the quantitative one. We developed a questionnaire which we distributed online followed by a frequency distribution and cross tabulation.

Chapter One

The Internet and Social Media

Introduction

Social media has changed the consumer decision making process. Indeed, in the last decade a more sophisticated view of how consumers engage with brands has emerged. Today, social Media is used not only to communicate with people but with brands as well. It has become an important marketing tool for companies to satisfy their customers' needs. In a competitive environment, businesses can use Social Media as a means to attract customers and reach target groups with the lowest costs.

In this context, this chapter aims to explore the impact of Social Media on Consumer's Decision Making. Therefore, it was conceived to be important to begin by providing a thorough understanding of Social Media. Hence the chapter is divided into three sections: the first section presents the World Wide Web, its emergence and importance. The second section focuses on Web 2.0, its history and emergence as well. The third section attempts to review the subject under study "Social Media" by providing theoretic definitions of the concept, its development, importance and finally its types.

Section 1: World Wide Web

World Wide Web is one of the main contributors to the advent of information technology. It facilitates the collection and display of information through the touch of a button. This section discusses the concept of the web, its emergence as well as its importance.

1.1. Definition of World Wide Web

World Wide Web ('www' or 'the web') is a collection of web pages found on a huge network of computers all connected together. It is called "The Internet". To access the web one needs a web browser.

The World Wide Web consortium defines the web as:

"The World Wide Web is the universe of network-accessible information, an embodiment of human knowledge".¹

Hence, World Wide Web is an information space, where documents and other web resources are identified by Uniform Resource Locators (URLs), interlinked by hypertext links. It can be accessed via the internet.²

The terms "World Wide Web" and "Internet" are not the same, even though they are interchangeable.

World Wide Web runs on top of the Internet, in the same way as Skype, Minecraft or Instagram do. The Internet is an underlying network that transmits data to all different applications. Yet the WWW is the most important. It is in fact, a huge distributed application running on million of servers worldwide accessed through a special program called a Web Browser.

World Wide Web can be described as a systematic collection of interlinked hypertext documents (texts, images, videos, sounds, animations etc.) that constitute "an abstract

¹<https://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/World-Wide-Web> viewed on 20/02/2018 at 20:05

² "What is the difference between the Web and the Internet?". W3C Help and FAQ. W3C. 2009.

(imagery) space of information” that can be accessed through a variety of devices via the Internet.³ In a broader, and much later definition, Fuchs et al define the World Wide Web as:

“...(the most prominent part of the Internet) as a techno-social system, a system where humans interact based on technological networks.”⁴

To recapitulate the definitions above, we can say that World Wide Web is all the Web pages, pictures, videos and other online content that can be accessed via a Web browser. The early Web was a collection of text-based sites hosted by organizations that were technically gifted enough to set up a Web server.⁵

1.2. Emergence of World Wide Web

World Wide Web was invented by Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 1989. While working at CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research) he made a proposal aiming the funding of the development of a “universal linked information system”.⁶

The proposal was the first initiative to overcome the organization’s problems in managing the information about various research projects, and the different platforms used to store information on different computer systems.⁷

When referring to “loosing information at CERN” Berners-Lee described the organization’s working structure as a “multiply connected web, whose interconnections evolve with time” and supported that “a web of notes with links (like references) between them is far more useful than a fixed hierarchical system” for information management.⁸

In 1990, Berners-Lee created four technologies on the basis of which all computers could understand each other. It was critical for the birth of the Internet of today.⁹

³ Fuchs & al, Theoretical Foundations of the Web: Cognition, Communication, and Co-Operation. Towards an Understanding of Web 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 2010, p.51.

⁴ Ibid, p.51.

⁵ Alan W. Biermann, Dietolf Ramm, Great Ideas in Computer Science with java 1st Edition, p-1.

⁶ Gerald R. Ferrera, Margo E. K. Reder, Stephen D. Lichtenstein, Robert Bird, Jonathan J. Darrow, Cyberlaw : Text and Cases Ed.2 p-4-5.

⁷ Terry Ballard, Google this!: Putting Google and other Social Media Sites to work for your library p-4.

⁸ www.w3.org/History/1989/proposal.html. viewed on 21/02/2018 at 00:25.

⁹ Terry Ballard, op.cit, p-5.

The four technologies were:

- Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP): a language that enables computers to communicate with each other over the Internet.¹⁰
- The Universal Resource Identifier scheme of addresses (URL).¹¹
- The World Wide Web, the first web browser.¹²
- The Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) for formatting web pages.¹³

The World Wide Web (WWW) has also been defined as:

*“a global hypertext project that enables people to work together by combining their knowledge in a web of hypertext documents”.*¹⁴

The Internet is an infrastructure or more specifically a user friendly multimedia information space that revolutionized not only the way people and organizations communicate, but also how they access information and interact. With over **4.2** billion users worldwide in **2018**, representing **54.4 %** of the world’s population, we noticed a **1052%** growth of users from **2000 to 2018** (which means a tenfold increase in the number of users).¹⁵

1.3. Importance of World Wide Web

The importance of World Wide Web can be illustrated through the following factors:¹⁶

- Availability of information in a quick and easy manner, publicly accessible within easy reach.
- Universal means of communication.
- Universal means of education.
- Universal means of sharing thoughts and ideas.

¹⁰ Paul Wellens, Practical Web Development p-3.

¹¹ Ibid, p-5.

¹² Ibid, p-1.

¹³ Ibid, p-2.

¹⁴ World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) 2009.

¹⁵ <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>.

¹⁶ <https://www.livinginternet.com/w/wp.htm>

- It also plays a great role in removing geographical borders between nations, which enhanced the process of globalization.
- Additionally, it has Contributed greatly to the creation of an ever-increasing global information database and has provided a client-server environment.
- Finally, it has delivered information in a suitable format to a wide range of computing platforms.

Section 2: Web 2.0

In the early part of this millennium, the web witnessed an evolution from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 tools. Web 1.0 has been defined as a one-way communication presented on websites, and is primarily used for proprietary interests. While, Web 2.0 consists of websites or web tools that offer two-way communications between information presented on the website and the user.

In this section we start by highlighting the term “Web 2.0” which will facilitate the understanding of the term Social Media which will be presented in section (3).

2.1. Definition of Web 2.0:

Sharon T defines Web 2.0 as:

“Web 2.0 refers to a change in the way that developers and individuals use and interact with the World Wide Web, with an emphasis on sharing and collaboratively modifying or annotating content.”¹⁷

It has also been defined as:

Definition one:

“ a set of economic, social, and technology trends that collectively form the basis for the next generation of the Internet — a more mature, distinctive medium characterized by user participation, openness, and network effects.”¹⁸

Definition two:

“a collection of open source, interactive and user-controlled online applications expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes. Web 2.0 applications support the creation of informal users’ networks facilitating the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing the efficient

¹⁷ Sharon Tettegah, Emotions, Technology and Social Media, 1st Edition, p- 87.

¹⁸ Musser and O’Reilly, Insights, analysis and research about new technologies, 2006, p-4.

generation, dissemination, sharing and editing/refining of content.”¹⁹

Definition three:

“Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the Internet as a platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform.”²⁰

Definition four:

“Web 2.0 is not a technological novelty but a philosophy; an approach on a common vision of its user community; a change in the understanding of the user’s role in IT applications, of knowledge and of the status of information”.²¹

The definitions above suggest that the Web 2.0 is the second generation in the development of the World Wide Web. It is conceived as a combination of concepts, trends, and technologies that focus on user collaboration, sharing of user-generated content, and social networking.

Web 2.0 can also be described as follows:

- An experience brought from a desktop to a browser.
- Applications exposing their functionality which can provide a set of much richer applications.
- Websites interacting with the end user and making the end user an integral part of the website, through a profile, a comment on content, uploading of a new content, or the adding of a user-generated content (e.g. personal digital photos).

¹⁹Constantinides E., Fountain S., Web 2.0: Conceptual foundations and marketing issues, Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice 9, 2008, p-232.

²⁰ /www.oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html viewed on 28/02/2018 at 18:05

²¹ Tredinnick 2006; O’Reilly 2007; Constantinides 2008; Fuchs et al. 2010.

2.2. History of Web 2.0:

The term "Web 2.0" was first used in January 1999 ²²by Darcy DiNucci that was an information architecture consultant. In her article, "Fragmented Future", DiNucci writes²³:

“The Web we know now, which loads into a browser window²⁴ in essentially static screenfuls, is only an embryo of the Web to come. The first glimmerings of Web 2.0 are beginning to appear, and we are just starting to see how that embryo might develop. The Web will be understood not as screenfuls of text and graphics but as a transport mechanism, the ether through which interactivity happens. It will appear on your computer screen, on your TV set your car dashboard your cell phone hand-held game machines maybe even your microwave oven.”

In 2004, the term began its rise in popularity when O'Reilly Media and MediaLive hosted the first Web 2.0 conference. In their opening remarks, John Battelle and Tim O'Reilly outlined their definition of the "Web as Platform", where software applications are built upon the Web as opposed to upon the desktop. They argued that the activities of users generating content (in the form of ideas, text, videos, or pictures) could be "harnessed" to create value.²⁵

2.3. Emergence of Web 2.0:

In the mid-1990, the Web began (Web 1.0) as a repository of information and static content. Within a couple of years, a huge amount of content was dynamic, returning custom results to users. By the turn of the century, the Web became much more interactive, allowing users to play, stop, rewind and fast forward through audio and video content.²⁶

The perceived evolution of the web from first generation to the second generation may be broadly characterized by its greater emphasis on user generated content, the proliferation of social networking, the wide spread adoption of services such as free blogging, and a resurgence in economic activity conducted over the Internet.²⁷

²² DiNucci, Darcy, "Fragmented Future", 1999. P-53.

²³ Ibid, P-53

²⁴ a software application for accessing information on the World Wide Web.

²⁵ Knorr, Eric.. The year of Web services, 2003.

²⁶ Sharon Tettegah, Emotions, Technology and Social Media, 1st Edition, p 87-88.

²⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iStkxcK6_vY&t=13s. viewed on 29/02/2018 at 18:57.

2.4. Importance of Web 2.0:

Web 2.0 is important to both users and businesses because of the following reasons:²⁸

- Promotion of business.
- Construction of social interactivity between clients and companies.
- Contain of general trends: interactivity, simplicity, and sharing.
- Profitable online applications that can touch the entire web through economic operation of licenses.
- Collective force of sites that represent the main content of the web.
- Beneficial to businesses in increasing sales of products and services.
- Creating or editing content in multiple languages.
- Flowing of information freely.
- Acquiring information easily.
- Enhancing the quality of interaction among internet users.
- Reviving the old business strategies into newer ones.
- Collecting a huge amount of data.
- Encouraging open innovation, re-use of content and sharing.

2.5. Characteristics of Web 2.0

The characteristics of Web 2.0 are listed below:

- Contribution to the site's content by commenting on published articles or creating a user account or profile on the site.
- Encouraging the users to rely more on their browser for user interface.
- Liberating from laptops because it is no longer necessary space to use software.
- provide services, not a software package, with saving opportunities scale.

²⁸ Kris Helge, Laura McKinnon, The teaching librarian web 2.0 Tecnnologies and Legal Aspect, 1st Edition, p-3-4.

- A control over unique data sources that are difficult to recreate, and whose wealth grows as people use them.
- Considering users as co-developers.
- Taking advantage of collective intelligence.
- Reaching the market even in its periphery through the establishment of services “ready to consume”.

Section 3: Social Media

Social Media has not been just a platform for easy and simple advanced online marketing but has become a technology revolution. Nowadays, Social Media Marketing is more and more affecting consumers purchasing decisions. It may even become more important than advertising as a trusted source of information. This section highlights the concept of social media, its development and importance. It also discusses the major types of Social Media.

3.1. Definition of Social Media

There are still many ongoing debates and discussions regarding social media's universal definition. Many terms are used to describe it among them: consumer-generated media, new social media, social communication platforms, social communication services, social media, social software, social web sites, user-generated content, user-generated content websites, user-generated media, web 2.0 websites.

The Oxford dictionary defines Social Media as:

“Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.”²⁹

It is also defined as:

Definition one:

“a group of Internet based-applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content.”³⁰

Definition two:

“A variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers intent on education each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues.”³¹

²⁹ https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/social_media viewed on 01/03/2018 at 15:45.

³⁰ Kaplan and Haenlein's, social media ,2010, p-61

³¹ Blackshaw and Nazzaro, Social Media and Social Media Marketing: A Literature Review, 2004, p-2

Definition three:

“ ...activities, practices and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Conversational media are Web-based applications that make it possible to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios. ”³²

Definition four:

“ Online applications, platforms and media which aim to facilitate interaction, collaboration and the sharing of content. ”³³

Definition five:

“The set of web-based and mobile tools and applications that allow people to create (consume) content that can be consumed (created) by others and which enables and facilitates connections. ”³⁴

The definitions above suggest that Social Media is:

- A sharing means.
- A collective vision provider.
- An online technology..

Social Media website content can come in many shapes and forms:³⁵

- A text expressing opinions.
- Images and Photos displaying various issues.
- Audio for podcasts.
- Videos for memories.

³² Safko and Brake, **The Social Media Bible: Tactics, Tools, and Strategies for Business Success**, 2009, p-6.

³³ Krishna De, **Social Media Study**: Universal McCann, 2008, p-10.

³⁴ Hoffman et al, **Towards a Theory of Socially Shared Consumption**, 2013, p-29.

³⁵ <https://blog.hootsuite.com/types-of-social-media>. viewed on 03/03/2018 at 9:05.

3.2. Development of Social Media

In 1968 Licklider and Taylor said: ³⁶

“In a few years, men will be able to communicate more effectively through a machine than face to face.”³⁷

Fifty years ago, no one knew the term “Social Media” but now, everyone knows it. This media is growing bigger every day with more and more users.

Every year social media appear with more interesting applications throughout the world offered to internet users like Blogger, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and so on. Yet before dealing with them, we need to talk about the development of the concept of social media.

The development of Social Media is summarized through the following points:

- The Creation of the first Social Media was in **1978** by Ward Christensen and Randy Suess called the Bulletin Board System (BBS). Its use was represented in announcing meeting and sharing information by posting it on BBS. It was the beginning of virtual community and the first dial-up in history.³⁸
- The launching of World Wide Web (WWW) and the creation of Geocities³⁹ in **1995**. It was launched by Beverly Hills Internet (BHI). It allowed internet users to create simple websites for themselves.⁴⁰
- Early social media service appeared in **1997**. It allowed its users to create profile and a list of friends. It was used by 1 million users.⁴¹
- Blogging and Livejournal appeared in **1999**. It allowed users to write, share and communicate with friends by using their own blog or journal.⁴²
- Friendster was launched in **2002**. It included a social networking group. It let users create profile and virtual connection with people around the world. Now, Friendster has become a social media for games.⁴³

³⁶ Licklider and Taylor, The computer as a communication device 1968, p-21.

³⁷ Ibid, p-21.

³⁸ <https://spectrum.ieee.org/tech-history/cyberspace/social-medias-dialup-ancestor-the-bulletin-board-system> viewed 06/03/2018 at 20:05.

³⁹ Geocities service was web hosting.

⁴⁰ <http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/sites/geocities>. viewed on 06/03/2018 at 22:00.

⁴¹ <https://interestingengineering.com/chronological-history-of-social-media>. viewed on 06/03/2018 at 23:00.

⁴² Ibid.

- MySpace, LinkedIn and WordPress were all launched in the same year in **2003**. Most of MySpace users were musician and band. WordPress was created to be used as open-source content management system. Whereas LinkedIn was social networking for business-oriented.⁴⁴
- Facebook was introduced by Mark Zuckerberg in **2004**. It began as a social networking for college students. Then it expanded membership eligibility to employees of several companies. It was then opened to everyone aged 13 and older with a valid e-mail address. Later it allowed companies to attract potential customers.⁴⁵
- YouTube was founded in **2005** by Jawed Karim, Steve Chen and Chad Hurley. They were employees of PayPal as social sharing allowing users to freely upload and share videos.⁴⁶
- Twitter was launched in **2006**. It was known as social networking and microblogging site that allowed the sharing and exchange of 140 character messages. This short message was called Tweets.⁴⁷
- Google launched new product of social networking named Google plus (Google+) in **2011**. It allowed chatting and exchange of information.⁴⁸
- Scrapbooking was created in **2012**. It allowed users to create and share photos.⁴⁹

The development of Social Media is illustrated through the following figure:

⁴³ <https://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/> viewed 08/03/2018 at 1:00.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Facebook>. viewed 08/03/2018 at 21:56

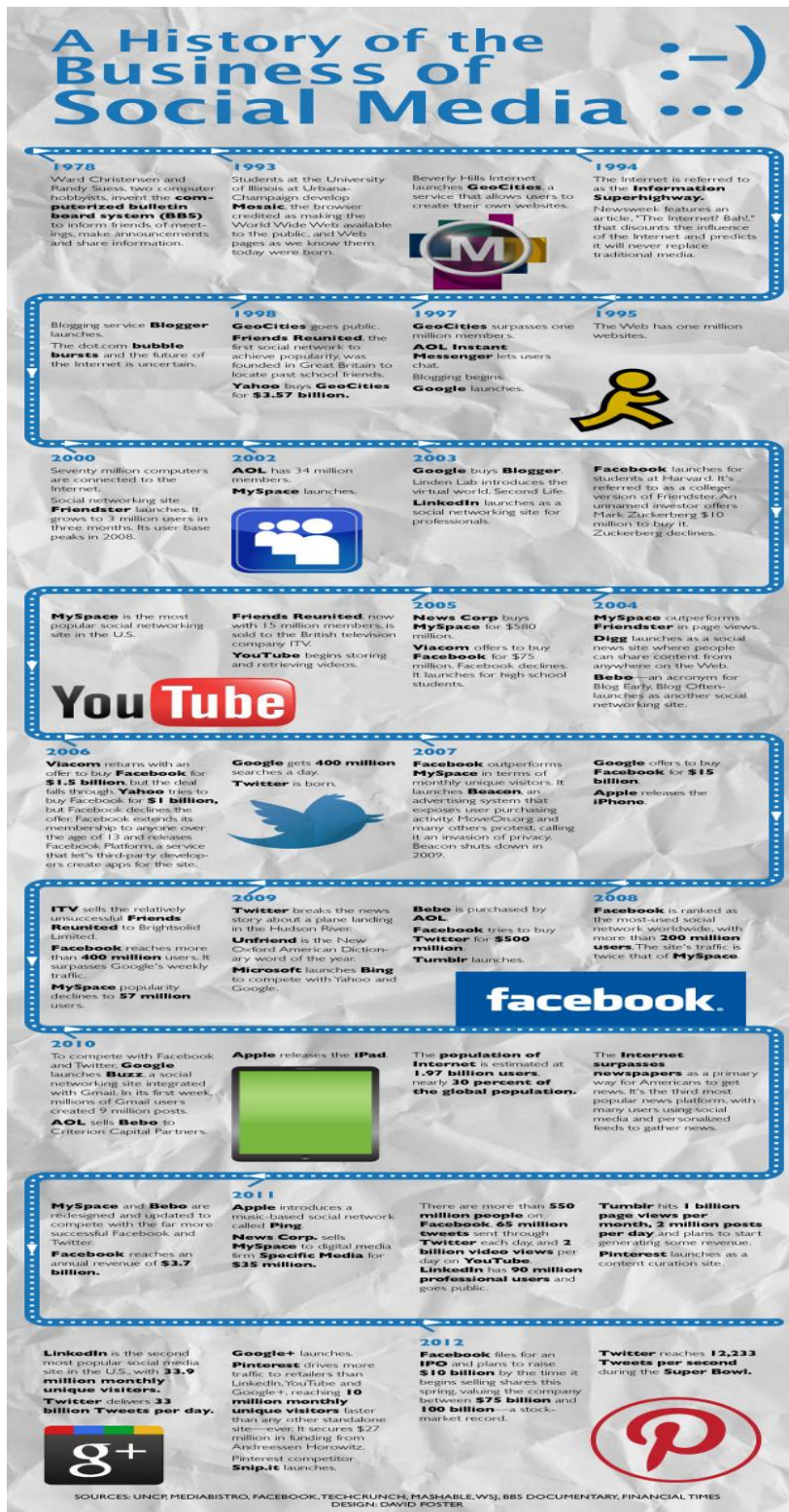
⁴⁶ <https://www.numerama.com/startup/youtube>. viewed 08/03/2018 at 6:02

⁴⁷ <https://www.lifewire.com/history-of-twitter-3288854>. viewed 08/03/2018 at 23:11

⁴⁸ <http://www.seowebmarketing.co.uk/google-plus-history>. viewed 08/03/2018 at 17:30

⁴⁹ <http://thehistoryofpinterest.blogspot.com>. viewed 08/03/2018 at 18:47

Figure 3.1: The development of Social Media



Source: <https://www.americanexpress.com/us/smallbusiness/openforum/infographics/social-media-for-business-2012-a-history-of-the-business-of-social-media/>. Viewed on 17/09/2018 at 22:00.

3.3. Importance of Social Media

With more and more people joining social media sites and using them commonly, the social media industry is bound to become bigger in the coming years. The importance of Social Media will be reflected in what will be mentioned in the following:

a. Social Advertising :

The success of digital advertising in business and its help in its prosperity made it a primary element in social advertising, because of the following reasons:

- **Lower costs:** compared to traditional advertising methods such as print media, TV and radio advertising. Social ads are not only dependable, but also cheaper. Companies are allowed to engage on various social media channels for free before engaging with paid ads.
- **High Targeted reach:** traditional advertising does not give the luxury to reach out target audience the way social media ads do.
- **Real-time performance:** knowing if an ad is working or not is integral in order to improve it .Offline advertising enable users to analyze the performance of ad campaign. Social media ads on the other hand allow keeping track on how the ad is performing and give the ability to change an ad on the fly and instantaneously see the results.

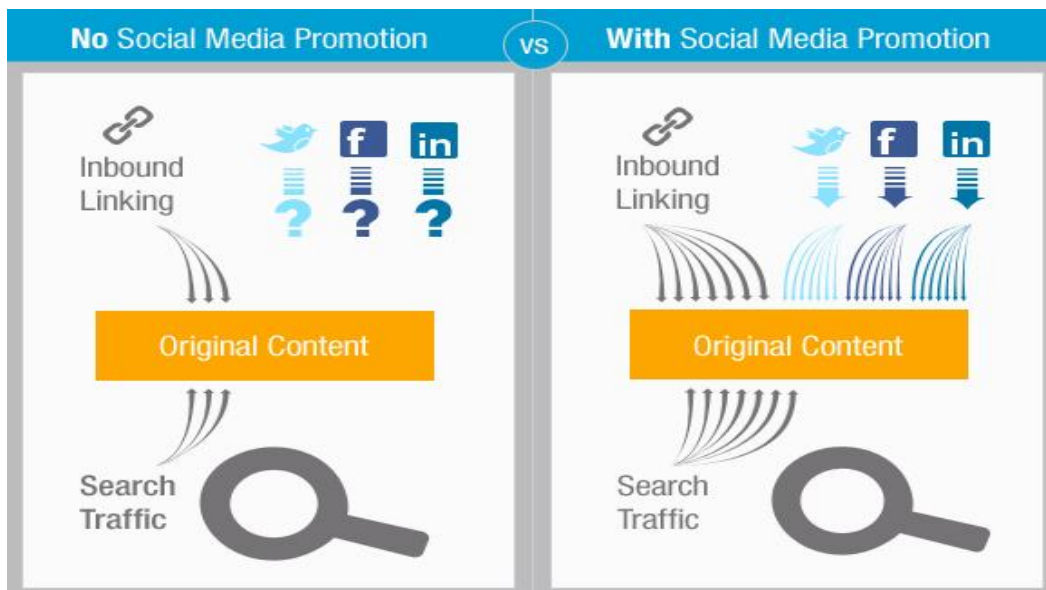
b. Brand Awareness:

Social media proves to be a powerful tool when it comes to growing brand awareness. Many reputable chief marketing (Antonio Lucio, Gary Briggs...) agree that social media has a definite impact on brand awareness, and that because it always attracts new audience by using figures and creating conversations.

c. High inbound Traffic:

The frequent and continuous use of Social Media made the interaction between users very large, which made companies put more effort in Social Media promotion.

The difference between non-social media promotion and social media promotion is illustrated through the following figure:

Figure 3.2: Difference between non-social media promotion and social media promotion

Source: [https://www.google.fr/increase inbound traffic by social media](https://www.google.fr/increase_inbound_traffic_by_social_media).

d. Search Engine Optimization:

There is a connection between social media and search engine optimization while Google does take “Social signs” into consideration when ranking a page, and that is for:

- **Increase opportunities:** taking social signals when ranking a page by SEO (search engine optimization) facilitates search results.
- **Ability to Reach More People Via Social Media Search:** People are no longer dependent on Google search when connecting. Today, search is not limited to the mighty web search engines. It has moved beyond, this why social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are the new search engines.

e. Conversion Rates:

It means converting targeted customers to potential consumers who are purchasing and raising sales. By using Social Media as:

- **Social Proof:** informational social influence. It is a psychological phenomenon, where people assume the actions of others reflecting correct behavior for a given situation.
- **User-Generated Content:** Creating quality content for social media.

f. Satisfaction of Customers:

Customer satisfaction should be the topmost priority of any company. Using social media to connect with customers is the opportunity to monitor consumers' needs and problems. Social Media functions as follows:

- Monitoring customers' conversations in order to know their brands.
- Broadcasting important messages, announcements and offers to customers via a social media platform such as Twitter.
- Offering prompt service to customers facing genuine problems or need some help with a given product or service.

g. Brand Loyalty:

Social Media boosts customer's brand's loyalty through:

- **Social Media Strategy:** formulating a social media strategy that corresponds to the company's goals in areas related to content marketing, search engine optimization, etc.
- **Sharing Value-Oriented Content:** followers of a brand are looking for value identified in company's work that provides quality content.
- **Consistency:** the content shared by the company should reflect the brand's personality.
- **Responding to Questions:** by answering questions of the brand's followers.
- **Show the Human Side through:** personal interaction with other people.

3.4. Types of Social Media:

There are six types of Social Media which will be discussed separately in the following part:

3.4.1. Social Networking Sites:

Social Networking sites are related to websites that provide a venue for people to share their activities and interest in a particular topic, with family, friends and colleagues.

Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn and Twitter are examples of the leading social sites. A group of members create an online profile with biographical data, photos and any other information, which they choose to post. They communicate with each other by making their latest thoughts public in a blog-like format or via email, instant messaging or video chat. Companies use social sites to advertise products, gain brand recognition, as well as expand traffic to their main website.

Kaplan and Haenlein define Social Networking sites as:

*“...applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other.”*⁵⁰

The major Social Networking Sites are recapitulated below:

3.4.1.1. Facebook:

Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg⁵¹, with the mission “to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected”.⁵²

On a business perspective, Facebook can be extremely useful in finding new customers, building online communities of fans, and digging into gold mines of demographic information, through the use of Facebook Pages.

⁵⁰ Kaplan and Haenlein, social media, 2010, p-63.

⁵¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Facebook> viewed on 10/03/2018 at 12:25.

⁵² Ibid.

The following figure displays the facebook home page:

Figure 3.3: Facebook home page



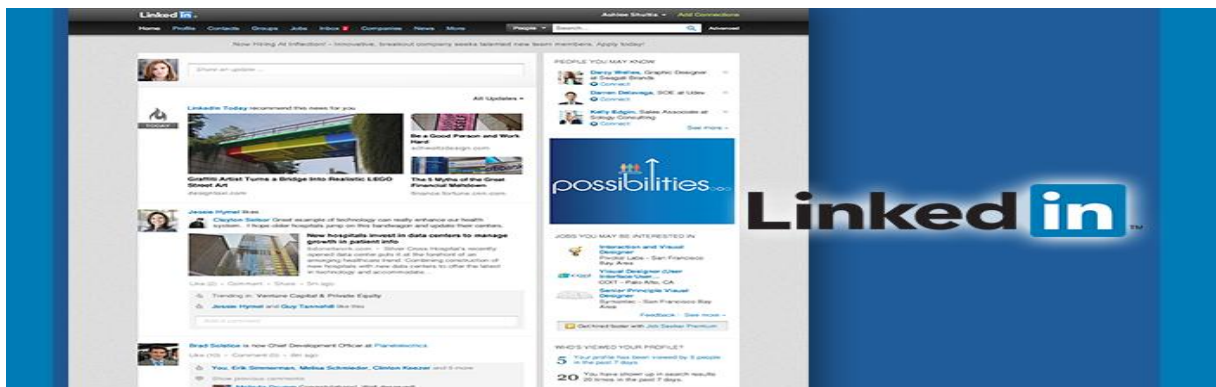
Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=facebook+page>

3.4.1.2. LinkedIn :

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site that enables users to connect with colleagues, look for a job or business relationships and get answers to industry questions. LinkedIn users invite people they know and trust to become "linked in" to them, and the business connections of invited users are in turn linked. LinkedIn was founded in 2003 by Reid Hoffman as a social networking site for professionals.⁵³

The following figure is an illustration of a LinkedIn home page:

Figure 3.4: LinkedIn home page



Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=linkedin+homepage>

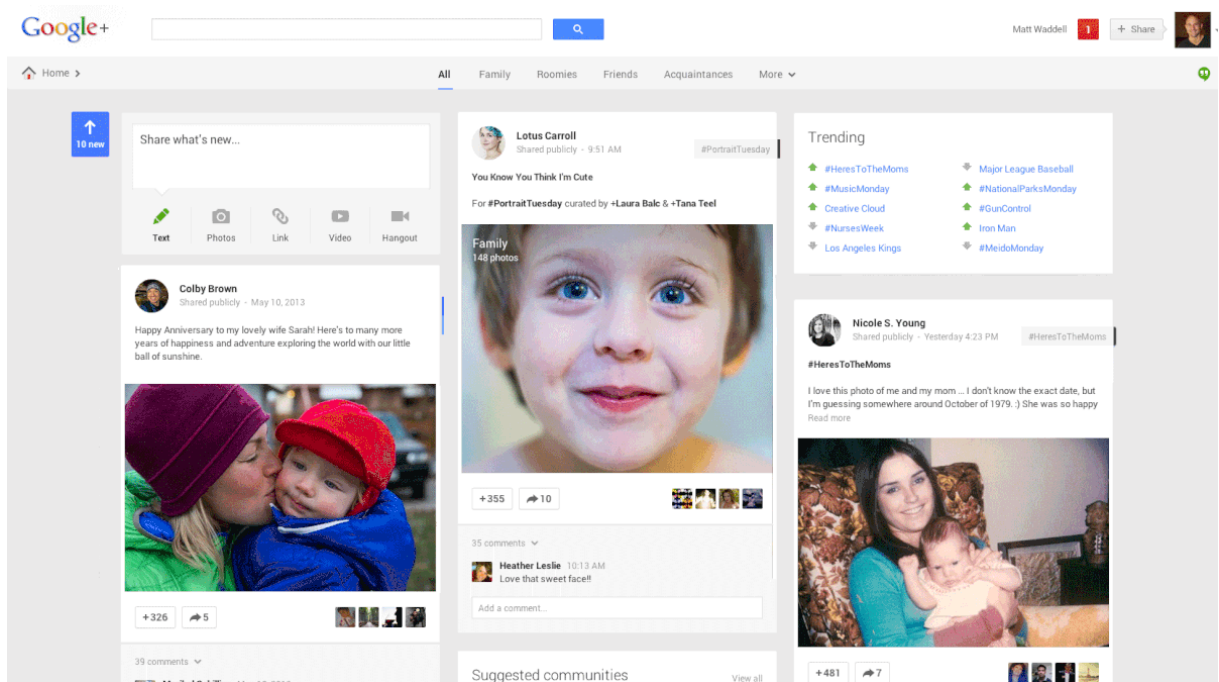
⁵³ <https://ca.linkedin.com> viewed on 11/03/2018 at 20:23.

3.4.1.3. Google + :

Google + is a Social Networking Site from Google. It connects people together in the same way that Facebook does. Google+ was created in 2011 and is therefore still difficult to evaluate.⁵⁴

The figure below is an illustration of the home page of Google plus:

Figure 3.5: Google + home page



Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=google+plus>

3.4.2. Blogging & Microblogging :

During the 20th century, news was taking quite a long time and lot of effort to reach the public and create an article. In the 21st century and with the emergence of blogging and microblogging users are able to post messages on their own personal websites.

The difference between bogging and microblogging will be explained in the following:

⁵⁴ <https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google%2B> viewed on 12/03/2015 at 23:23.

3.4.2.1. Blogging :

Blogs are journals published online consisting of entries called posts, usually displayed in reverse chronological order so that the most recent post appears first. The blogs are used for marketing, branding, promotion or public relations purposes are called external corporate blogs. The most famous blog platforms are Blogger, TypePad, Tumblr and WordPress. Blogs allow chronological organization of thoughts, status and ideas. They foster conversation, sharing and creating. They also allow bloggers to speak their mind and share their thought processes with the rest of the world. Blog readers are able to comment and share the blog posts, but this feature can be disabled by the bloggers to avoid negative comments, in case they cannot react immediately.

The importance of blogging is summarized as follows:

- Blogs are free and easy to use, which make them an asset for businesses.
- Blogs bring credibility to a company's basic website.
- Blogs allows interaction with the target audience in a more personal way.

3.4.2.2. Micro Blogging – Twitter :

Microblog is a type of blog in which users can post short messages or short digital content like pictures, video or audio on the Internet. These posts called microposts, are immediately available to a small community or public. It differs from a blog due to its smaller content.

The following figure is a picture of Twitter home page:

Figure 3.6: Twitter home page



Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=twitter+homepage>

The importance of Micro-Blogging is summarized as follows:

- Development and promotion of a brand.
- Interaction with target audience and customers.
- Tracking the company's products and services.
- Creation of a buzz around business events.
- Encouraging employees to act as a link between the company and its audience.
- Promotion of content generated by the business (webinars, blog posts, and media sharing...).
- Development of relationships with bloggers for potential public relations placement.

3.4.3. Social Media Sharing Sites:

Social Media sharing sites allow people to upload media such as photos, videos, audio or slide presentations to a website that can be accessed from anywhere in the world. Then, the content can be shared with the world. Besides, most media sharing sites offer the possibility

to post on other Social Media sites through embedding. Most Social Media Sharing sites have additional social features such as profiles, commenting and playlists.

Marketers often use Social Media Sharing sites because they bring a huge emotional or practical value to sharing the companies' message with picture or video. Creating videos is usually quicker than writing a whole text. Besides, most Social Media Sharing sites get a big amount of traffic. Therefore, getting involved and building a following is a great way to attract potential customers.

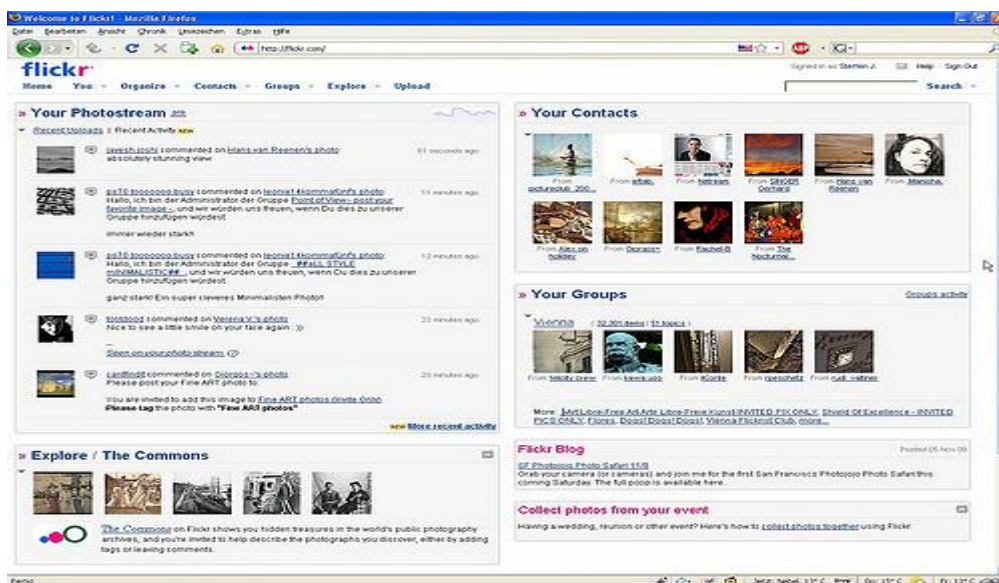
There are three types of media that needs to be taken into account:

3.4.3.1. Photo Sharing :

Photo Sharing is a website used to store and share photos. Users upload their pictures to the site, which are stored on the server and made available to friends and family via personal Web pages. Some of the most popular photo sharing sites includes: Flickr, ofoto(the oldest one) and Pinterest.

The following figure is a picture of Flickr home page:

Figure 3.7: Flickr Home Page



Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=flickr+home+page>

The importance of Photo Sharing is illustrated through the following points:

- It helps people to make photos available to their friends and relatives.
- It enables new ways of organizing photos and videos.

3.4.3.2. Video Sharing :

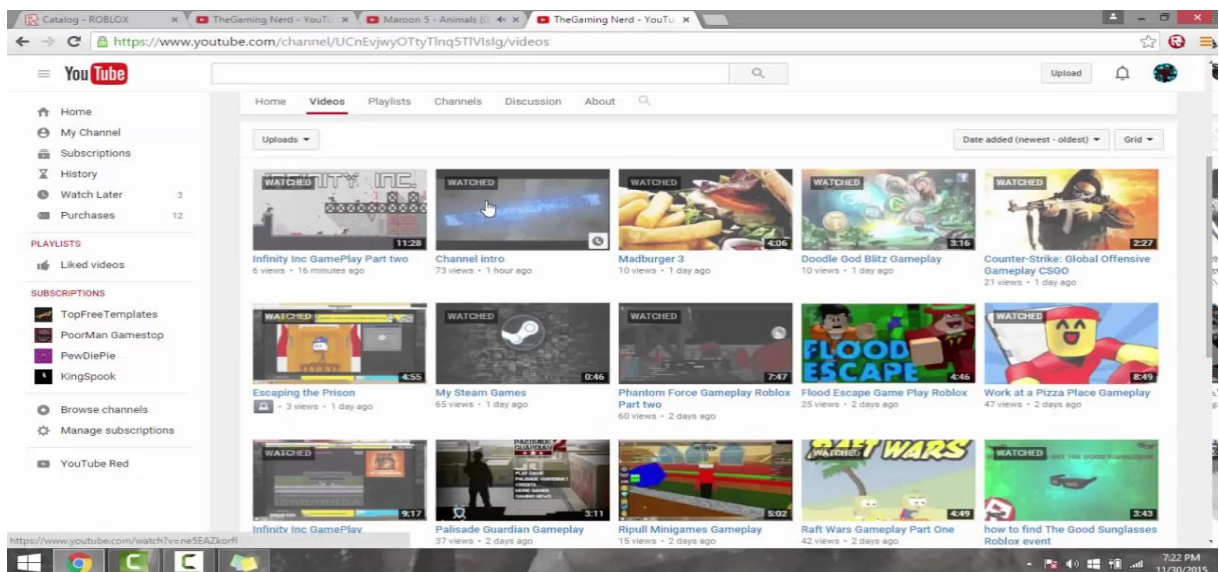
The most popular form of social media sharing sites is video sites. It is a website that allows people to upload and share their video clips with the public at large or to invited guests. YouTube is the most popular video sharing site on the Web.

The importance of Video Sharing is summarized as follows:

- An increase in companies' brand awareness through the upload of relevant videos such as presentations, products descriptions or advertisings, tutorials or even any "tips and tricks" useful videos.
- A powerful marketing tool for small businesses.
- Interaction with the audience without a huge budget to support television-oriented efforts.

An example of Youtube home page is illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 3.8: Youtube Home Page



Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=youtube+homepage&source>

3.4.3.3. Presentation Sharing :

Presentation Sharing is another type of media which can be shared online. It enables people to upload PowerPoint files to their account. Content can be uploaded under various forms: PowerPoint, OpenOffice, Keynote files, PDFs, Word and Pages documents.

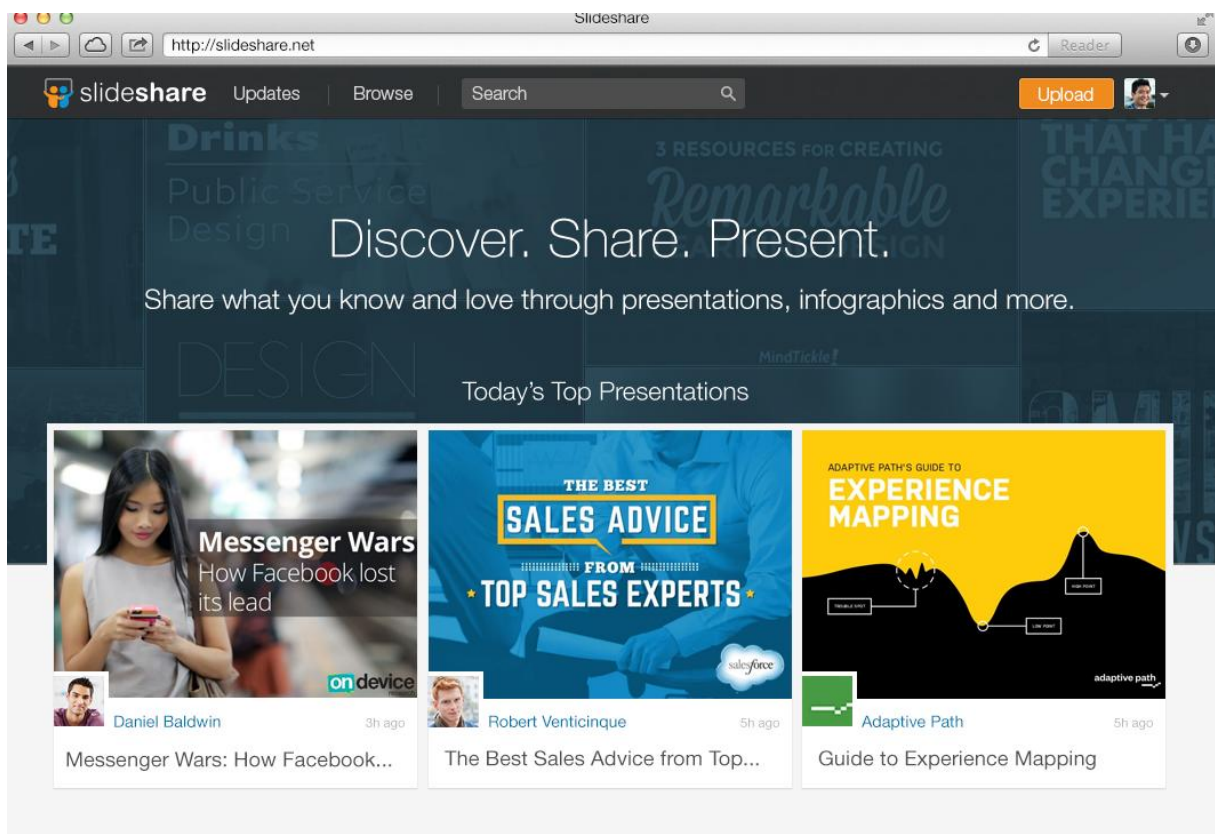
SlideShare.com is the World's largest community for sharing presentations.⁵⁵

The importance of Presentation Share is illustrated through the following points:

- Connecting with customers through the content uploaded.
- Promoting the content next to related content in order to encourage targeted views.

The following figure is the SlideShare home page:

Figure 3.9: SlideShare Home Page



Source: <https://mashable.com/2013/12/05/slideshare-redesign/#qPKfQkjdcqh>

⁵⁵ <https://mashable.com/2013/12/05/slideshare-redesign/#qPKfQkjdcqh> viewed on 20/03/2015 at 18:23.

3.4.4. Social Collaborative Sites-Wikis:

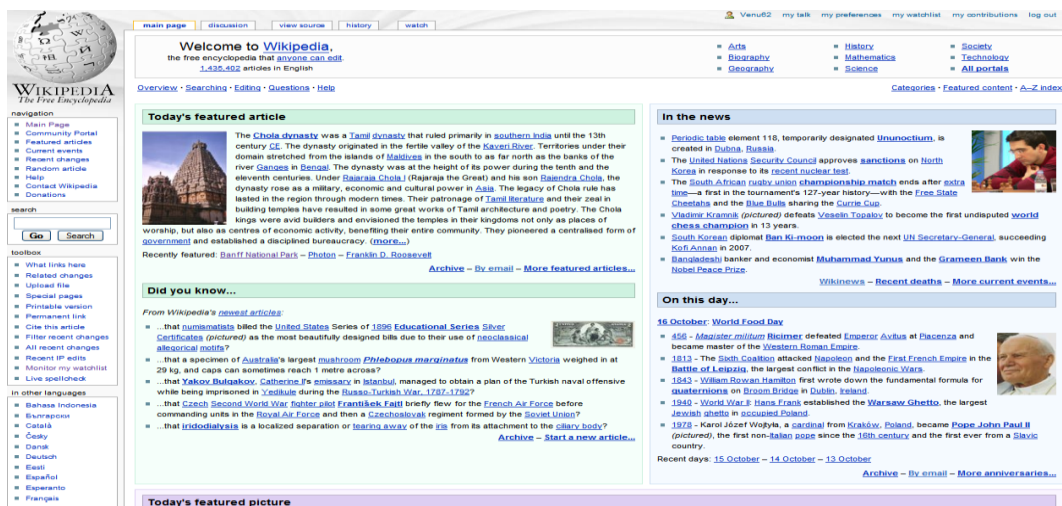
Wiki is a Hawaiian word for “fast” that have been developed a long time ago, but which has just started to used by businesses⁵⁶. Indeed, the first Wiki software was launched by Ward Cunningham in 1995.⁵⁷ Wikis represent a collaborative website that enables the creation of content by any number of interested people in an open environment, offering a well-researched, well-written and highly regarded source of information. They encourage conversing, sharing, creating. They are also a great way for people to share their knowledge and expertise on any subject, fostering a quick information exchange. Examples of Social Collaborative sites include Wikipedia, Wetpaint, company intranets, and community sites.

The importance of Wikis is illustrated through the following points:

- Collaborative participation.
- Edition of an already existing content.
- An open platform without registration.

The following figure is a picture of Wikipedia home page:

Figure 3.10: Wikipedia home page



Source: MediaWiki 1.1 Beginner's guide p 11.

⁵⁶ Mizanur Rahman, Jeffrey T. Orloff, MediaWiki 1.1 Beginner's guide p8-9.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

3.4.5. Forums:

Forums are online discussion sites, where members are holding interactive conversations by posting messages. A discussion Forum is hierarchical and can contain a number of sub-forums, each of which may have several subjects. Within a sub-forum, each new discussion started is called a thread, and can be replied to by anyone. Depending on the forum's settings, users can be anonymous or have to register within the forum in order to post messages. However, on most forums, users do not have to log in to read existing messages.⁵⁸

The importance of Forums is illustrated through the following:

- Fostering targeted traffic to specific information, products or media.
- Enhancing conversations around a brand, its products and services.

3.4.6. Social Events:

Social Events sites are a great option for companies wanting to get some word-of-mouth around a public event.⁵⁹ Sites such as Eventful, Upcoming, Meetup or even Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are the best platforms to promote events.

The importance of Social Events is summarized as follows:

- Strengthening relationships with customers.
- Building confidence and trust with consumers.

⁵⁸ David Mercer, *Drupal :creating Blogs, Forums, Portals, and community websites*, p 21-22.

⁵⁹ Evans 2008.

An Upcoming home page is presented in the following figure:

Figure 3.11: Upcoming Home Page

The screenshot shows the Upcoming.com website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the 'upcoming' logo and links for 'Home', 'Events', 'Places', 'Friends', 'Groups', and 'Popular'. A 'Sign in or join now' link and a 'Help?' link are also present. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'My Events', 'My Scrapbook', and 'My Friends' Events'. The main content area is titled 'San Francisco' and includes a search bar for 'Find events' with a 'GO' button. The page features several event listings under the heading 'Today's Top Events'. Each listing includes a 'going' count, the event name, time, location, and a brief description. A calendar for April 2007 is visible on the right side, showing the current date as the 19th. Below the calendar, there is a section for 'Recent Photos from Flickr' with a photo of a group of people and a caption 'Bring Your Own Big Wheel'. The page also has sections for 'Tomorrow' and 'Later this week' with event listings for those periods.

Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?biw=1366&bih=613&tbm=isch&sa=1>

Conclusion

As we have seen, social media have influenced our society on all fronts. They have changed our society, including changing the behavior and habits of individuals. Moreover, they have also influenced the field of recruitment and employment. Thus, social media has had both cultural and social impact.

Finally, social media have emerged as a modern and effective advertising tool. Indeed, advertising via social media is a great way to attract a maximum of customers and thus increase its turnover. As a result, we can say that social media influence business strategies as well as the decision making of consumers.

We can therefore conclude that social media have become an indispensable component of our daily lives and of the world in which we live. That is why we will study their impact on consumer behavior. The second chapter will study the decision making of consumers and after that an analyze of the impact of social media on consumer's decision making in the third chapter.

Chapter Two

Consumer Decision Making

Introduction

In front of the events and the upheavals engendered by the evolution of the market, the comprehension of the consumer and the way he makes a decision become essential for the company to develop its products, the distribution methods and the marketing strategies. The customer is important for the company, hence the need to know him and understand his needs are the key to win his trust. Indeed customers do not just buy the products of a brand but they buy a relationship with the company they trust to represent them if a problem arises.

This chapter focuses on the study of consumer decision-making and the factors that influence that decision. At first this chapter aims to present concepts and definitions on traditional and online decision making. Therefore, it explains the types of decisions and finally the factors that influence the consumer's purchasing decision.

Section 1: Decision Making

A consumer moves through a decision making process in order to purchase a product or a service. This process is done in the mind of the consumer.

This section focuses on the concept of Consumer Decision making. It starts with a definition of decision making, its process as well as the act of the Online Decision Making.

1.1. Definition of Consumer Decision Making

Consumers constantly face choices: how much to spend? what product to acquire? and where to purchase it?. So the consumer decision making is a complex process, which involves various stages, from problem recognition to post purchase activities. Consumers have different needs which make them make different decisions. These last can be complex depending on the consumer's opinion about a particular product also its position among other types of products.

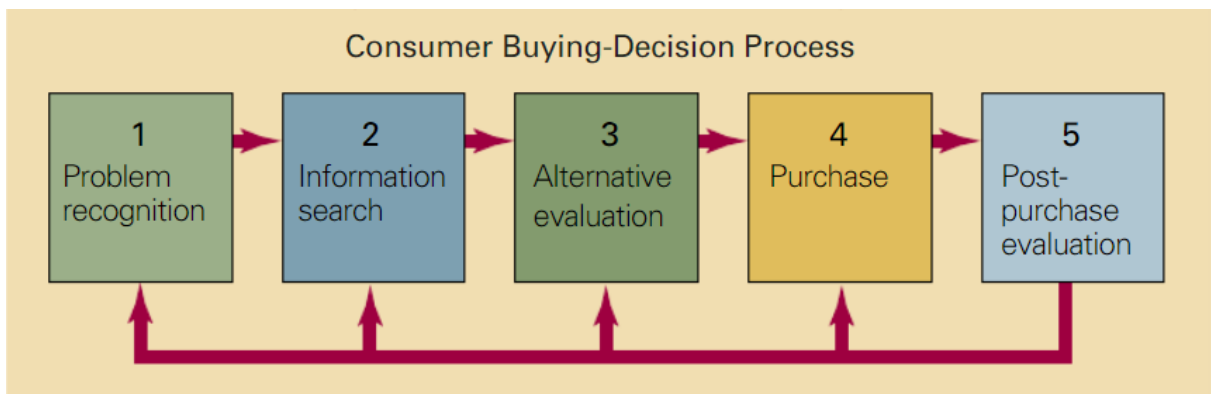
1.2. Decision Making Process

The Consumer's decision making process is the major method used by marketers to identify and track the process of the customer followed in the act of buying.

This process depends on five (5) stages:

- 1- Problem recognition
- 2- Information search
- 3- Alternative evaluation
- 4- Purchase
- 5- Post-purchase evaluation

These stages are illustrated in the following Figure:

Figure 1.1: Consumer Decision Making Process

Source: Marketing Principles and Best Practices Ed.3 p-177.

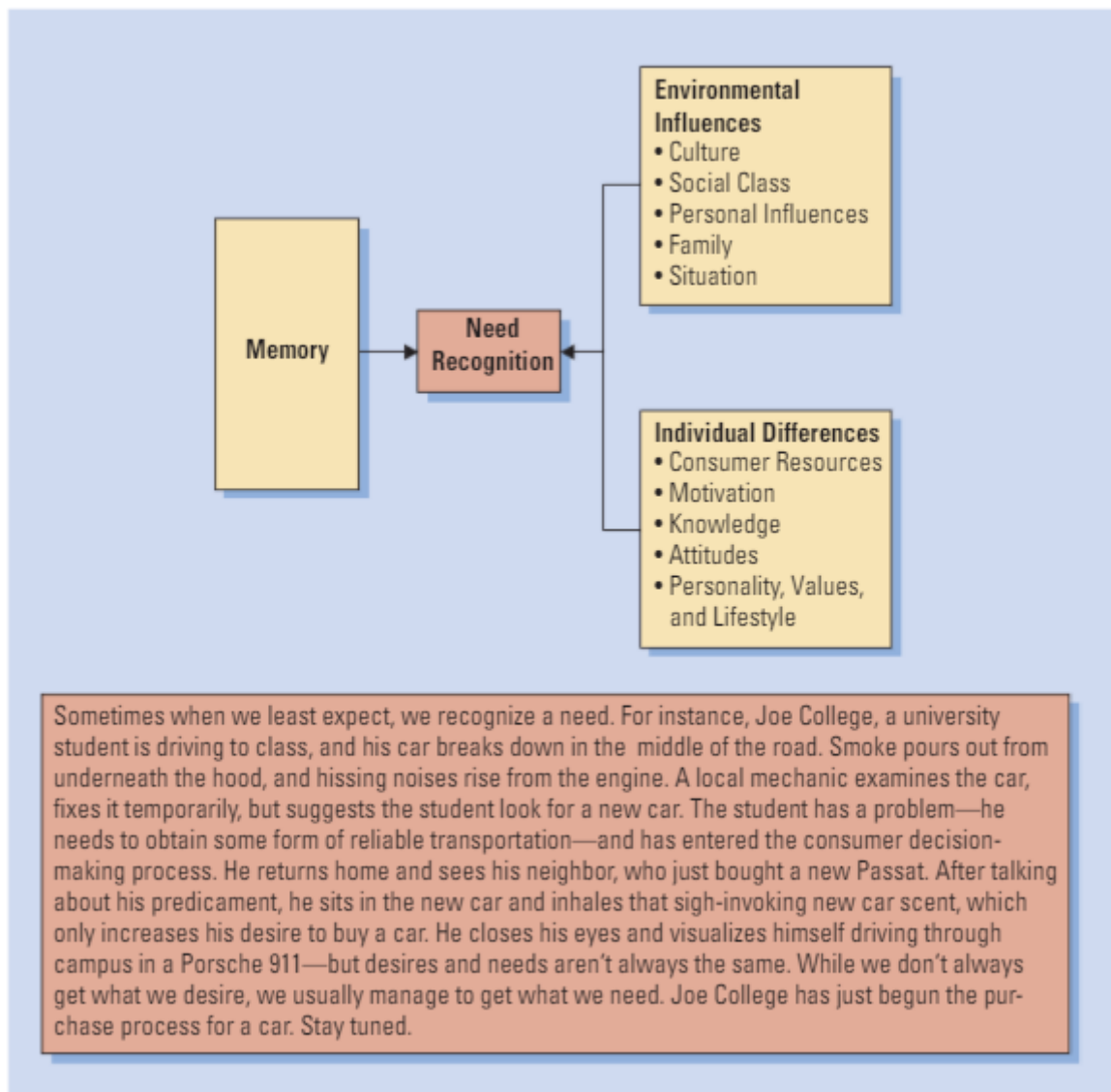
The steps followed by consumers in the process of buying a particular product are:

- Step 1: The problem recognition stage

The first stage of the process occurs when the consumer knows what he needs. This is referred to as “need recognition”. It appears when “*an individual senses a difference between what he or she perceives to be the ideal versus the actual state of affairs*”¹. The customer feels like something is missing him and needs to have it in order to be satisfied. If the company succeeds to determine the needs of customers, it would be an ideal time to advertise their products.

Figure 2.2 determines the factors that affect the customer in his decision. The figure is supported by an illustration:

¹ Breda McCarthy, Consumer Behavior Edition 9, p-72.

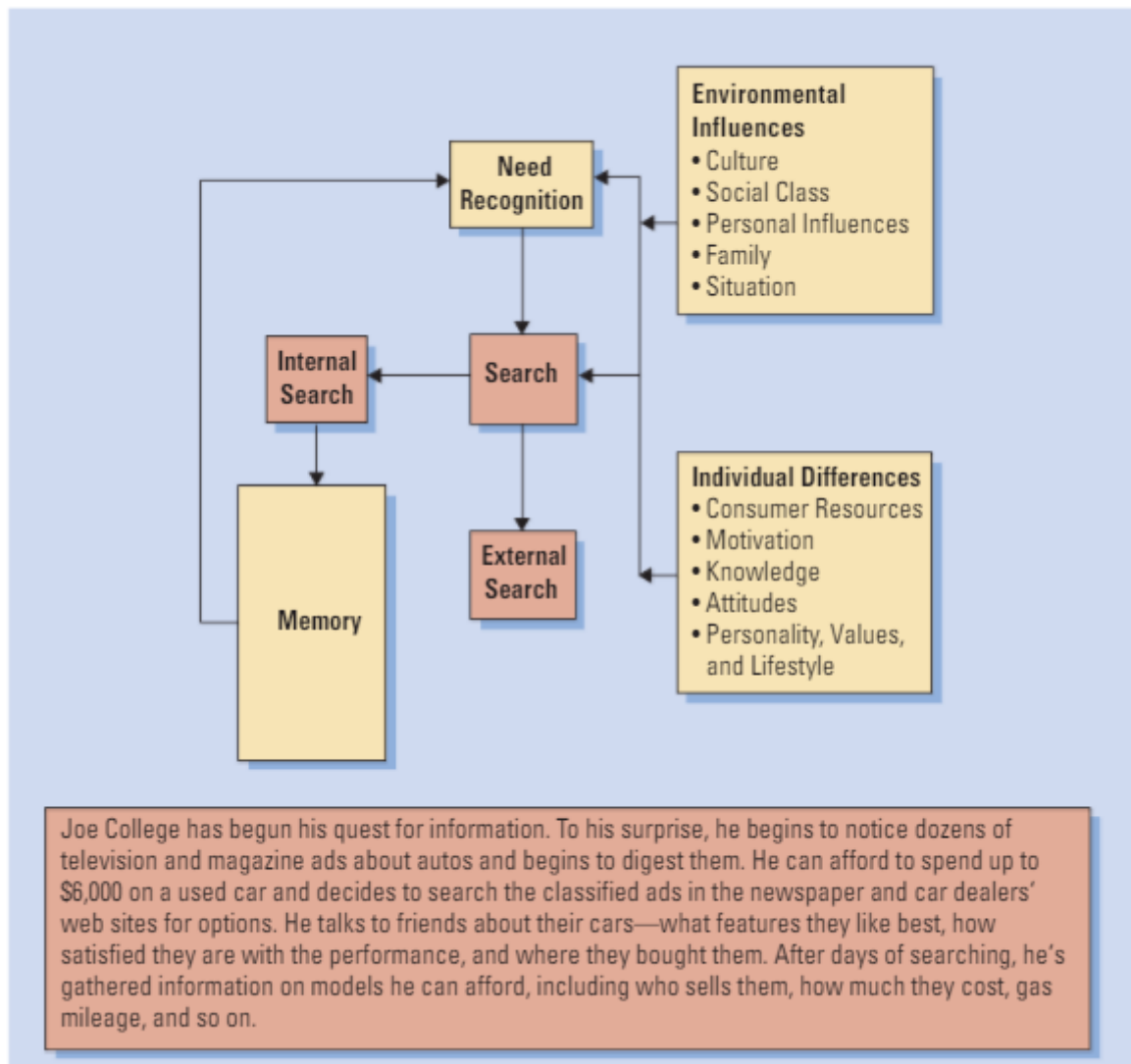
Figure 1.2: Need recognition

Source: Consumer Behavior Ed.9 p-72

- Step 2: The information search stage

This is the search stage of the process, which is continually changing from old fashioned shopping methods such as retail stores to new digital means such as Google and other search engines (Bing, Yahoo, Ask.com...) which are available today. Information is obtained from users, who provide reviewers of their previous experiences with given products.

The search for information is illustrated through the following figure supported with an illustration:

Figure 1.3: Search for information

Source: Consumer Behavior Ed.9 p-74

- Step 3: The alternative evaluation stage

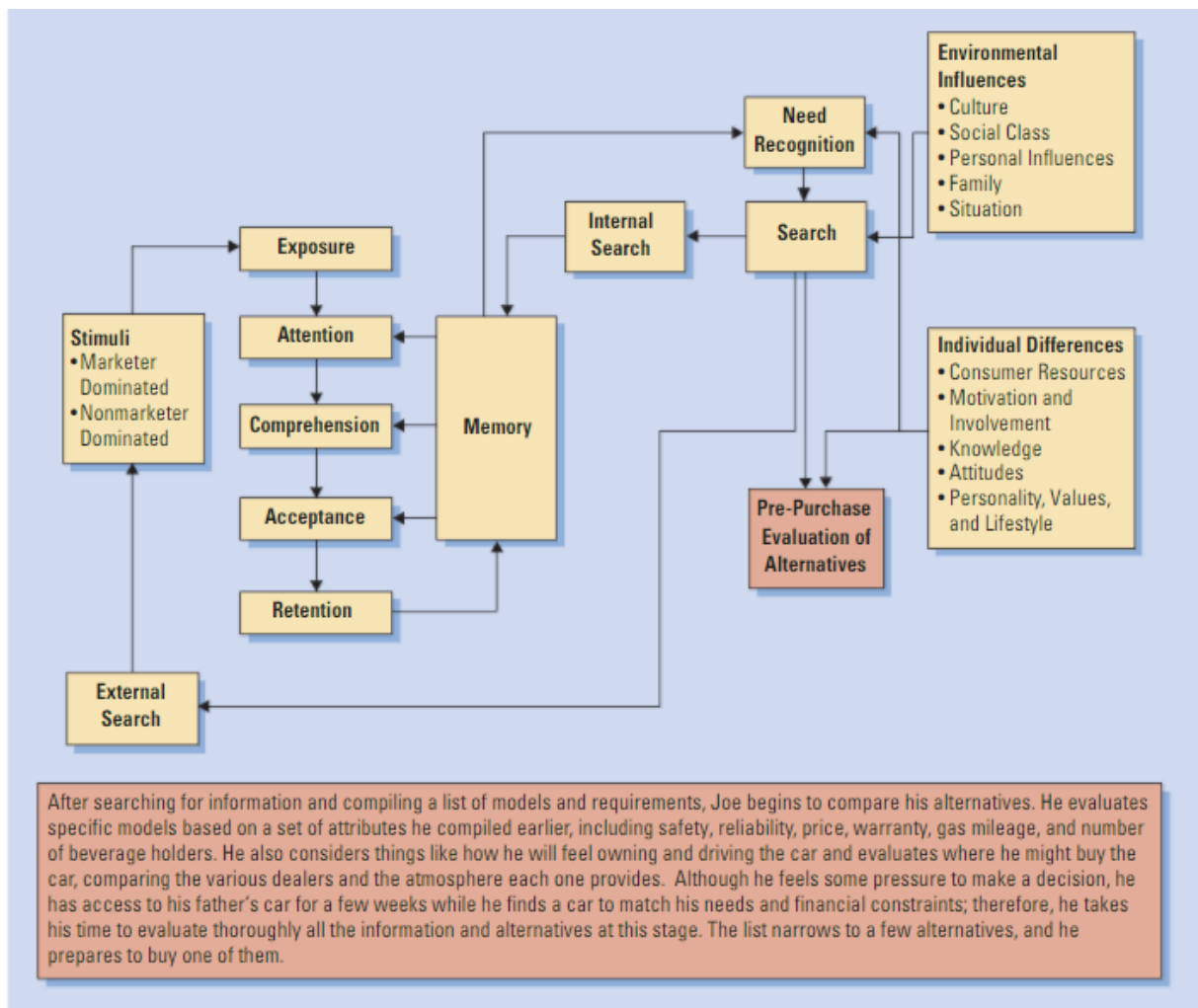
This stage is characterized by customers starting to ask questions such as: is that product appropriate for me? Does the product correspond to my needs or do I need a different product? If the answers are “No it’s not right” or “yes I need a different product” then the second stage restarts. The third stage transition to stage two occurs several times before the fourth stage is reached.

Once the customer determines what satisfies really his wants or needs he will begin to seek out the best deal based on price, quality, or other important factors such as life style, brand

name, product fitting...etc. The customer reads many reviews and compares prices, until he succeeds to choose the one that satisfies most of his parameters.

The following figure is customer's evaluation of the available alternatives accompanied by an explanation:

Figure 1.4: Evaluation of alternatives



Source: Consumer Behavior Ed.9 p-77.

● Step 4: The purchase stage

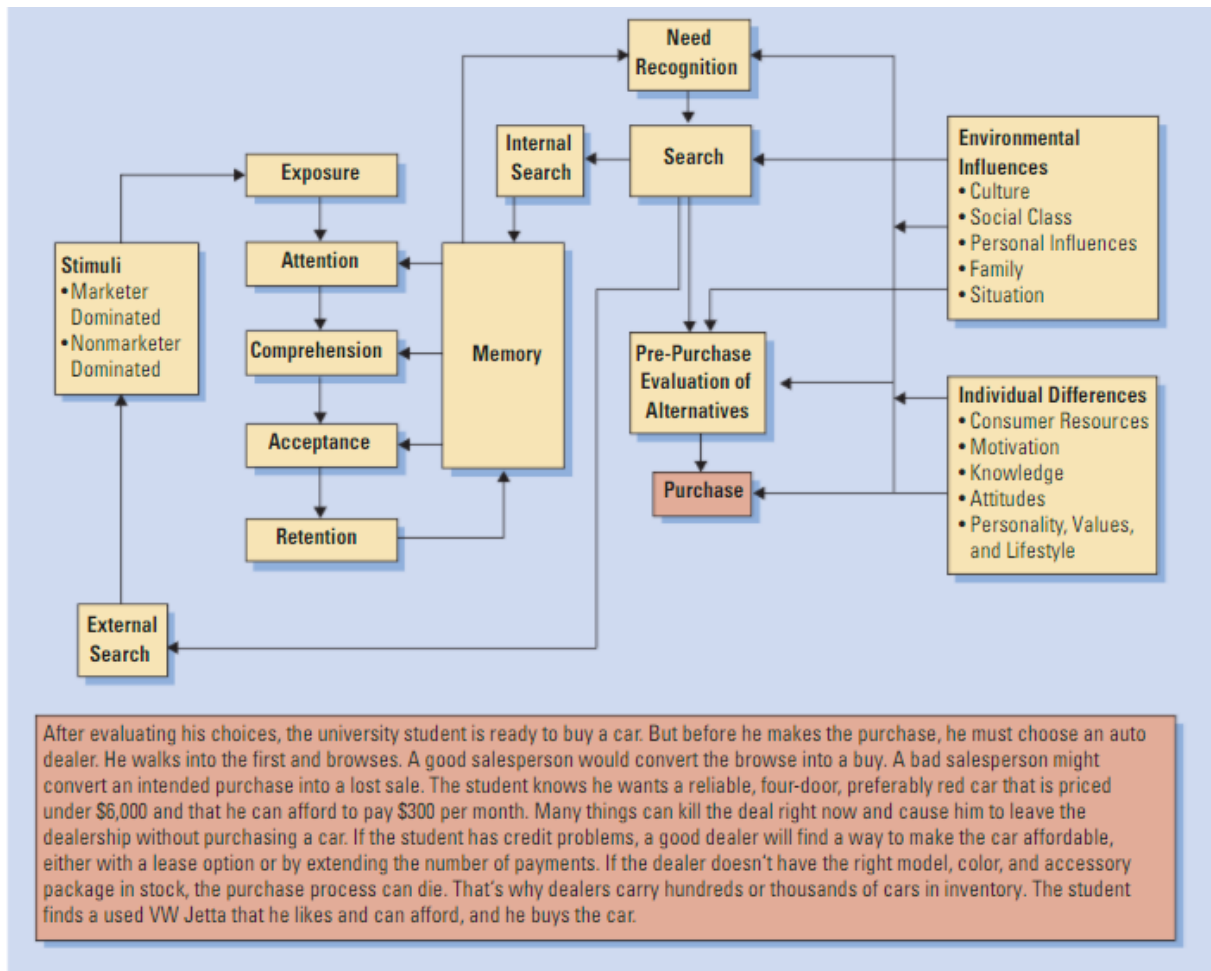
In this stage, the customer has reached a decision based on the knowledge gathered from the previous stages.

At this stage a customer has also assessed all the facts, and come to a logical conclusion, made a decision based on emotional connections, experiences and succumbed to advertising

and marketing campaigns.

The following figure illustrates the components of the purchase stage:

Figure1.5: Purchase



Source: Consumer Behavior Ed.9 p-79.

- Step 5: The post-purchase evaluation stage

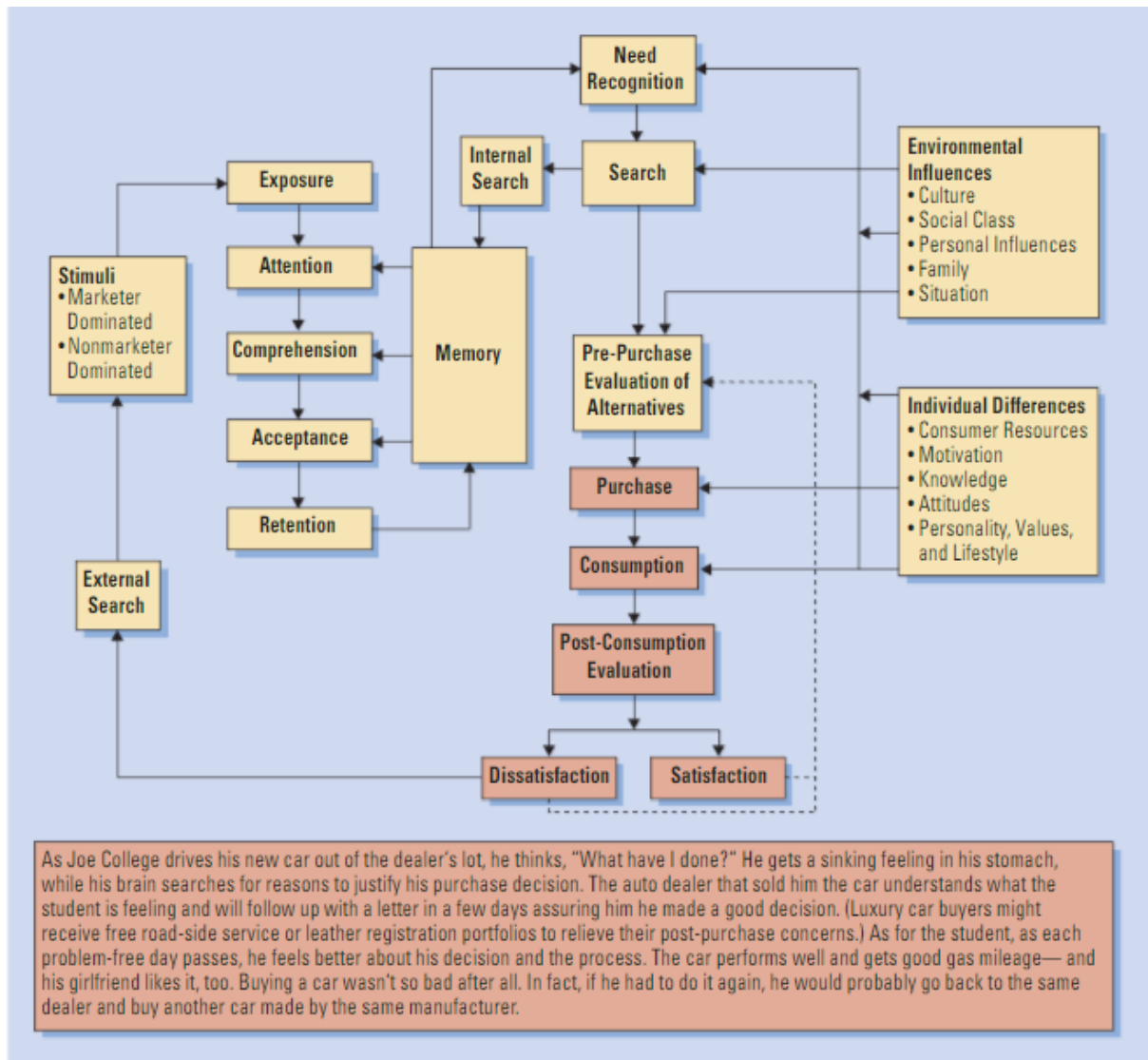
The post-purchase evaluation stage is a key element for the company and for the customer likewise. It is based on the following inquiries: was the product delivered according to the strategies of the marketing and advertising campaigns? Did the product match or exceed the customer's expectations?

If the customer finds that the product has matched or exceeded the promises made by the company as well as his own expectations he will potentially become a brand ambassador to

the company, influencing other potential customers to consume the company’s products and hence, boosting the chances of the product to be purchased again. The same can be said for negative feedback which can halt a potential customer to go towards the company’s product.

The post-purchase evaluation stage is illustrated through the following figure supported by an illustration:

Figure1.6: Post-purchase evaluation



Source: Consumer Behavior Ed.9 p-81.

1.3. Online Decision Making

The majorities of people all over the world are using online purchase and keep buying goods in high frequency, the new purchasing trend has gradually appeared and the world is making the purchase process through it. The use of Internet in commerce has created an effective and efficient way in shopping environment. It enables consumers to make decisions or transitions anytime and anywhere.¹

1.3.1. Definition of Online Decision Making

Online decision making is a concept that describes the cognitive process that goes in the mind of customers before making a decision on the web. In other words, it is the choice to buy online.

1.3.2. Online decision making process

Decision-making process is unique in online purchase, that when referring to brand choice and price sensitivity. Several motivation factors, such as situational factors, characteristics of products as well as the experience of previous e-shopping can influence consumers' attitudes to shop online.²

Online decision making process is no different from traditional decision making process and goes through five stages:

- 1- Problem recognition
- 2- Information search
- 3- Alternative evaluation
- 4- Purchase
- 5- Post-purchase evaluation

¹ Yoon & Occeña, Impacts of Customers' Perceptions on Internet , 2015.

² International Journal of Marketing Studies; Vol. 8, No. 3; 2016.

- Step 1: The problem recognition stage

Problem or need recognition is the most important step in the buying decision. The need can be triggered by internal stimuli (e.g. hunger, thirst) or external stimuli (e.g. advertising).¹ Maslow held that needs are arranged in a hierarchy. According to Maslow's hierarchy,² only when a person has fulfilled a need at a certain stage, then he can move to the next stage.

- Step 2: The information search stage

The information search stage is the next step that the customers may take after the recognition of the problem in order to find out what they need. At this stage, consumers search for information via the Internet: brands' web sites, social media...etc. The internet has enabled easier and faster information discovery.³

- Step 3: The alternative evaluation stage

At this stage, consumers evaluate different products and brands online on the basis of varying product attributes, and whether these can deliver the benefits that the customers are seeking.⁴

- Step 4: The purchase stage

This is the fourth stage, where the purchase takes place. In this stage the consumer can buy online or in the traditional way (shops and retailers...etc). The difference lies in the delivery time.

- Step 5: The post-purchase evaluation stage

In this stage customers compare products with their expectations and are either satisfied or dissatisfied. This can affect the decision process for a similar purchase from the same company in the future mainly at the information search stage and evaluation of alternatives stage.

On the basis of either being satisfied or dissatisfied, a customer will spread either positive or

¹ Kotler, P., Keller, K.L., Koshy, A. and Jha, M, Marketing Management, 2009.

² Ibid.

³ Michele D.Bunn, "Taxonomy of Buying Decision Approaches". *Journal of Marketing*. American Marketing Association.

⁴ Kotler, Keller, K.L., Koshy,.and Jha, op.cit, 2009.

negative feedback about the product. At this stage, companies should carefully create positive post-purchase communication to engage the customers.¹

1.3.3. The Differences between Online and Traditional Shopping

Determining the differences between online and traditional shopping is by reference to the advantages and disadvantages of each one.

The table below shows the difference between the two terms:

Table 1.1: Advantages and disadvantages of Online and Traditional Shopping

	Online shopping	Traditional shopping
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main driving force that affect the sales volume of retailers. - Easy access and search about information. - More conservative.² - More money saving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic location to purchase. - Delivery time is too short. - Ability to see and feel the product. - Price transparency.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More perceived risks in an e-commerce than use the traditional method. -Delivery time is too long(in Algeria - Sensitivity with prices. - Inability of seeing, touching or examining goods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of information. - Bad location to purchase.

Source: made by the student

1.3.4. Impact of the Internet on the purchase decision-making process

The nature of online purchase activities makes the online purchase process different from the traditional one. The Internet affects all stages of the purchase decision making process

¹ Foxall, G. Understanding Consumer Choice USA, 2005.

² More conservative: Well-known brand with detailed description and lower price will attract more consumers online, and e-consumers turn out to be more conservative and sensitive with products.

followed by consumers¹. For instance, searching for alternatives, gathering required information, simultaneous evaluation of different retailers, providing personal information and the payment process are all different in the online environment. In other words, the Internet has changed consumer behavior by offering consumers diverse types of convenience to search for information, evaluate different options, and make a purchase.

The Internet also allows for cross-channel purchases. This means that different stages of the purchase process might take place via the Internet channel or physical shops.²

One of the main underlying issues of online purchase decisions is information overload. The amount and type of information available online is different. It has been verified that a limited number of alternatives and attributes can be processed by individuals before being affected by information overload. Information overload is a “multiplicative function of the amount of product attributes and alternative information available for a single product”.³ It leads to simplification of choice processes which in return reduces the quality of the decision. It also increases confusion and lowers the decision satisfaction.⁴ As there is a huge amount of information available on the Internet, consumers are unable to evaluate all the alternatives in depth prior to make a choice.

¹ McGaughey and Mason, The Internet as a Marketing Tool, The Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice 1998.

² Choudhury and Karahanna, The Relative Advantage of Electronic Channels: A Multidimensional View, 2008.

³ Mick, Broniarczyk and Haidt, Do consumer choices augment narcissism? The role of self-referent processing 2004.

⁴ Ibid.

Section 2: Types of decisions

Wants are unlimited and the resources to satisfy these wants are limited. So the consumers think rationally before buying any product. The decision made by the consumer is about the quality and price of the product. The more expensive the good the more information is required by the consumer. This section highlights the types of consumers' decisions.

2.1. Programmed and non-programmed decision making

Decisions can be classified according to their repetitiveness and complexity. They are classified into two (2) types:¹

- Programmed decisions

Programmed decisions are routine decisions, which are properly structured. Consumers (decision makers) develop particular procedures to tackle the problem. They have a clear starting point and goal as well as a well-defined procedure to reach the goal.²

- Non-programmed decisions

Non-programmed decisions are unique, unstructured and there is no known or pre-specified procedure to make the decision. This type of decision making occurs when the consumer is dealing with a new or not recent product or service, when the decision situation is very complex, important or requires an innovative procedure.³

2.2. Adaptive decision making

Decisions can have various degrees of repetitiveness and complexity. If there is a unique, non complex problem, the consumer might use adaptive decision making and adapt a known procedure to a new context rather than creating a unique one.

2.3. Complex decision making

In complex decisions making, a consumer shows high level of involvement while purchasing and observing considerable differences among brands. Complex decisions are noticeable

¹ <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/difference-between-programmed-unprogrammed-decisions-business-perspective-25876.html> viewedd on 29/03/2018 at 23:57.

² <http://www.businessmanagementideas.com/decision-making/types-of-decisions-programmed-and-non-programmed/4831>. viewed on 26/03/2018 at 6:00.

³ Ibid.

when the product price is high, risky, low quality after sale service and so on, example: buying a mobile or laptop. Both products are expensive and characterized with a variety of brands. Hence consumers feel uncomfortable to decide for a specific brand.

2.4. Nominal decision making

Nominal decisions are made about low-cost products. They include frequent purchases, purchases from a familiar brand or product. It is a buying that requires low involvement, or little search efforts.¹

If the consumer has been using the same laundry detergent for twelve years, he is unlikely to spend much time researching different brands unless he notices a problem with his existing purchase. In other words, the consumer keeps picking up the same bottle without thinking about it.

Nominal decision-making doesn't always start off as nominal. It becomes nominal over time because of the loyalty to a brand after searching and getting information about it.

When purchasing a product is a nominal decision, marketers simply need to perform brand maintenance:

- Making sure that the product is available where customers are shopping
- Maintaining the right pricing structure
- Creating advertisements that ensure memorability of the brand.

2.5. Limited decision making

Limited decision-making is a less involved than nominal decision-making, but it's still not a process that requires in-depth research. Limited decisions are made about mid-cost products, semi-frequent purchases, or purchases from a somewhat familiar brand. They require a little involvement, and some searching.²

When customers make limited decisions, they take a small amount of time to ponder over their purchase, but they might not go online to look for testimonials and reviews. Instead, they could consider their memory of their product, and make decisions based on logical inferences.

¹ <http://www.managementnote.com/types-consumer-buying-decision-buyer-behaviour-principles-marketing/> viewed on 01/04/2018 at 9:23.

² Ibid.

For instance, a consumer might go to a store with every intention to pick up a particular brand of juice, but when he arrives he notices that another juice is on offer. His memory tells him that he enjoyed that juice before, but found it too expensive for his regular shopping habits, so he decides to make a change for a limited time, and purchase the alternative juice instead. While the argument could be made that limited decisions come from a lack of brand loyalty, the truth is that they can be attributed to anything from the novelty of a new product, to a feeling of boredom with an existing shopping habit.

When it comes to addressing limited decision-making, it's important for marketers and brands to examine their customer data, and understand the factors that influenced decision-making, such as:¹

- Product quality
- Product availability
- Price
- Packaging style

2.6. Extended Decision-Making

Extended decisions are made about higher-cost products, and infrequent purchases. They require a lot of involvement. Often center around unfamiliar brands or products, and need extended thought and search efforts to ensure buyer confidence. Major purchases come with more risk for the customer, and that means that there's more cause to consider things from a deeper perspective.²

For example, consumers don't buy a huge flat-screen television every day, so when the time comes to make this kind of investment, consumers want to know for sure that they are making the right choice in everything from brand to picture quality.

When it comes to influencing extended decision-making, brands need to work on building their positive online presence.³

¹ <https://www.marketing91.com/types-of-decision-process/> viewed on 03/04/2018 at 5:56.

² <http://www.managementnote.com/types-consumer-buying-decision-buyer-behaviour-principles-marketing/> viewed on 03/04/2018 at 22:03.

³ <https://www.marketing91.com, op.cit.>

- Making sure that the brand has a social presence where consumers can share their opinions and thoughts about their products, and ensure that replying and responding to negative comments positively is crucial.
- Giving consumers plenty of spaces to review the brand products and post testimonials so that customers can find opinions online in a hurry.
- Providing extensive product details on listing pages, and make sure that the staff members are well-equipped to answer any questions customers might have.
- Offering interactive guides and other tools that will help them through the decision-making process.

2.7. Decision making under risks

Risk is an important factor that affects the buying behavior of consumers,¹ because consumers are at risk when they are forced to make purchasing actions. Consumer decision making involves risks in that sense that any action of a consumer will produce consequences which he cannot anticipate with anything approximating certainty, and some of which are likely to be unpleasant.²

2.8. Impulsive decision making

Impulsive behavior is a tendency to act without thinking about the consequences of actions and these actions usually occur in reaction to some event that has caused the person to have an emotional response.

In other words, impulsive decision making is an unplanned decision to buy a product or service, made just before a purchase.³ Research findings suggest that emotions and feelings play a decisive role in purchasing.

The following are common types of impulse purchase:⁴

¹ Park & Jun, The Role of Risk in Consumer Behavior, Journal of marketing, 2003, p. 545

² Christer Ekelund, Annika Fjelkner, Lisa Kalstrom, The perceived Risk and the consumer decision-making process p-23.

³ "What is impulse buying?". Businessdictionary.com. Retrieved 22-12-2011.

⁴ <https://simplicable.com/new/impulse-buying>. viewed on 05/04/2018 at 00:02.

- Reminded

Customers are reminded of something they need while shopping. For example, a customer who buys lamps because he sees them and remembers that he has some lights which are burnt.¹

- Suggested

Customers are persuaded by a marketing message or pitch they encounter while shopping. For example, a salesperson pitches a perfume to a customer who buys shoes.²

- Motivational

Customers see something they are a strongly motivated to buy. For example, a customer who loves smoking decides to buy cigarettes on lunch break while waiting in line to buy a salad.³

- Savings

Many customers are in the habit of stocking up on things that are on sale as a means of saving money. For example, a customer who goes to a mall to buy shoes may end up buying 2 T-shirts because they are on sale.⁴

- Complementary

A customer buys several things that are complementary to a purchase.⁵

- Fear of Missing Out

Purchasing something that is of limited supply or that is on sale out of a fear of missing out.⁶

- Shopping Enthusiasts

Customers who find joy in shopping may make sudden purchases driven by desire. For example, some shoppers will buy things beyond their budget due to uncontrolled emotional desires.⁷

¹ <https://simplicable.com/new/impulse-buying>. viewed on 08/04/2018 at 18:55.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <https://simplicable.com/new/impulse-buying>. Viewed on 09/04/2018 at 23:23.

- Decision Fatigue

Making a decision to purchase a product is not always easy, when consumers are tired from shopping they will make a fatigue decision to escape it. For example, a customer who is looking for a product may consider functions and features for hours. Then in a state of decision fatigue they may suddenly buy an expensive model without much thought at all.¹

2.9. Heuristic decision making

Heuristics are efficient rules which consumers often use to form judgments and make decisions. They are mental shortcuts that usually involve focusing on one aspect of a complex problem and ignoring others.² These rules work well under most circumstances, but they can lead to systematic deviations from logic, probability or rational choice theory.³ These have been shown to affect consumer's choices in situations like valuing a house, deciding the outcome of a legal case, or making an investment decision. Heuristics usually govern automatic, intuitive decisions but can also be used as deliberate mental strategies when working from limited information.

The use of heuristics in making decisions can be:⁴

- Alone or in combination with other heuristics.
- Constructed on the spot or can be planned a priori

Heuristics differ in both how much effort they require to use and how accurate they are likely to be. For example, a heuristic that only considered information on one attribute might require less effort and be less accurate for some types of decisions than a heuristic which examined a larger proportion of the available information.⁵

¹ Ibid.

² Alan Lewis, *The Cambridge Handbook of Psychology and Economic Behaviour*, 2008, p. 43.

³ John Wiley & Sons. *Judgement and decision making*, 2013, p. 65.

⁴ Eric J. Johnson, John W. Payne, R. Bettman, James, *Consumer decision making*, 1993, p-58.

⁵ Ibid, p-58.

Section 3: Influencing Factors on Decision Making

There are many factors that affect the purchasing decisions of consumers. Consumers are conditioned when choosing from millions of alternative products and make alternate purchasing decisions. The factors that influence buying decisions help the consumers in recognizing needs, and finding ways to satisfy these needs.

In this section the factors influencing decision making are identified.

3.1. Cultural Factors

Consumer decision making is deeply influenced by cultural factors¹, such as buyer's culture, subculture and social class. As explained in the following:

- Culture

Culture is one of the key factors that influence the consumer buying decisions. These factors refer to the set of values, preferences, perceptions, and ideologies of a particular community.² Culture is a very complex belief of human behavior, it includes the human society, the roles that the society plays, the behavior of the society, its values customs and traditions.³

- Sub-Culture

Each culture has different subcultures, such as religions, nationalities, geographical regions, racial, etc. marketing groups may use these groups, segmenting the market in several small portions. For example, marketers can design products according to the needs of a specific geographical group.⁴

- Social Class

Social class is a group of people within a society who possess the same socioeconomic status. Every society has some kind of social class which is important for marketing because the buying behavior of people in a particular social class is similar. Thus marketing activities

¹ <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/marketing/factors-that-influence-the-consumer-decision-process-marketing-essay.php>. viewed on 12/04/2018 at 3:05.

² <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/cultural-factors-affecting-consumer-behaviour.htm>. viewed on 13/04/2018 at 18:05.

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://marketingwit.com/factors-that-influence-buying-decisions-of-consumers>. viewed on 13/04/2018 at 23:56.

could be adapted to different social classes. Here we should note that social class is not only determined by income, but also by several other factors such as wealth, education, occupation etc.¹

3.2. Social Factors

Social factors also influence the purchasing behavior of consumers. They are also subdivided into three (3) factors:²

- Reference groups

Under social factors reference groups have a great potential of influencing consumer buying or making decision. Also its impact varies across products and brands. For example, if the product is visible as clothing, shoes, car etc., the influence of reference groups will be high. Reference groups also include opinion leader (a person who influences others by his special skill, knowledge or other characteristics).

- Family

The behavior of a consumer to make a decision is not only influenced by his motivation and personality but also by his family and family members who can influence the decision despite the fact that the consumer did not accept it. If the decision to purchase a particular product is influenced by the wife then sellers will try to target women in their ad.

- Role and status

Consumers who belong to different organizations, groups or club members, families play roles and have a status to maintain. These roles and status influence their daily decisions in various fields especially when making a purchase. For example, a woman working in an organization, so she is playing two roles in the same time, one as an employee and the other as a mother. Therefore, purchasing decisions will be influenced by their role and status.

3.3. Personal Factors

Personal factors may also affect consumer behavior. Some of the important factors that influence personal buying behavior are: lifestyle, economic status, occupation, age, personality and self esteem. The sub factors under personal factor are listed below:

¹ <https://marketingwit.com/factors-that-influence-buying-decisions-of-consumers>. viewed on 15/04/2018 at 10:05.

² <https://www.educba.com/4-factors-influencing-consumer-behaviour/> viewed on 16/04/2018 at 23:02.

- Age and life cycle

Age and life cycle have a potential impact on the purchasing behavior of consumers. It is obvious that consumers change the purchase of goods and services over time. Family life cycle consists of different stages as young singles, married couples, unmarried couples etc that help marketers to develop suitable products for each stage.¹

- Occupation

The occupation of a person has a significant impact on his buying behavior. For example, a marketing manager of an organization is trying to buy business suits, while a low level worker in the same organization buy-resistant clothing work.²

- Financial or Economic situations

Economic situation of the consumer has a great influence on his buying behavior. If income and savings a customer is high, then going to buy more expensive products. Moreover, a person with low income and savings buy cheap products.³

- Life style

Life style is another factor affecting import purchasing behavior of consumers. Lifestyle refers to the way a person lives in a society and express things in their environment. It is determined by the client's interests, opinions, etc and activities shape their whole pattern of acting and interacting in the world.⁴

- Self concept and personality

Personality changes from person to person, time to time and place to place. Therefore, it can greatly influence the buying behavior of customers. In fact, personality is not what one has, but is the totality of the conduct of a man in different circumstances.⁵

3.4. Psychological Factors

There are four (4) psychological factors that affect consumer decision making which are:

¹ <https://www.educba.com/4-factors-influencing-consumer-behaviour/>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

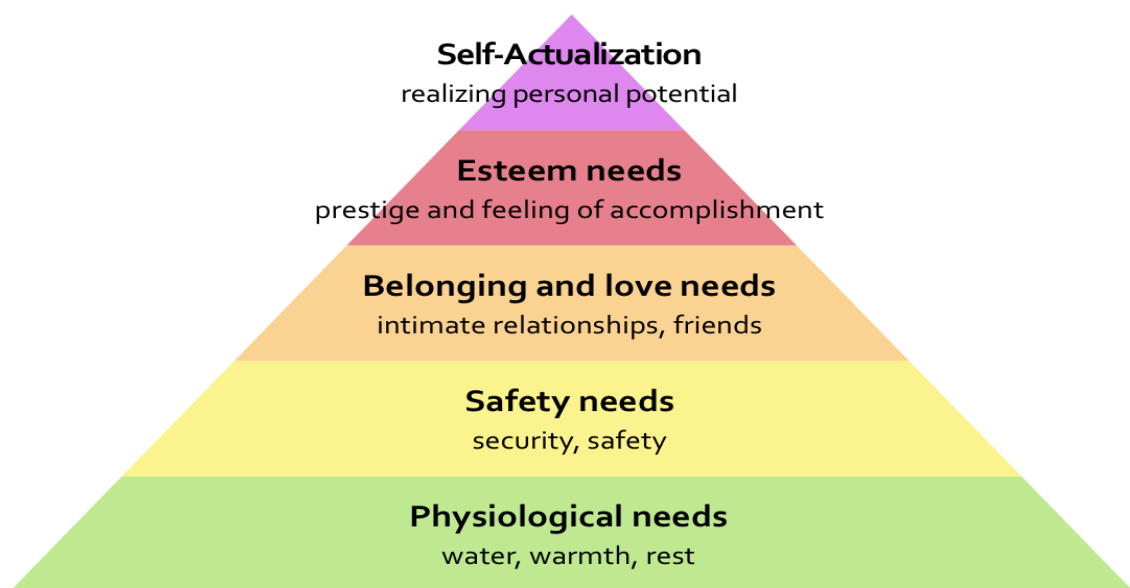
⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

- Motivation

Motivation is activating the internal needs and requirements of the consumer. The level of motivation also affects the purchasing behavior of customers. Each person has different needs, such as physiological needs, biological needs, social needs, etc. The nature of the requirements is that some are more urgent, while others are less pressing. Therefore, a need becomes a motive when it is most urgent to lead the individual to seek satisfaction.¹ As shown in Maslow's hierarchy in the figure below:

Figure 3.1: Maslow hierarchy



Source: <https://www.google.fr/search?q=maslow+pyramid&source=lnms&tbm>

- Perception

Selecting, organizing and interpreting of information in a way that produces a meaningful experience of the world is called perception. There are three different perceptual processes which are selective attention, selective distortion and selective retention.² In the case of selective attention, sellers try to attract the attention of the customer. Whereas in case of selective distortion, customers try to interpret the information in a way that supports what

¹ <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/marketing/factors-that-influence-the-consumer-decision-process-marketing-essay.php>. viewed on 25/04/2018 at 6:00.

² Ibid.

customers already believe. Similarly, in the case of selective retention, marketers try to retain information that supports their beliefs. Perception is sensing the world and the situations around consumers' environment and then taking a decision accordingly. Every individual looks at the world and the situations differently. The judging ability and capacity of every individual is different and hence they look at the world differently. This is what separates the decision taking abilities.¹

- Learning and experience

Learning is the search of products and services before the consumer takes the decision of buying a product. Learning and self-educating these days is done online and also in groups. Experience is taking a lesson from the past experiences of a product and service. Both learning and experience play an important role in influencing the consumer's behavior as it influences their purchase decision.²

- Attitude and beliefs

Attitude is a consumer's favorable and unfavorable emotional condition or emotional feeling, also its tendency of reaction to certain actions and behaviors. Consumers have specific beliefs and attitudes towards different products. Because such beliefs and attitudes shape the brand image and affect consumer buying behavior, so traders are interested in them. Attitude and beliefs are also important and need to be taken into consideration while studying the decision making.³

After the clarification of the factors affecting decision making, also the thesis should be addressed to talk about the factors of the problem.

¹ <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/marketing/factors-that-influence-the-consumer-decision-process-marketing-essay.php>. viewed on 29/04/2018 at 19:23.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

3.5. Problem Factors

In the first step of the decision-making process, "the need to recognize" which is the consumer's knowledge of the problem, there is a problem to solve and control factors affecting that problem.

Those factors are as follows:

- Problem size

Increasing the number of alternatives makes the problem size larger and causes consumers to use strategies that lead to early elimination of a number of alternatives to reduce it. The larger the problem, the harder it is for the consumer to make a decision.

- Time pressure

Consumers accelerate their processing, become more selective, and change strategies when time pressure becomes severe.¹ Even heuristic decision making tended to be more robust under severe time pressure. Wright and Weitz argued that decision makers simplify the decision by placing greater weight on negative information about the alternatives.²

¹ Payne, Bettman and Johnson, James R. Bettman, Eric J. Johnson, John W. Payne, Consumer decision making, 1988, p-66.

² James R. Bettman, Eric J. Johnson, John W. Payne, Consumer decision making p-67.

Conclusion

In the light of the information presented in this chapter, understanding the behavior of a consumer implies a broad knowledge of all the factors that can influence it. With the advent of social media, a decisive step in the buying process has changed “the search for information” stage. Sources are multiplying and consumers are becoming more informed.

The digital age has made an impact between the brand and the consumer relationship. And this will be discussed in the last chapter.

Chapter Three

Empirical Research

Introduction

In the previous chapters, we dealt with both social media and consumer decision making on a theoretical basis. Thus, the theoretical study is the framework of this chapter where we took the example of beverages to show the impact of Ramy's social media on consumer decision making and also to provide concrete findings concerning the problematic of the dissertation.

Therefore, we adopted the method of questionnaire which was submitted to employees and consumers of Ramy juice and has been distributed on social media.

On this basis we divided the chapter into three sections:

The first section presents missions and objectives of “TFC”, its organizational chart and marketing department, and also TFC’s social media.

The second one explains the methodology and approaches of the research.

The last section includes the analysis of the questionnaire which is the source of data submitted for analysis. The results of the analysis enabled us to determine the impact of social media on consumer behavior and especially on his decision to purchase.

Section 1: Presentation of the Company

1.1. History of TAIBA FOOD COMPANY: TFC (internal documents of the company)

TAIBA FOOD COMPANY is a private company created in 2007 under the statute of a limited liability company “LLC” with a registered capital of 101 500 000.00DA. It is located at the level of the industrial zone of Rouïba in Algiers which is a strategic zone for the supply of raw material to be distributed in the national territory.

TAIBA FOOD COMPANY is a commercial and industrial type of business with a well defined structure and a commercial oriented activity. It is specialized in the manufacture and distribution of non-alcoholic beverages and fruit juices. It has a total workforce of 669 agents distributed among executives, technicians and performers including 558 men and 111 women. “RAMY” is the trademark by which TFC is known by the general public.

The company’s sectors include:

- SARL Ramy Food Company (RFC) created on 14-10-2009 (Rouiba). It is specialized in the production and distribution of fruity drinks packaged in cardboard boxes, all brands and large format.
- SARL D & M (Djouider and Maouchi) created on 07-02-2012 (Rouiba). It is specialized in the production and distribution of fruity drinks packaged in cardboard boxes of all "small capacity" brands.
- SARL Ramy Beverage Company (RBC) created on 27-02-2012 (Rouiba). It is specialized in the production of fruity drinks, carbonated and energizing packaged in cans, all brands and all capacities (24cl, 33cl).
- SARL Zine Food Company (ZF) created on 04-11-2012 (Rouiba). It is specialized in the production and distribution of fruit drinks packaged in plastic bottles (PET), all brands and capacities.
- SARL Ramy Milk: (El Harrach) created in 2015. It is specialized in the production and distribution of milk drinks packaged in cardboard boxes, 1L and 180ML.

RAMY is part of the SAFA group specialized in the production and marketing of hygiene products. This group was created in 2000.

Today this group contains four(4) sectors:

- SARL "GSIPH" is a company producing and distributing cleaning and detergent products that started in 2002.
- SARL "HYGENYX" is a company producing and distributing personal hygiene products (nappies baby, sanitary napkin) having started in 2002.
- SARL "DELICE FOOD COMPANY" is a bottled juice company created in 2005.
- SARL "TAIBA FOOD COMPANY" which is described above is the company that ensures the production of fruity juice. TFC is an investment of DFC (TFC and DFC work closely).

In 2005, it was recorded the creation of MAX WIN PACK Company. It is specialized in plastic transformation.

1.2. Mission and objectives of the company

The main mission of the TFC is to offer the Algerian consumer a product of incomparable quality as well as an impeccable service. Other missions are planned by the company in the medium and long term.

These missions include:

- The development of the business activity.
- The assurance of a steady supply of the juice market, energy drinks and dairy products.
- The response to the consumer's expectations through an optimal development of the company's products.

The objectives of the company are as follows:

- Availability of employment, especially to young people.
- Establishment of production conditions that strengthen a climate of trust between trading partners.

- Promotion of trade.
- Establishment of a quality, coherent, progressive and realistic approach in the food field.
- Development of business activity and extensions.
- Increasing market share.

1.3. Presentation of Ramy's products

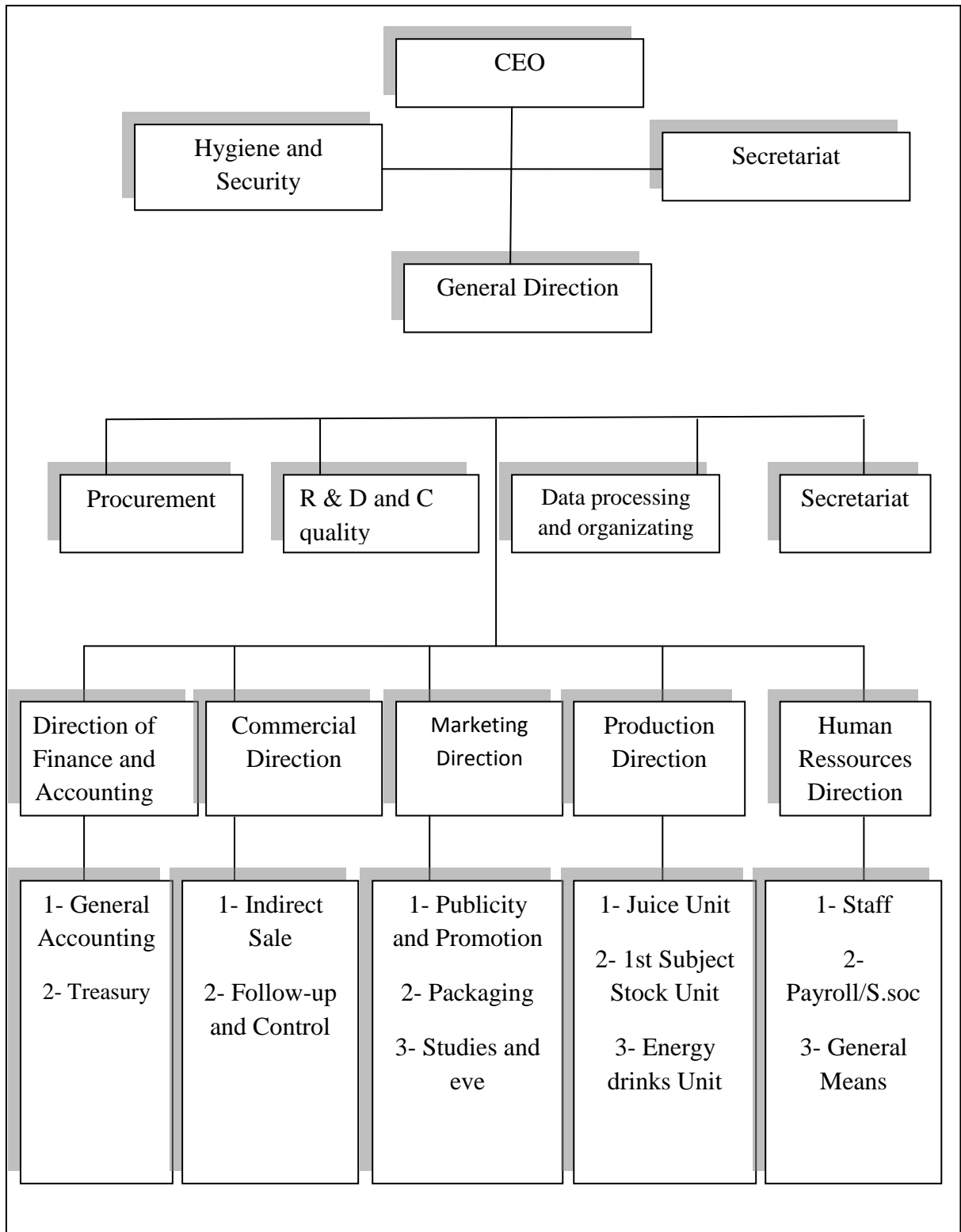
TFC's policy is to diversify its products and reach several sectors of the beverage market. The different products of "RAMY" are:

- Juice with fruit pulp.
- Fruit juices marketed under the name: RAMY, FRUTTY and TROPICAL.
- Fruit juice with mixed pulp marketed under the name of TAIBA.
- Juices made from natural concentrates marketed under the name of RAMY EXTRA.
- Drinks with pulp and natural fruit pieces.
- Carbonated drinks.
- Vitamin-enriched flavored water drink for children marketed under the names: RAMY KIDS and RAMY PRINCESSE.
- RAMY MILK is prepared milk powder, reconstituted and treated with Ultra High Temperature (UHT) without preservatives.
- Semi-skimmed chocolate milk, marketed under the name: RAMY UP.
- Energy drink marketed under the name of RAMY WILD BUFFALO.
- Malt woods.
- Fruity drinks with milk.

1.4. Organizational chart of the company

The organizational chart of the company is illustrated through the following figure:

Figure 1.1: company organization chart



Source: Company documentation

1.5. Presentation of the Marketing Department

The marketing communication operations are carried out by the Marketing Department, which is one of the most important departments within the TFC company. It consists of eighteen (18) employees.

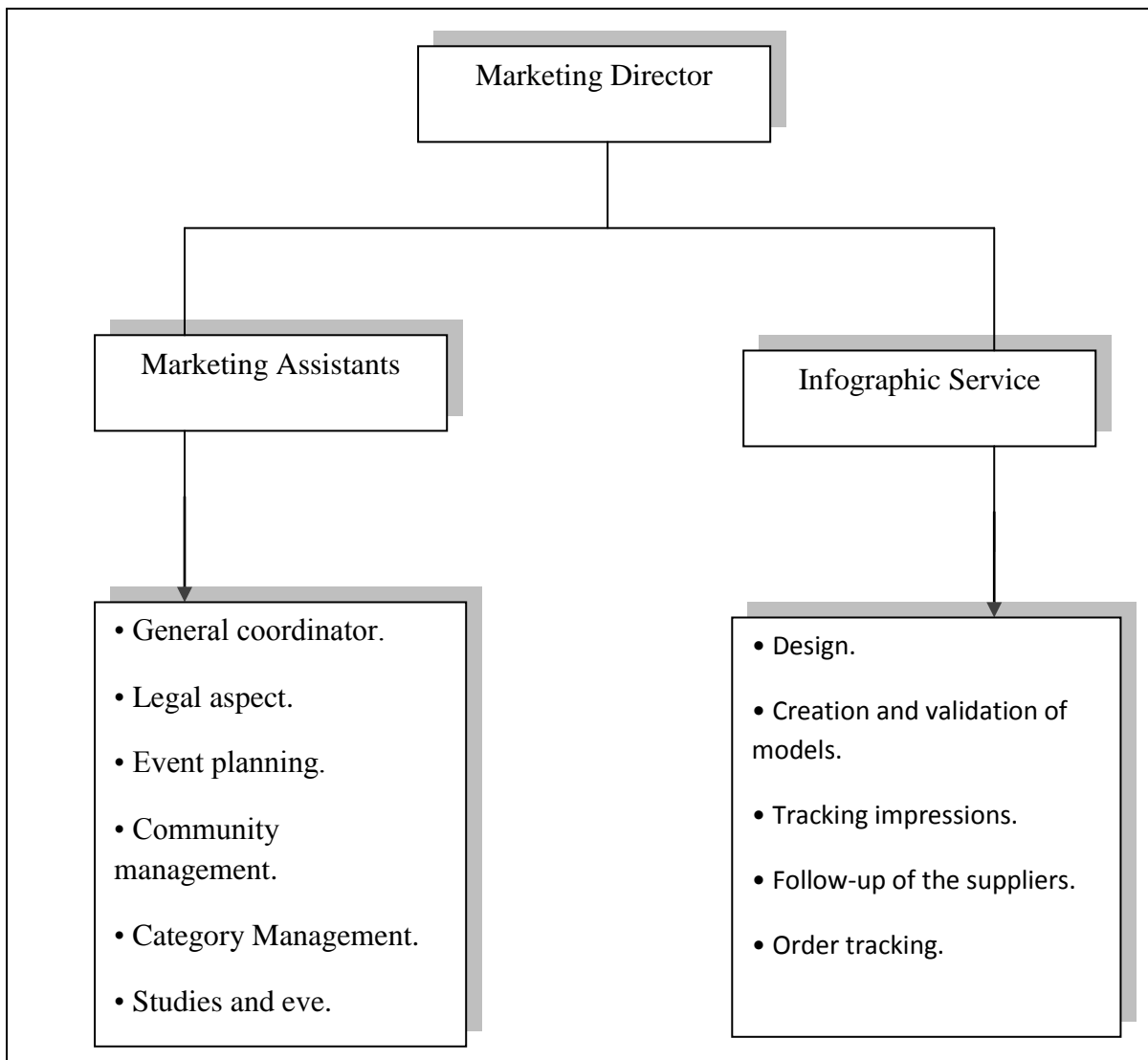
1.5.1. Missions of the Marketing Department

The missions of the department are as follows:

- Offering business opportunities.
- Expanding the business market.
- Improvement of the efficiency of the company.
- Development of strategies to build consumer loyalty.
- Setting up communication plans through advertising and promotion.
- Prospecting the market to find out the expectations of consumers.
- Contributing to the growth of the company and to the Algerian economy.

1.5.2. Organizational chart of the Marketing Department

The organizational chart of the marketing department is as follows:

Figure1.2: Organizational chart of the Marketing Department

Source: Internal document of the company.

1.5.3. Missions of the staff of marketing department

This department is headed by a Marketing Director, who monitors the work of the staff.

Eighteen (18) employees are responsible for the marketing aspects of the business.

The tasks of the staff are:

- ▶ General Coordinator
- Distribution of tasks between the different cells.
- Ensure the coherence between members of the group.
- Identification of unrealized tasks.

- Organization of briefings.
- Preparing and following the annual budget of the marketing department.
- Preparation of purchase orders.
- ▶ Responsible of the legal aspect
 - INAPI: Algerian National Institute of Industrial Property.
 - NRC: National Business Register Center.
 - EAN: Bar Codes.
 - Urban display.
- ▶ Community manager
 - Representation of the brand on the internet.
 - Management of the presence of the brand on social networks.
 - The E-reputation of the brand on social networks.
- ▶ Responsible of Events
 - sponsoring.
 - Preparation and follow-up of events
 - Supervision of emissions
 - Study of the files.
 - Exploitation of the events.
- ▶ Category management
 - Prospecting: market, competitors.
 - Merchandising.
 - Cross-functional function: between sales and marketing department.
 - Market expertise

▶ Press officer

- Transition of information.
- Organization of press conferences to convey information on the latest activities of the company.

▶ Webmaster

- Participation in the design of the site.
- Development of the site, its implementation and technical follow-up.
- Realization of the integration of multimedia elements.
- The graphic design of the website: management of multimedia visual graphical interfaces
- Editorial animation: management of the editorial content (articles, events ...)
- SEO: improving SEO of the site
- Management of the update and archiving of the website.

▶ Responsible of Infographic

- Design
- Creation and validation of models
- Tracking impressions.
- Supplier tracking.
- Order tracking

1.6. Ramy's Social Media

Ramy is present on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram and Google+ .

1.6.1. Facebook

The page of the brand Ramy on Facebook contains the logo, the slogan, the number of subscribers, the publications of the offers of the brand. It has two Facebook pages, one for Ramy Food while the other is for Ramy Milk. The page properties are listed below :

- The links: - Ramy Food : <https://www.facebook.com/ramy.jus>
 - Ramy Milk: <https://www.facebook.com/ramymilk/>
- Number of subscribers: -Ramy Food: 32000 followers in Algeria.
 - Ramy Milk: 6400 followers in Algeria.
- The language used on the pages: Arabic, French and English.

Ramy's Facebook page is shown in the figure below:

Figure 1.3: Ramy Food Facebook Page



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/ramy.jus>

Figure 1.4: Ramy Milk Facebook page

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/ramymilk/>

1.6.2. Twitter

Twitter page of Ramy contains the brand's logo and slogan, the number of Followers, the number of Following, the number of Tweets and the languages used. The page properties are listed below:

- The link: <https://twitter.com/RamyJus>
- Number of followers: 129
- Number of followings: 130
- The language used on the page: French, Arabic and English.

The profile page of Ramy on Twitter is as shown in the following:

Figure 1.5: illustrates the profile page of Ramy on Twitter



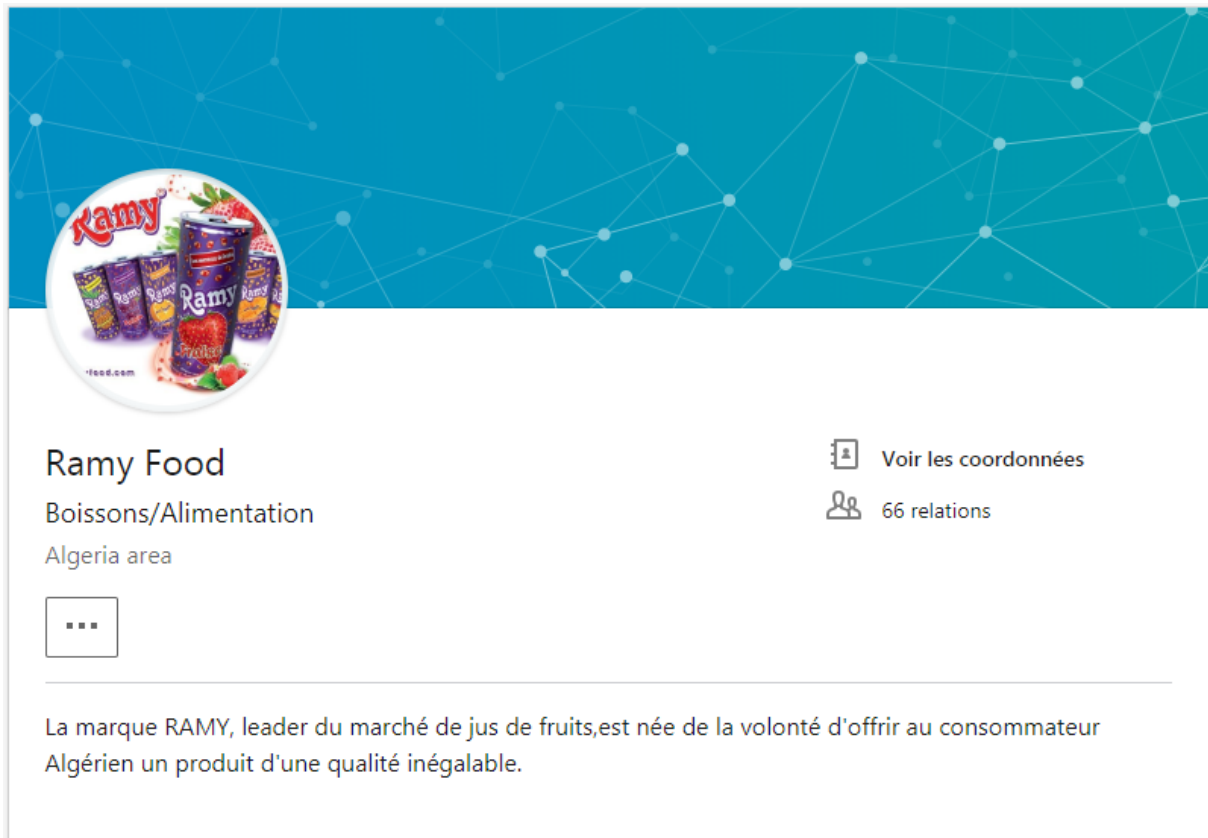
Source: <https://twitter.com/RamyJus>

1.6.3. LinkedIn

LinkedIn page of the brand Ramy contains the brand's logo and slogan, information about Ramy and the number of subscribers. The page properties are listed below:

- The Link : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ramyfood>
- Number of subscribers: 66
- The language used on the page: French

LinkedIn page of Ramy is presented in the following figure:

Figure 1.6: Ramy's LinkedIn page

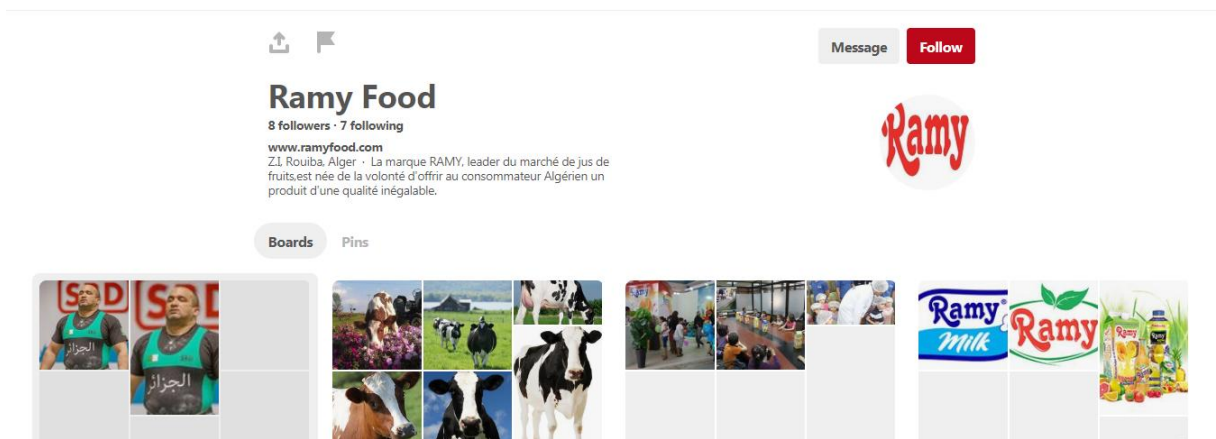
Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ramyfood>

1.6.4. Pinterest

Properties of Pinterest page of the brand Ramy are listed below:

- The Link: <https://www.pinterest.com/ramyfood>
- Number of followers: 8
- Number of following: 9
- The language used on the page: French

The figure below represents the Pinterest page of Ramy:

Figure 1.7: Pinterest page of Ramy

Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/ramyfood>

1.6.5. Instagram

Characteristics of Ramy's Instagram page are as follows:

- The Link: <https://www.instagram.com/ramyfood/>
- Number of followers: 1388
- Number of following: 546
- Number of publications: 296
- The language used on the page: French and Arabic

The figure below represents Instagram page of Ramy:

Figure 1.8: Instagram page of Ramy

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/ramyfood/>

1.6.6. Google +

The characteristics of Google+ page of Ramy are:

- The Link: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+RamyFood>
- Number of followers: 58
- The language used on the page:

Ramy's google+ page is shown in the following:

Figure 1.9: Ramy's Google+ page



Source: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+RamyFood>

To conclude, and based on our research on the presence of Ramy's brand on several social media pages such as: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn we deduce that the dominant social media is Facebook whose number subscribers is more than 32000. Hence it represents a real communication tool for Ramys' company. The fact that Ramy is present on these social media allows it to increase its visibility and reputation of its brand and push consumers to influence the buying behavior.

Section Two: Research Methodology

In this section, we will present the methodology that we have followed to answer our problematic and confirm or refute our hypotheses, so we opt for a quantitative study that allows analyzing the impact of social media on consumer decision making.

2.1. Objective of the research

The main objective of this research is analyzing the impact of social media on consumer decision making through a quantitative approach. For this purpose, we will analyze the data collected from a questionnaire.

2.2. The quantitative approach

A quantitative study is characterized by:

- Using a questionnaire;
- Constitution of a representative sample;
- Analyzing, measuring and establishing trends.

Quantitative studies, whatever they are, rely on the questionnaire tool and have for the purpose of quantifying, measuring a behavior for example. The questionnaire takes the form of a succession of closed or semi-open questions, simple and ambiguity.

2.3. Elaboration of the questionnaire

Based on our problematic and the research questions, the questionnaire constitutes the support that materializes the communication between the interviewer and the respondent.

2.3.1. Definition

The questionnaire is: “a direct technique of scientific investigation used with individuals that allows them to be questioned in a directive manner and to make a quantitative sampling in order to find mathematical relationships and make numerical comparisons”.¹

¹ CHABANI (S), OUACHERINE (H): "Guide to methodology of research in social science", 2nd edition, p77.

2.3.2. Elaboration stages of the questionnaire

Our questionnaire contains 21 questions that were clear and short so that they do not take much time, from which we used the following types of questions:

2.3.2.1. Closed questions

Closed questions are questions for which the respondent is asked a specific form of answers and a limited number of choices.

2.3.2.1.1. Dichotomous questions

Questions that offer only two choices of answers, the respondent is faced with an alternative, if one or the other.

Example

Sexe : Male Female

2.3.2.1.2. Multiple choice questions

These questions offer a range of answers to respondents, there are 2 types:

• Only one answer allowed

The respondent has here a list of choices greater than two answers, but his answer must be unique.

Example

What do you think of the content of the brand "Ramy" on social media?

- Not satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Average satisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

• Multiple answers allowed

The respondent can choose more than one answer.

Example

Why do you use social media?

- To recognize a problem
- To search for information
- To evaluate the alternatives
- To purchase
- To evaluate your purchase

2.3.2.2. Scale questions

These are questions intended to evolve individual positions on psychological variables, usually scales.

2.3.2.2.1. Scale of Liker**Example**

What do you think of the content of the brand "Ramy" on social media?

- Not satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Average satisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

2.4. Sampling

To carry out this study and in order to have diverse and varied answers, we opted for the simple random sample method belonging to the probabilistic method.

The size of our sample is 200 individuals, who answered our questionnaire in order to conduct our survey. And our sample includes individuals from several towns of Algeria.

2.5. Analyzing the questionnaire

Once the collection of the information is complete, we proceed to analyzing the questionnaire, the results are then translated in the form of tables to interpret them. We will therefore approach the processing of the information collected through an "Excel" software to conduct statistical analysis and generate various tables, graphs and diagrams that allow us to better understand the results of our investigation.

We will perform two sorts of information obtained:

Frequency distribution: Calculate the percentage of each question.

Cross tabulation: Calculate percentages of crosses variables.

Section3: Data Analysis

This section will focus on analyzing and interpreting the results obtained from the distributed questionnaire with a view to answer the hypothesis of the problematic.

The study will be based on the Frequency distribution and the cross sorting to interpret the results.

3.1. Frequency distribution

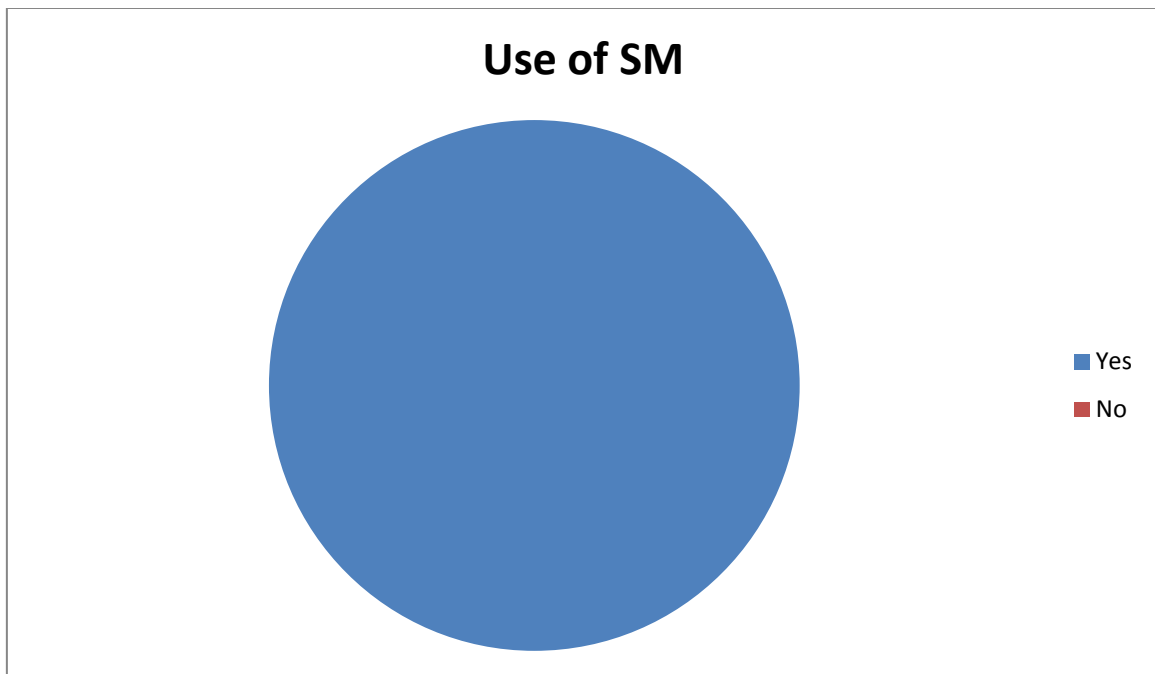
Question 01: Do you use social media?

Table 3.1: The use of social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	200	100%
No	0	00%
Total	200	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of respondents according to the use of social networks



Source: made by the student based on the table data.

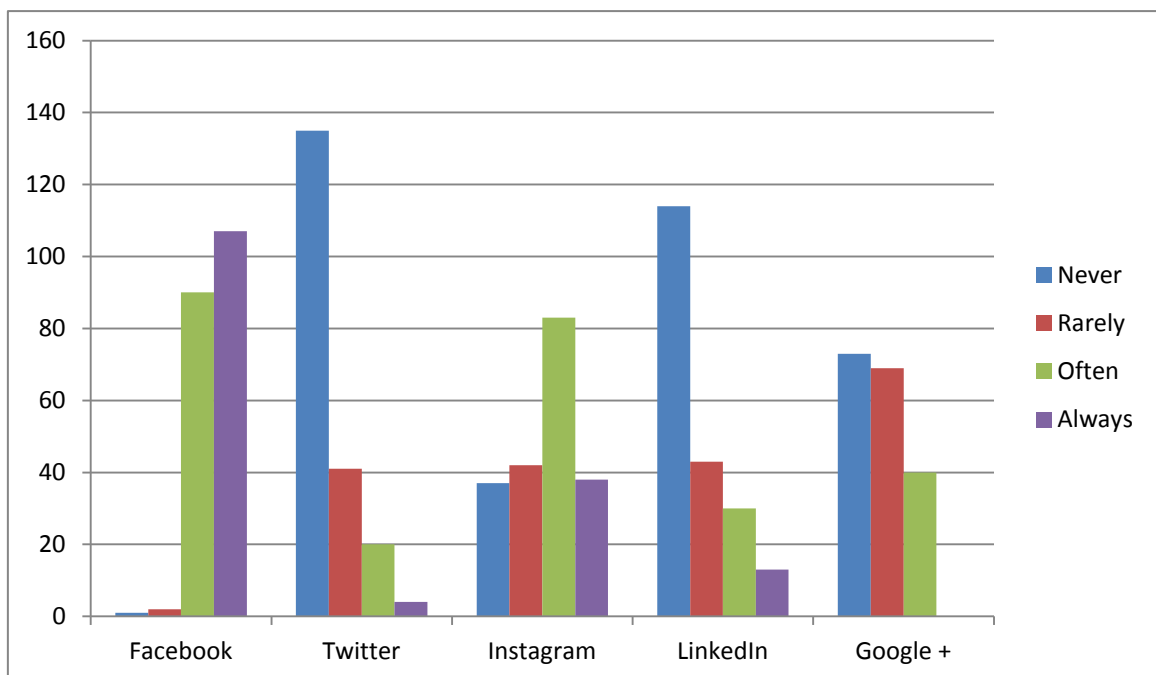
Comment:

All the respondents (200 respondents) use social media, with a percentage of 100%.

Question 02: How often do you use social media?**Table 3.2:** Frequencies of use of social networks

	Never		Rarely		Often		Always	
Facebook	1	0.5%	2	1%	90	45%	107	53.5%
Twitter	135	67.5%	41	20.5%	20	10%	4	2%
Instagram	37	18.5%	42	21%	83	41.5%	38	19%
LinkedIn	114	57%	43	21.5%	30	15%	13	3.5%
Google+	73	36.5%	69	34.5%	40	20%	18	9%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.2: Frequencies of use of social networks

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

Based on the table above, we notice that the majority 53.5% of respondents use Facebook on a daily basis. 45% of them use it often. 67.5% of respondents never use Twitter and 20.5% use it rarely.

As for Instagram 41.5% of respondents often use it while 21% of them use it rarely.

And 57% of respondents have never used LinkedIn while only 15% use it often.

As for Google+, it is never used by 36.5% of respondents, rarely used by 34.5% and used often by 20% of respondents.

We deduce that the most used social media is Facebook.

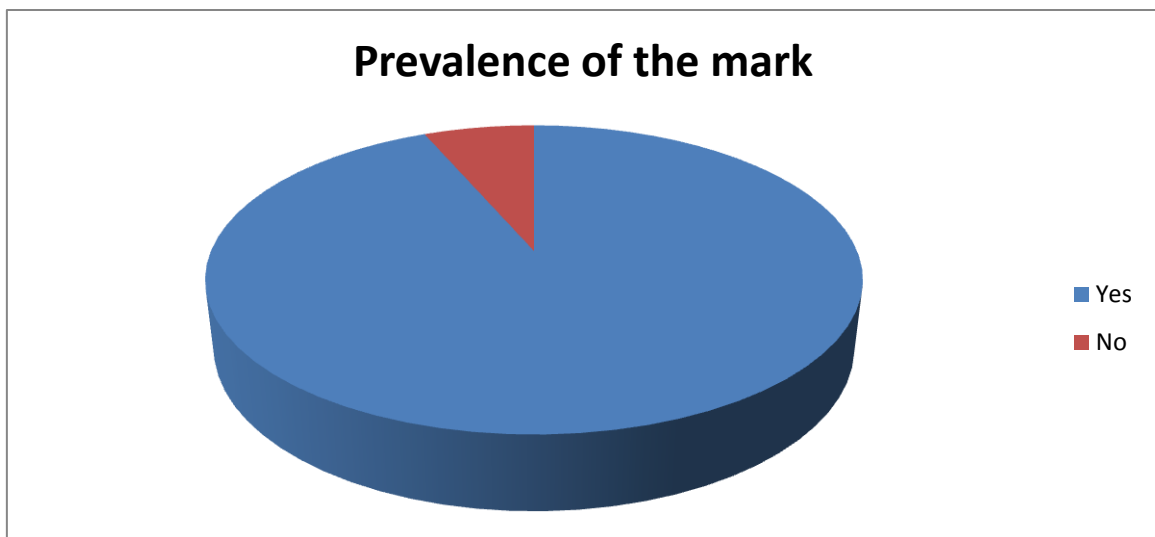
Question 03: Do you know the brand "Ramy"?

Table 3.3: The prevalence of the mark

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	187	93.5%
No	13	6.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.3: The prevalence of the mark



Source: made by the student based on the table data.

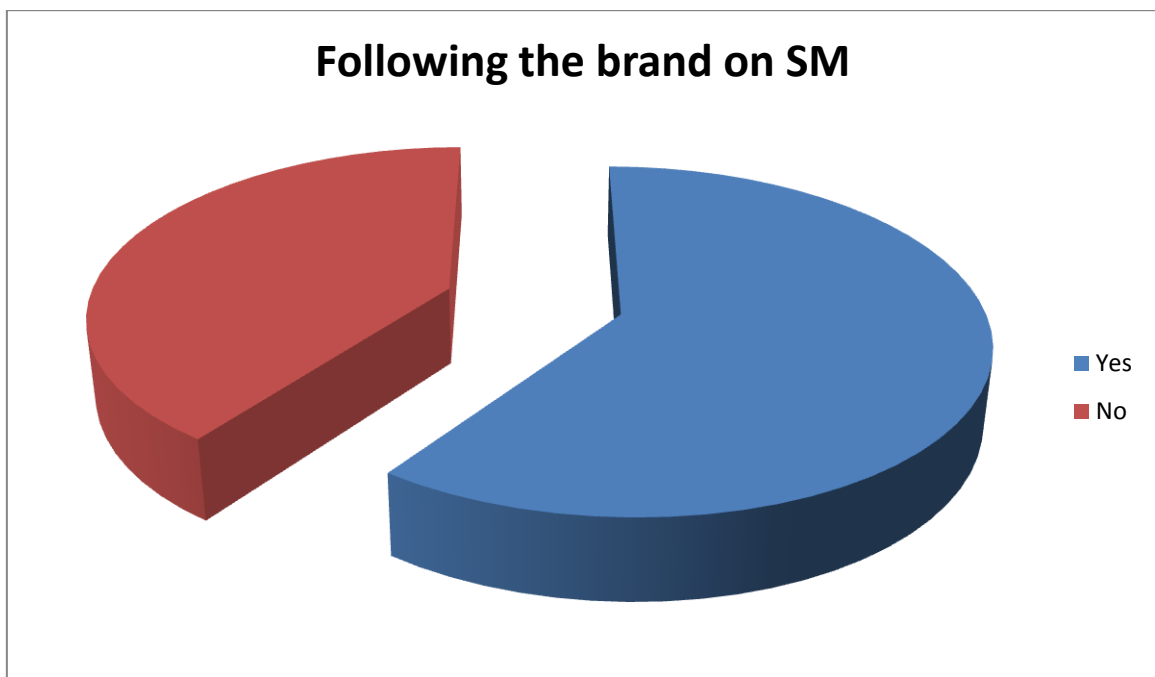
Comment:

Based on the table above, we notice that the majority of respondents know the brand Ramy with a percentage of 93.5% from 200 respondents.

Question 04: Do you follow the brand "Ramy" on its social media?**Table 3.4:** Following the brand Ramy on SM

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	120	60%
No	80	40%
Total	200	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.4: Following the brand Ramy on SM

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

From the table above, we notice that 40% of the respondents do not follow Ramy on their social media and 60% of them do follow it.

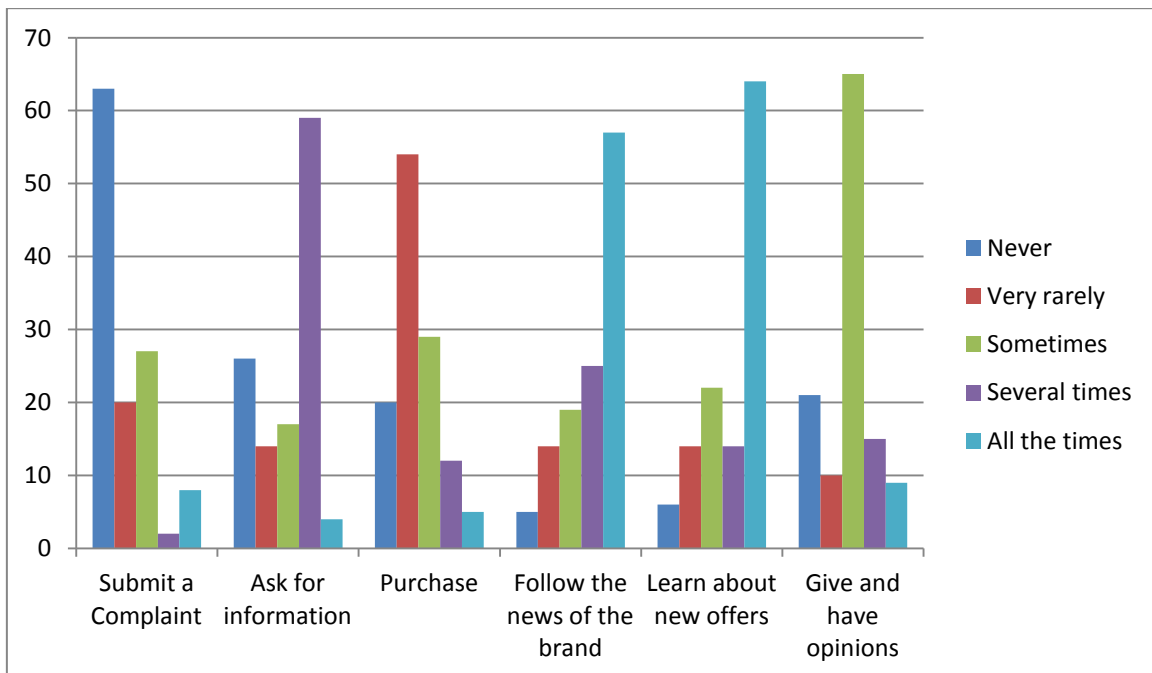
Question 05: If yes, why?

Table 3.5: The reasons why consumers follow Ramy on social media

	Never		Very rarely		Sometimes		Several times		All the time	
Submit a complaint	63	31.5%	20	10%	27	13.5%	2	1%	8	4%
information	26	13%	14	7%	17	8.5%	59	29.5%	4	2%
Purchase	20	10%	54	27%	29	14.5%	12	6%	5	2.5%
Follow the news of the brand	5	2.5%	14	7%	19	9.5%	25	12.5%	57	28.5%
Learn about new offers	6	3%	14	7%	22	11%	14	7%	64	32%
Give and have opinions	21	10.5%	10	5%	65	32.5%	15	7.5%	9	4.5%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.5: The reasons why consumers follow Ramy on social media



Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

From the graph and the table above, we notice that the majority of respondents follow Ramy on their social media to learn about new offers (32% of respondents) and follow the news of the brand (28.5% of respondents).

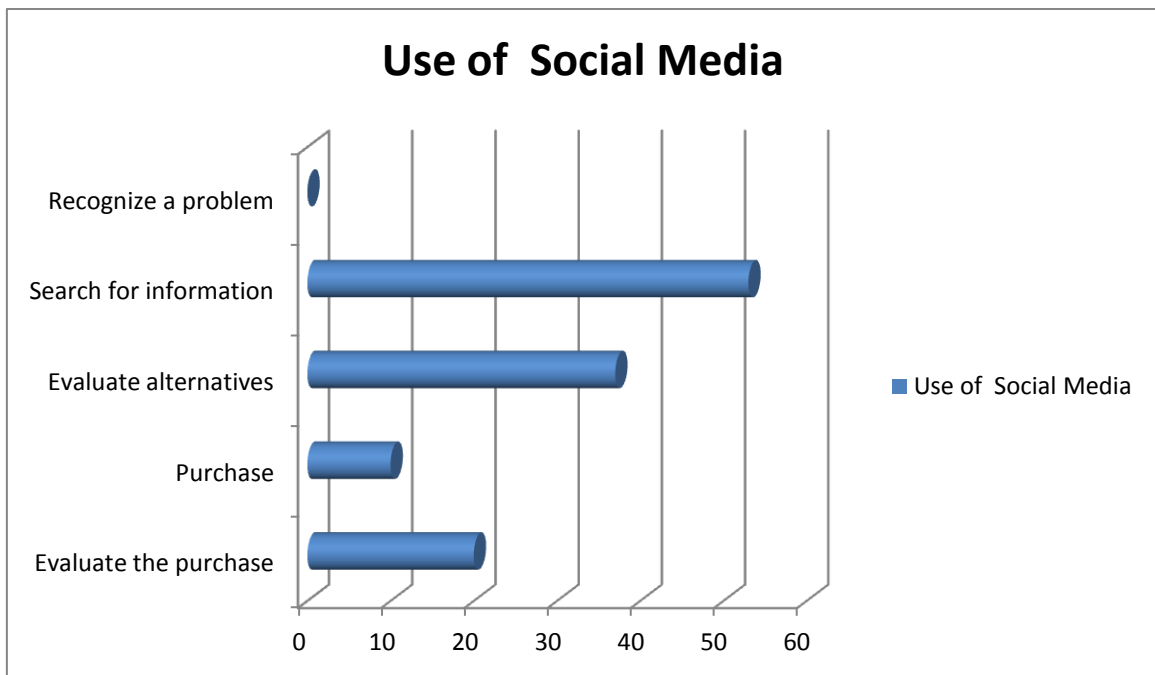
Also the majority of them (31.5% of respondents) do not claim on social media.

In terms of purchasing through social media, we notice that 27% (54 respondents) of the follower of Ramy on social media do not make purchase on the internet.

Question 06: Why do you use social media?**Table 3.6:** Use of Social Media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Recognize a problem	0	0%
Search for Information	53	44.17%
Evaluate alternatives	37	30.83%
Purchase	10	8.33%
Evaluate the purchase	20	16.67%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.6: Use of Social Media

Source: made by the student based on the table data

Comment:

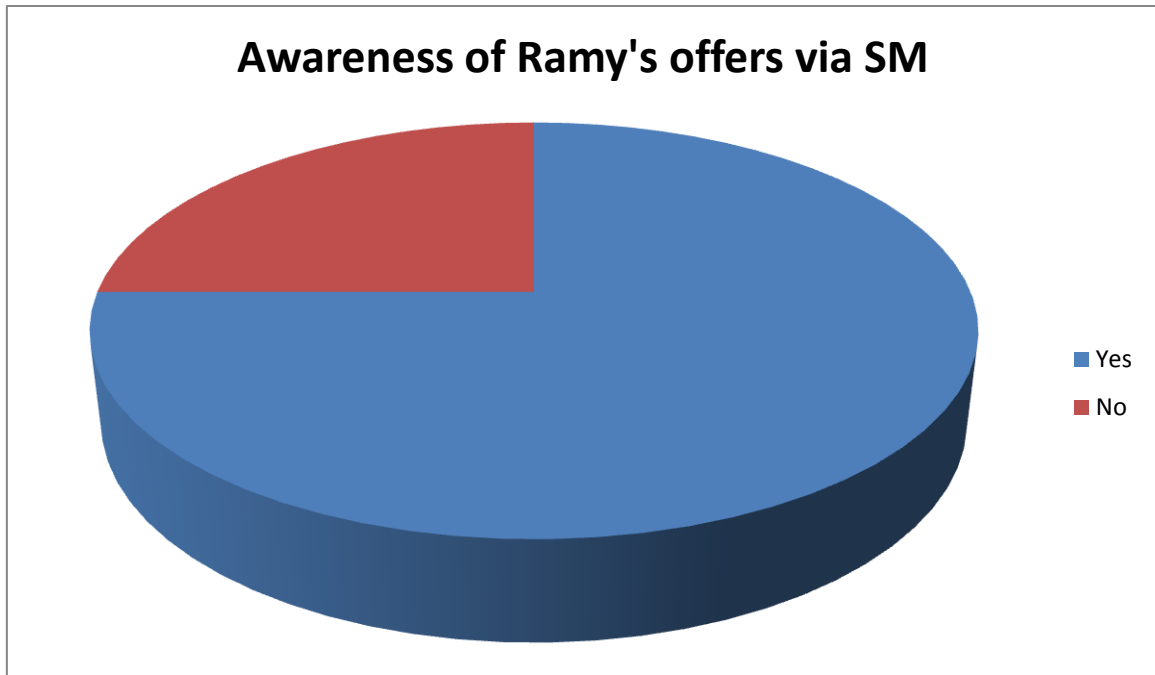
On the figure we can see that 44.17% of respondents use social media to search for information and only 8.33% of them purchase their products through social media, also 30.83% of respondents evaluate their alternatives through social media.

Question 07: Are you aware of offers and promotions made by "Ramy" via social media?

Table 3.7: Awareness of Ramy's offers via SM

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	90	75%
No	30	25%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.7: Awareness of Ramy's offers via SM

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

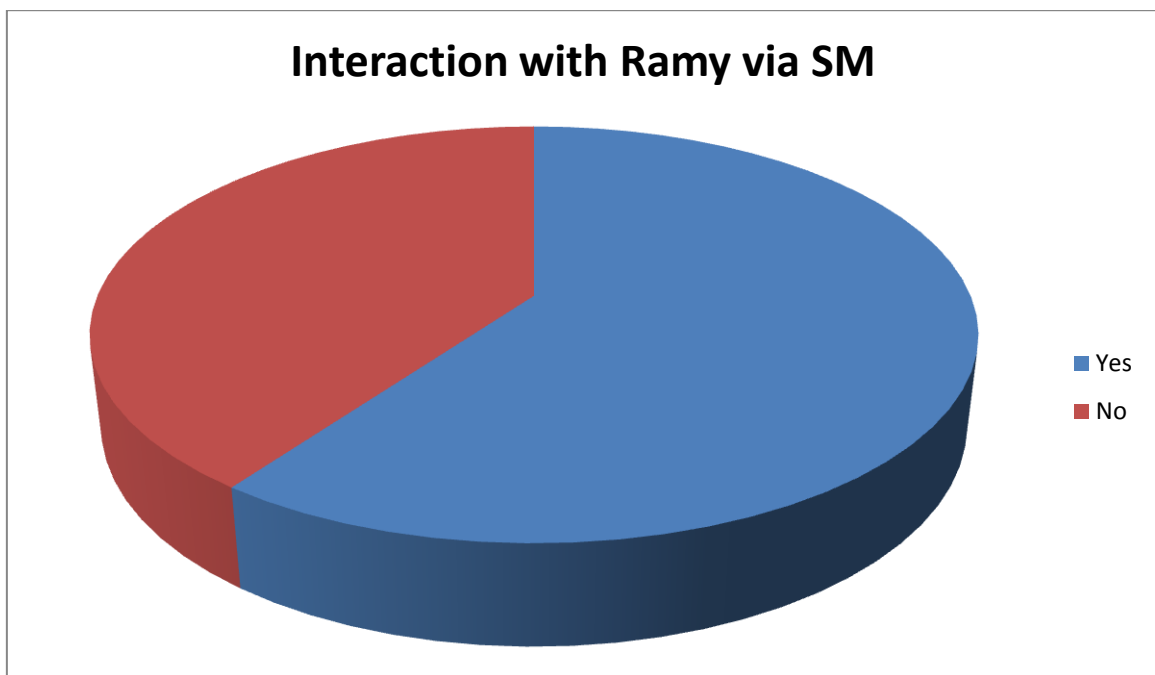
Comment:

From the table above, we notice that 75% of respondents have awareness toward the offers and promotions made by Ramy on social media and 25% of them have not.

Question 08: Have you ever interacted with "Ramy" via social media?**Table 3.8:** Interaction with Ramy via SM

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	72	60%
No	48	40%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.8: Interaction with Ramy

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

60% of respondents interact with Ramy via social media, while 40% do not interact with the brand via social media, because, according to the previous question (question 5), the majority follow the brand Ramy to be informed about its news and offers.

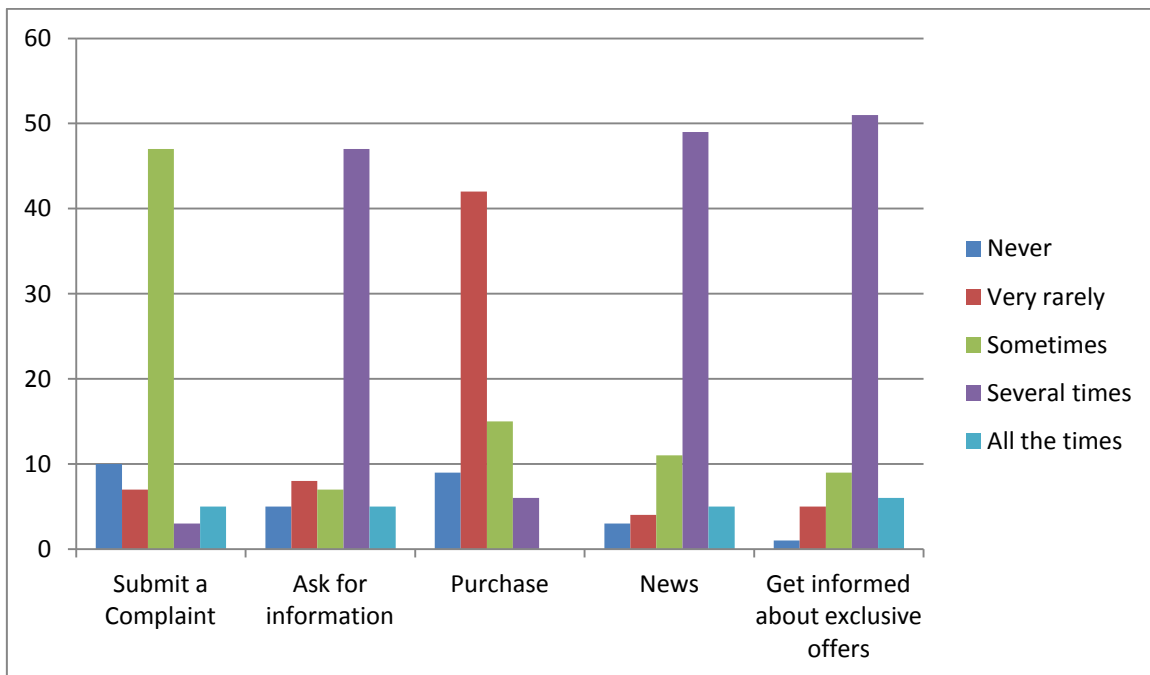
Question 09: If yes, for what reason?

Table 3.9: Reasons of the interaction

	Never		Very rarely		Sometimes		Several times		All the times	
Submit a Complaint	10	13.8%	7	9.72%	47	65.3%	3	4.16%	5	6.94%
Ask for information	5	6.94%	8	11.1%	7	9.72%	47	65.3%	5	6.94%
Purchase	9	12.5%	42	58.3%	15	20.8%	6	8.3%	00	00%
News	3	4.16%	4	5.56%	11	15.3%	49	68%	5	6.94%
Get informed about exclusive offers	1	1.39%	5	6.94%	9	12.5%	51	70.8%	6	8.3%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.9: Reasons of the interaction



Source: made by the student based on the table data.

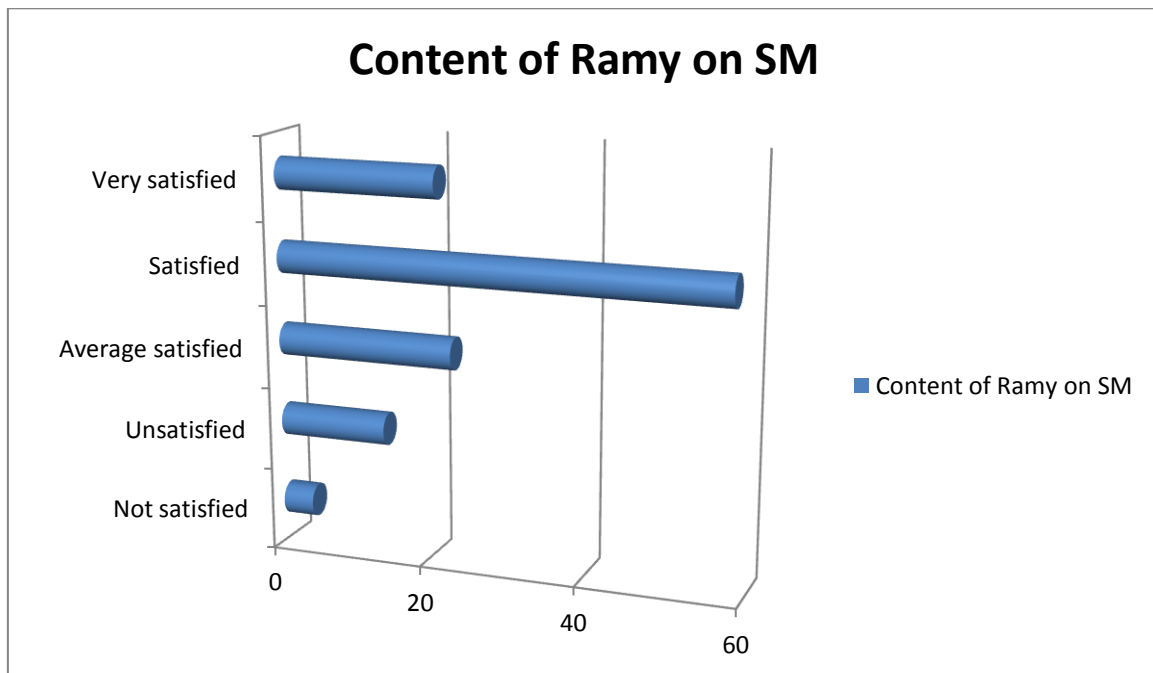
Comment:

We notice that the majority of respondents interact with the brand Ramy to follow the brand's news (74.94% of respondents), inquire about exclusive offers (79.1% of respondents) followed by requests for information (72.24% of respondents). Also they do not interact with Ramys' social media for making a purchase or claiming.

Question 10: What do you think of the content of the brand "Ramy" on social media?**Table 3.10:** Content of Ramy on SM

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Not satisfied	4	3.33%
Unsatisfied	14	11.66%
Average satisfied	23	19.16%
Satisfied	58	48.3%
Very satisfied	21	17.5%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.10: Content of Ramy on SM

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

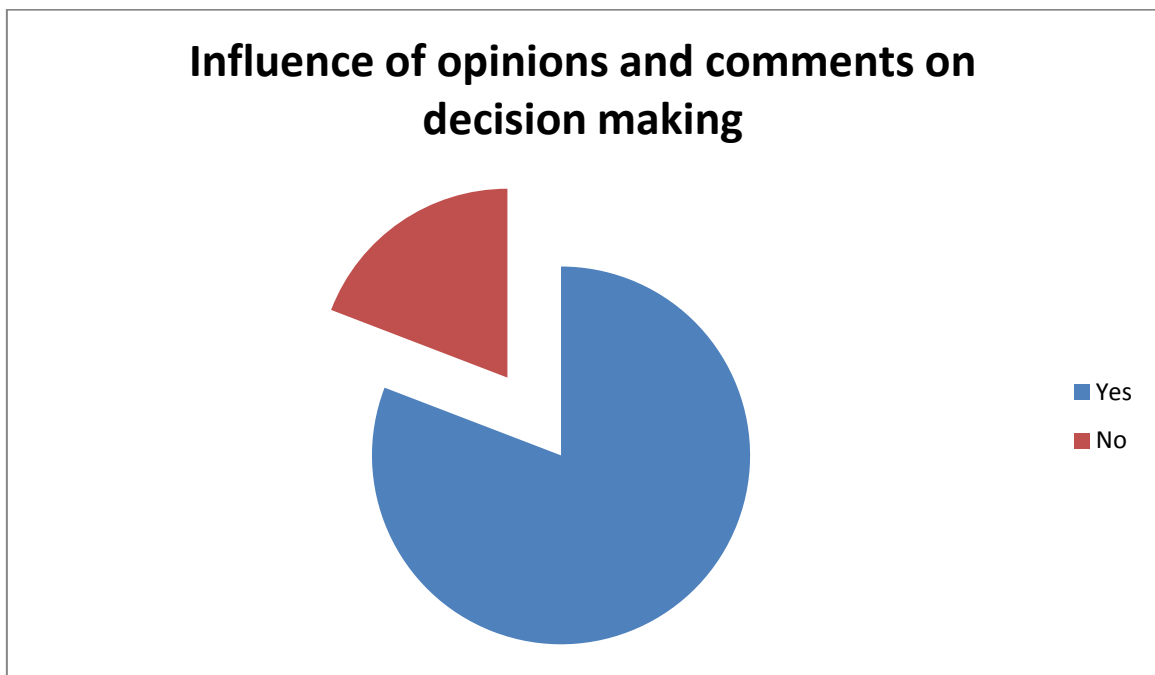
Comment:

On the board we can see that 48.3% of respondents believe that the content of Ramy via social media is satisfactory while 19.16% think it is moderately satisfactory and only 11.66% found it unsatisfactory.

Question 11: Do opinions and comments on social media about an offer influence your purchase decision?**Table 3.11:** Influence of opinions and comments on decision making

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	80.84%
No	23	19.16%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.11: Influence of opinions and comments on decision making

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

This question allows us to know if opinions and comments via social media influence or not the purchasing decision of consumers. It follows that 80.84% are influenced by the opinions and comments of others in their purchasing decisions, while 19.16% are not. It is deduced that Ramy's customers are sensitive to the comments and opinions of others on social media about its offers.

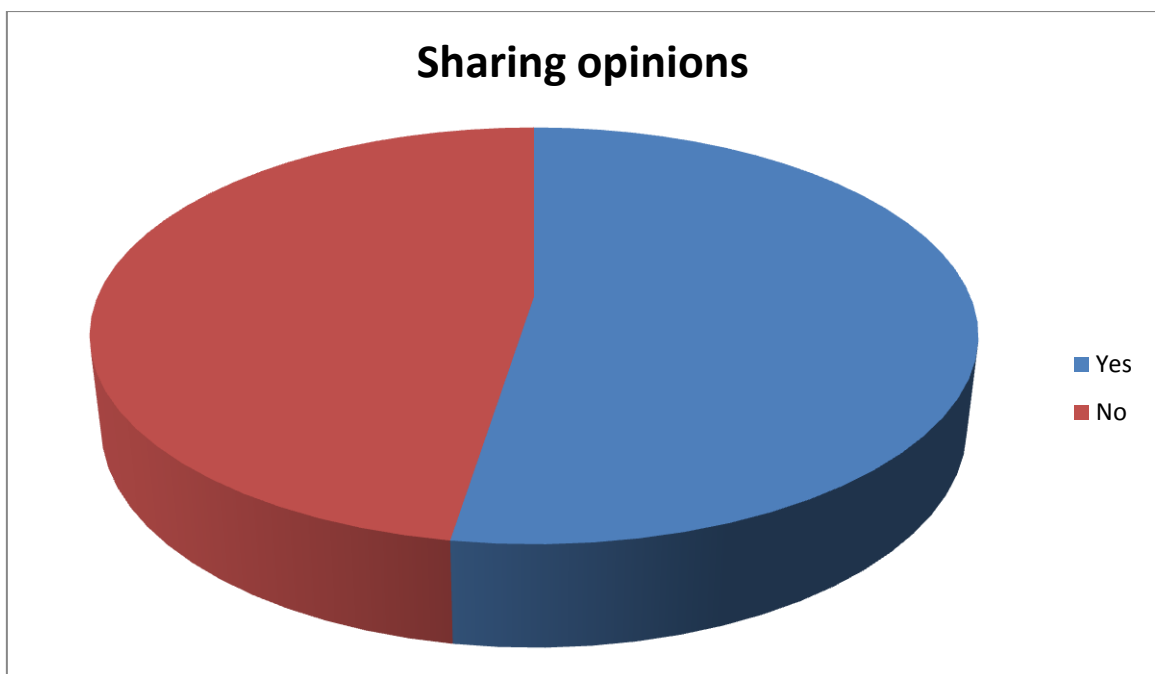
Question 12: Have you ever expressed your opinion about Ramy's offers, products and services on a social media post?

Table 3.12: Sharing opinions

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	63	52.5%
No	57	47.5%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.12: Sharing opinions



Source: made by the student based on the table data.

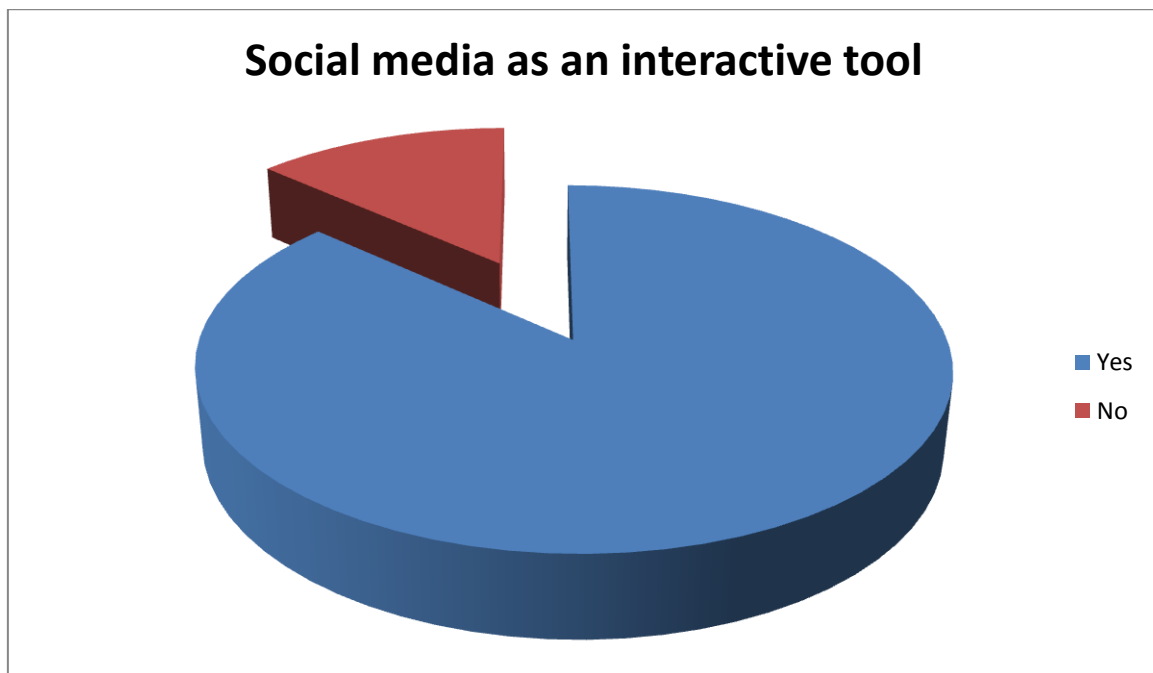
Comment:

52.5% share their opinions about an offer or service they tested on social media before, while 47.5% did not.

Question 13: Do you think social media facilitates interacting with users of the brand?**Table 3.13:** Interaction of social media with brands

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	104	86.67%
No	16	13.33%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.13: social media as an interactive tool

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

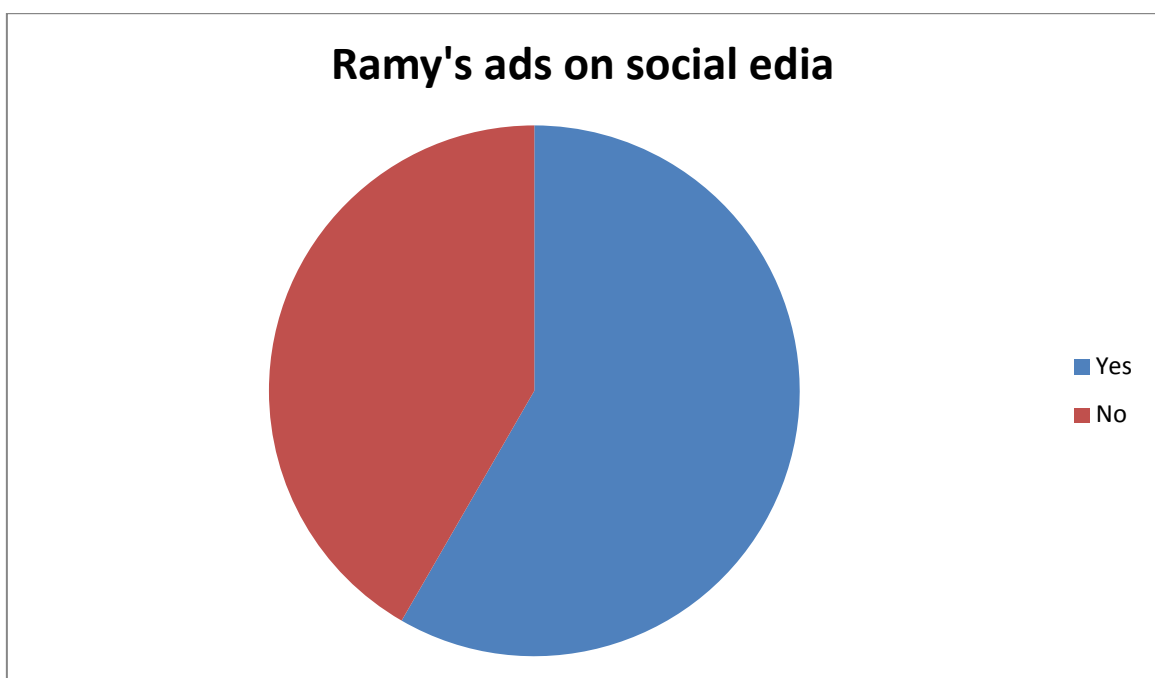
Comment:

This question is primarily about whether social media facilitate the interaction between consumers and a brand, we then find that the majority asserts this hypothesis while only 13.33% confirm it. It is deduced that the majority prefers to use social media to better interact with the brand by saving time.

Question 14: Have you seen the ads of "Ramy" on social media?**Table 3.14:** Ramy's ads on social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	58.33%
No	50	41.67%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.14: Ramy's ads on social media

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

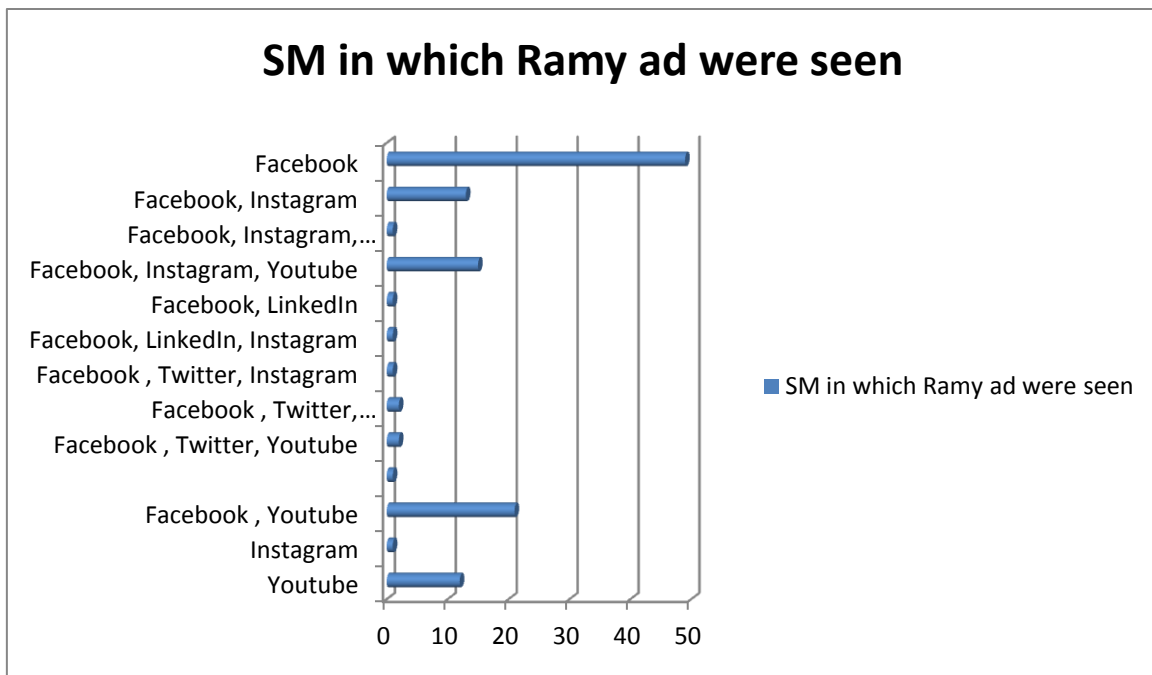
This question aims to find out if consumers have viewed Ramy ads on social media or not, so we notice that the majority of respondents (58.33%) saw their ads while the rest (41.67%) have not seen it.

Question 15: If yes, on which social media?**Table 3.15:** Social media in which Ramy ads were seen

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	49	40.83%
Facebook, Instagram	13	10.83%
Facebook, Instagram, Google +	1	0.83%
Facebook, Instagram, Youtube	15	12.5%
Facebook, LinkedIn	1	0.83%
Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram	1	0.83%
Facebook , Twitter, Instagram	1	0.83%
Facebook , Twitter, Instagram, Youtube	2	1.67%
Facebook , Twitter, Youtube	2	1.67%
Facebook , Twitter, Google +, Youtube	1	0.83%
Facebook , Youtube	21	17.5%
Instagram	1	0.83%
Youtube	12	10%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.15: Social media in which Ramy ads were seen



Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

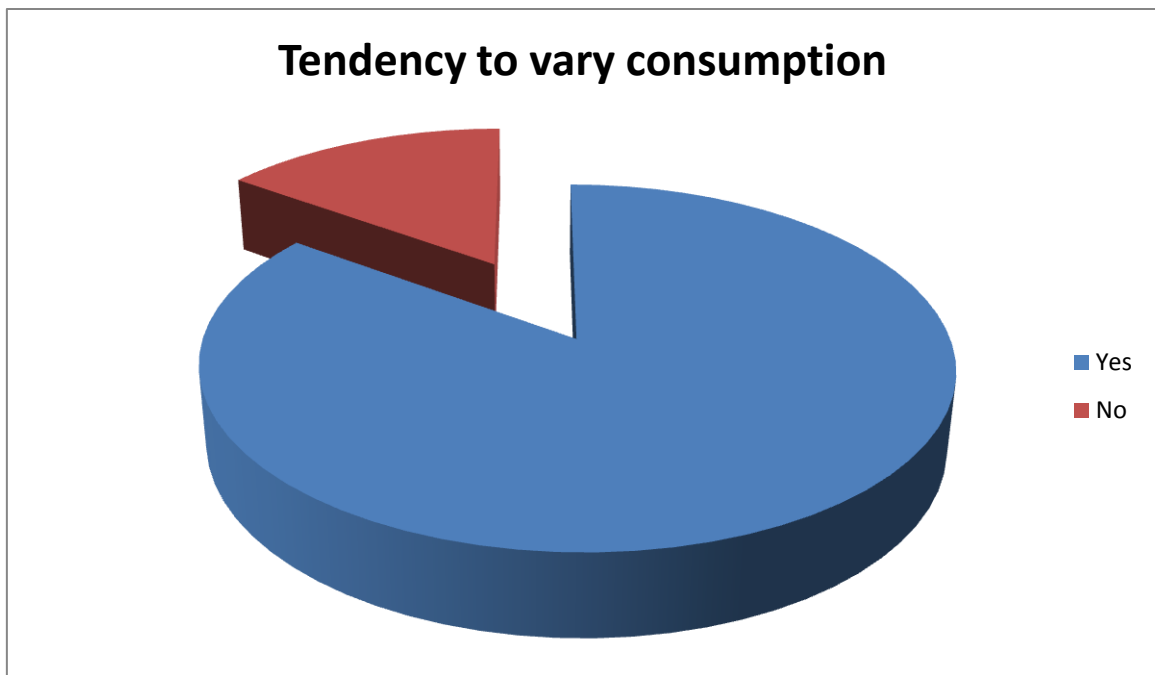
40.83% of respondents saw Ramys’ ads on Facebook, followed by Youtube and Facebook with a rate of 17.5% and finally the rest is divided between Instgaram, Twitter and LinkedIn. We deduce that all respondents used Facebook and Youtube with a high rate.

Question 16: Do you increase your consumption of a "Ramy" product in order of the influence of offers on social media?

Table 3.16: Tendency to vary consumption

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	102	85%
No	18	15%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.16: Tendency to vary consumption

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

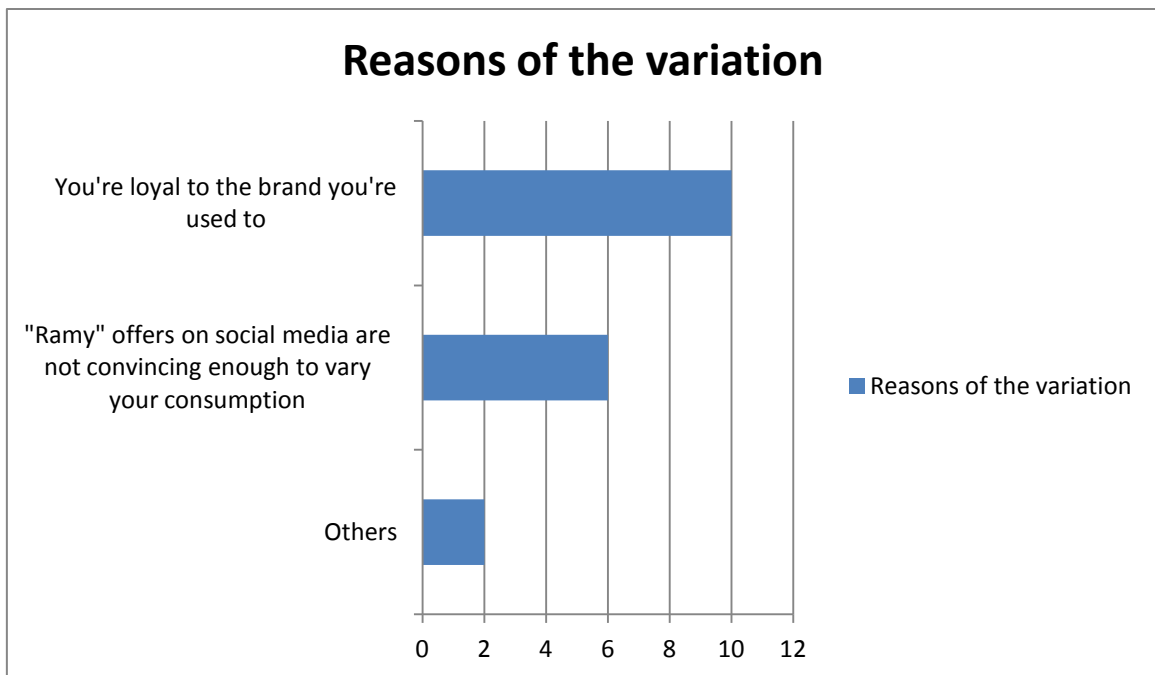
From the table above, we notice that 85% of respondents have a tendency to vary their consumption in favor of "Ramy" after consulting their offers on social media and only 15% of them have not.

Question 17: If no, why?

Table 3.17: Reasons of the non variation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
You're loyal to the brand you're used to	10	8.33%
"Ramy" offers on social media are not convincing enough to influence someone to increase his consumption	6	5%
Other	2	1.67%
Total	18	15

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.17: Reasons of the variation

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

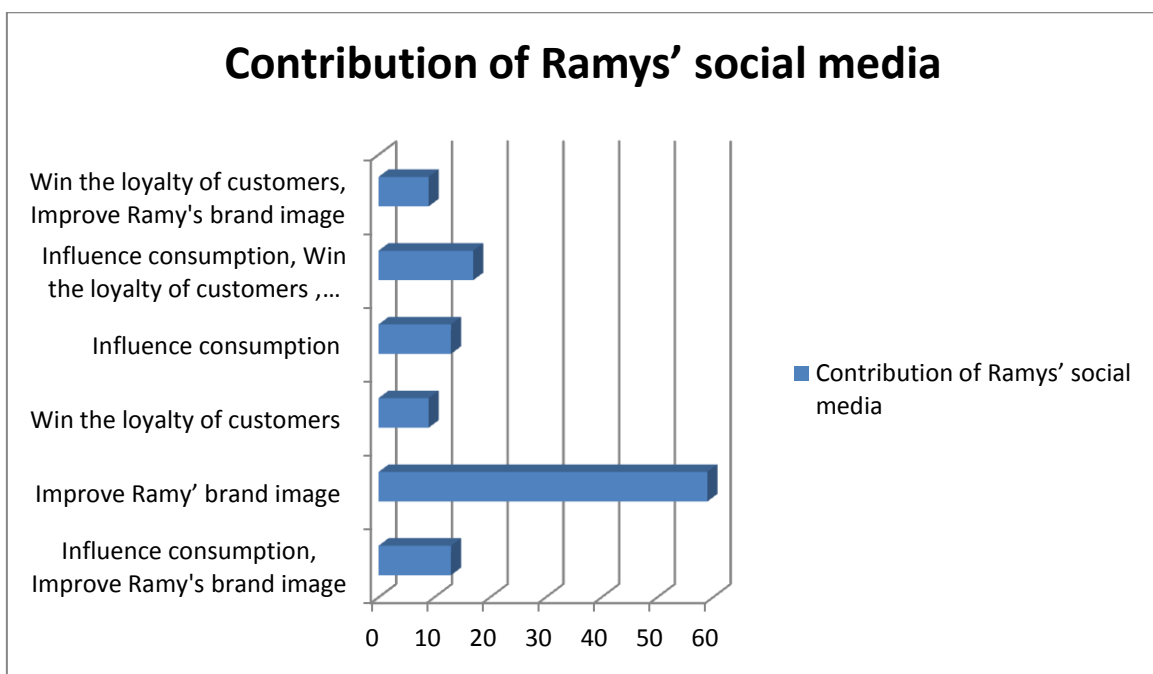
Comment:

From the figure above, 8.33% of respondents are not going to vary their consumption in favor of "Ramy" after consulting their offers on social media because they are loyal to the brands they are used to, 5% of them are not going to vary their consumption because "Ramy" offers on social media are not convincing enough, and only 1.67% of them (2 respondents) have other reasons.

Question 18: What does Ramy's presence on social media contributes to the brand?**Table 3.18:** Contribution of Ramys' social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Influence consumption	13	10.83%
Win the loyalty of customers	9	7.5%
Improve Ramy' brand image	59	49.17%
Influence consumption, Improve Ramy's brand image	13	10.83%
Influence consumption, Win the loyalty of customers , Improve Ramy's brand image	17	14.17%
Win the loyalty of customers, Improve Ramy's brand image	9	7.5%
Total	120	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.18: Contribution of Ramys' social media

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

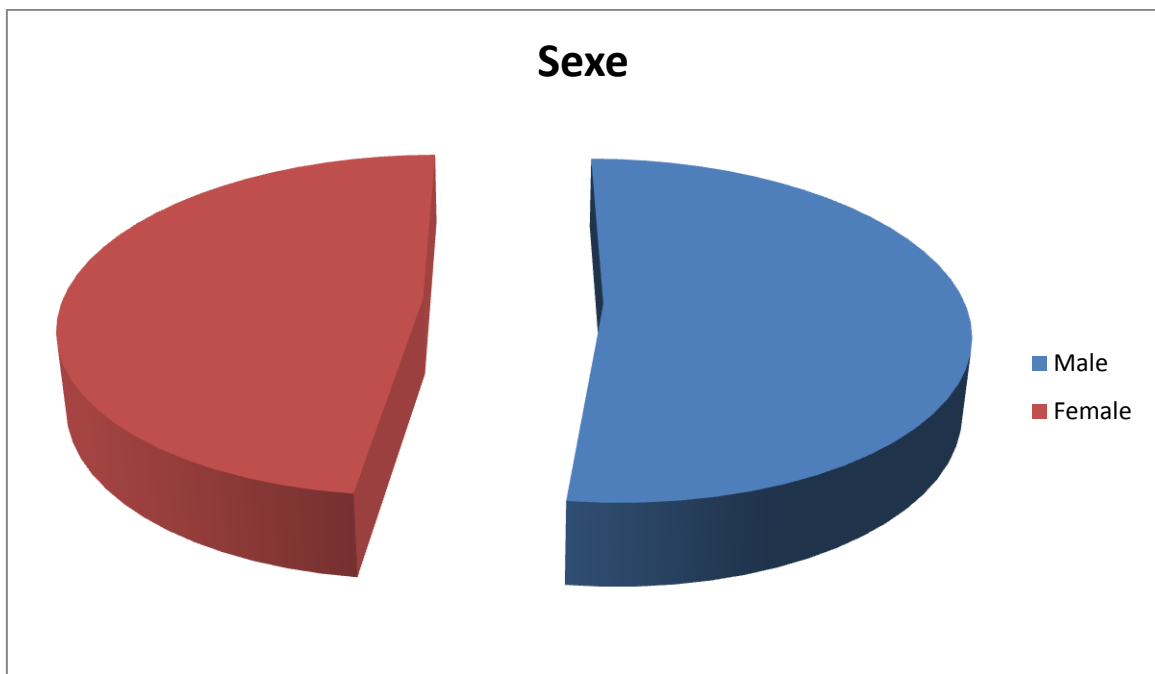
Comment:

The presence of Ramy on social media contributes to the improvement of Ramys' brand image according to 49.17% respondents. 14.17% see that it influences consumption, help to win the loyalty of customers and improve Ramy's brand image, regarding to influencing consumption only 10.83% of respondents believe that, and finally winning the loyalty of customers represented by 4.5% respondents.

Question 19: Sexe**Table 3.19:** Sexe

Sexe	Frequency	Percentage
Male	104	52%
Female	96	48%
Total	200	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.19: Sexe

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

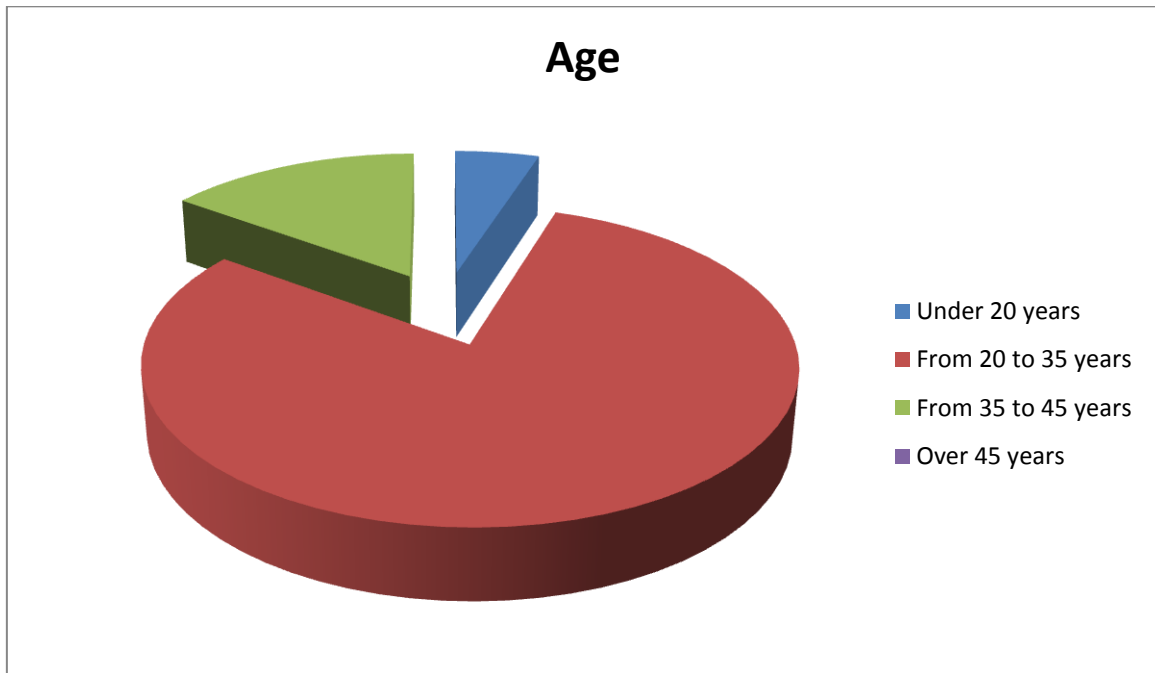
Comment:

We note that 52% of respondents are men and 48% are women.

Question 20: Age**Table 3.20: Age**

	Frequency	Percentage
Under 20 years	10	5%
From 20 to 35 years	160	80%
From 35 to 45 years	30	15%
Over 45 years	0	0
Total	200	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.20: Age

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

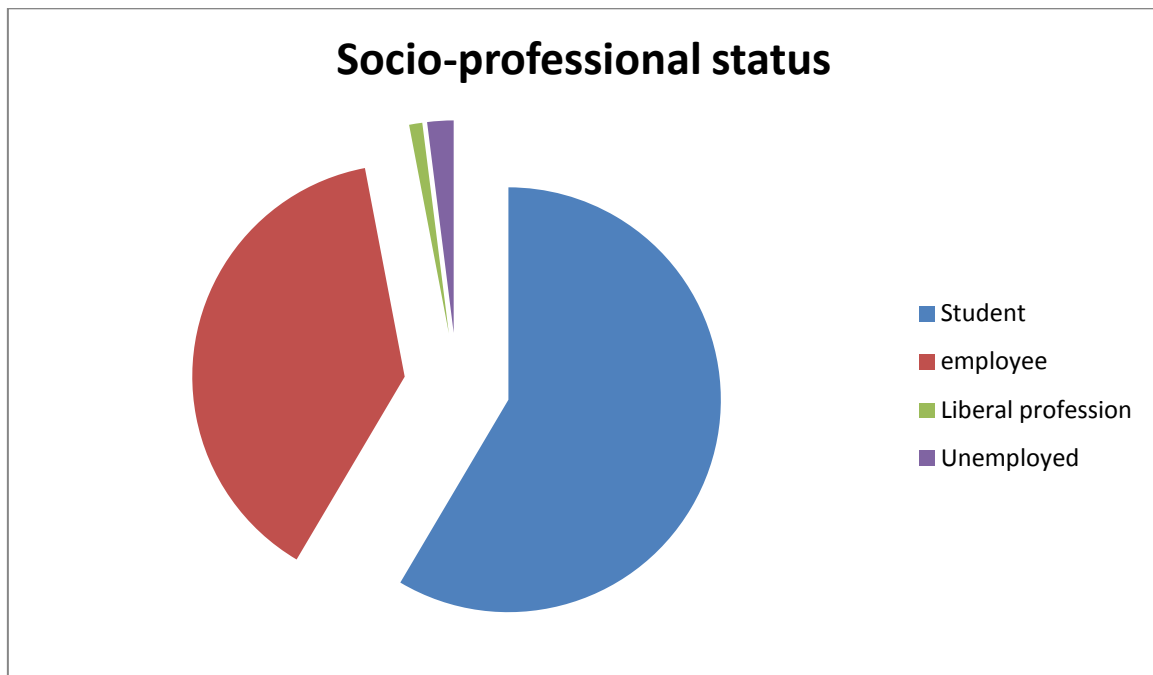
Comment:

We note from the table above that the most represented age group is between 20 and 35 years old with a percentage of 80%, and respondents under 20 years old with a rate of 5%.

Question 21: Socio-professional status**Table 3.21:** Socio-professional status

	Frequency	Percentage
Student	117	58.5%
Employee	77	38.5%
Liberal profession	2	1%
Unemployed	4	2%
Total	200	100%

Source: made by the student based on the survey data.

Figure 3.21: Socio-professional status

Source: made by the student based on the table data.

Comment:

According to the results obtained in the preceding table we find that the surveyed population is made up of 58.5% of students, 38.5% of employees, 1% of liberal professions, 2% of unemployed. Therefore, the most dominant socio-professional status is the student category with a rate of 78 students out of 114 respondents.

3.2. Cross tabulation

Q 20: Age

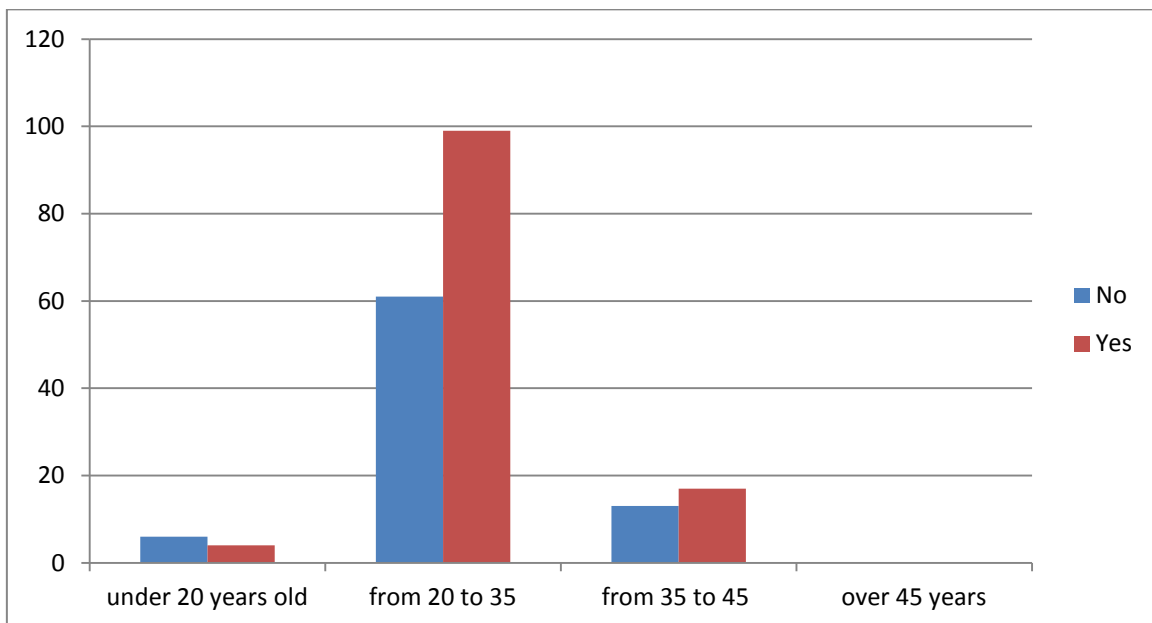
Q 04: Do you follow the brand "Ramy" on its social media?

Table 3.22: Cross between: Age * Follow the brand "Ramy" on SM

Effectif		Follow the brand "Ramy" on SM				Total
		No		Yes		
Age	[20-35]	61	30.5%	99	49.5%	160
	[35-45]	13	6.5%	17	8.5%	30
	Under 20 years	6	3%	4	2%	10
	Total	80		120		200

Source : spss output

Figure 3.22: Cross between: Age * Follow the brand "Ramy" on SM



Source: made by the students based on the table data.

Comment:

From the table above, we notice that 49.5% of respondents that follow the brand Ramy on its social media are aged between 20 and 35 years old. And only 2% of respondents aged less than 20 years old follow Ramy's social media.

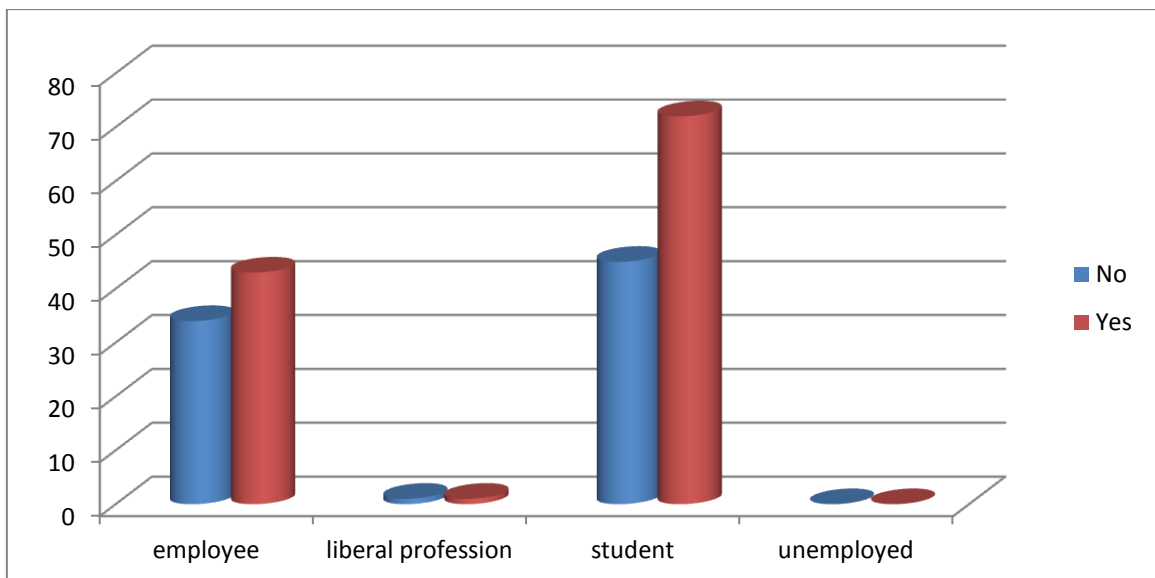
Q 21: Socio-professional status

Q 04: Do you follow the brand "Ramy" on their social media?

Table 3.23: Socio-professional status * Follow the brand "Ramy" on SM

Effectif		Follow the brand "Ramy" on SM				Total
		No		Yes		
Socio-professional status	employee	34	17%	43	21.5%	77
	liberal profession	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	2
	student	45	22.5%	72	36%	117
	unemployed	0	00%	4	2%	4
Total		80	40%	120	60%	200

Source: spss output

Figure 3.23: cross between: Socio-professional status * Follow the brand "Ramy" on SM

Source: made by the students based on the table data.

Comment:

From the table above we notice that (36%) of respondents that follow the brand Ramy on its social media are students and (21%) are employees.

3.3. Synthetic analysis of the survey

After analyzing the results, we arrived at the following synthesis:

- Male represents 52% of the studied sample.
- 80% of respondents are aged between 20 and 35 years old.
- 58.5% of respondents are students.
- 49.5% of respondents that follow the brand Ramy on its social media are aged between 20 and 35 years old.
- 36% of respondents that follow the brand Ramy on its social media are students.
- 100% of our sample use social media from which we deduce that they have become an indispensable tool and that everyone follows the technology.
- The social media most used by Algerians is Facebook with a high rate of 98.5% which shows that social media are widely used in our sample and in particular Facebook.
- Ramy is much more present on Facebook and Instagram with 40,000 fans because these two social media are the most used by consumers.
- 39% of respondents follow the brand Ramy to learn about new offers and follow the news of the brand.
- 60% of our sample follow Ramy's social media, 44.17% of them use it to search for information and 30.83% to evaluate alternatives and this confirms the first hypothesis.
- The majority of respondents (75%) are informed of offers and promotions made by Ramy via social media, this is explained by the effective presence of the brand on social media.
- 60% of respondents interact with the brand Ramy on social media, where 79.1% of them interact to inquire about exclusive offers. It means that social media facilitate the interaction between the brand and its customers in terms of getting informed about offers and this confirms the second hypothesis.
- Respondents rate the content of the brand Ramy on social media as satisfactory, reflecting that the content of the brand on these social media is consistent with what is expected by its customers and provides them with what they want in terms of information or services...etc.

- 80.84% of respondents are influenced by the opinions and comments of others on social media where this influence changes the behavior of these consumers and their purchasing decisions.
- 52.5% of our sample has shared their opinions about an offer or service they have previously tested on social media, so they allow consumers to express themselves and give their opinions about products and services of the brand Ramy to reinforce or criticize them.
- The majority of respondents (86.67%) prefer to use social media to interact easily with the brand Ramy because social media are an effective communication tool in terms of speed and time saving and they allow consumers to stay in touch with the brand.
- 58.33% of respondents saw Ramy's ads, 40.83% on Facebook and 10% on YouTube this is due to the visibility of the brand on social media and that consumers are following the brand on these media.
- 85% of respondents have a tendency to vary their consumption of a Ramy product in order the influence of offers on Social Media. Also, the purchase decision of 80.84% of respondents is influenced by opinions and comments of others on Social Media. So it is for sure that opinions and comments about an offer on Social Media affect the purchase decision of consumers and this confirms the validity of the third hypothesis.
- The presence of the brand Ramy on social media contributes to the improvement of Ramy's brand image (49.17%) and influence consumption (10.83%). This shows that the means of social media can: establish authenticity, provides clarity and builds trust between the brand and consumers.

Conclusion

After collecting the results of our study, we analyzed and understood how social media influences the decision of consumers.

According to the information gathered from our investigation we concluded that the presence of the brand Ramy on social media impacts the decision of consumers by giving them information about their products and services to evaluate it and compare it with other products. Thus, we find that customers inquire about offers when consulting the company's official pages and social media ads and that influence their decision before and after purchasing a product. Finally, we conclude that opinions and comments of others on social media affect the purchase decision of consumers.

Based on these results, we confirm that social media has an impact on consumer decision making.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The evolution of the internet has led to the creation of new means of communication: social media, social networking sites, search engines..etc. They are increasingly used by consumers who navigate on internet and affect an extremely wide audience.

With the advent of these platforms, the habits, uses and behaviors of consumers have changed, which has encouraged companies to invest in digital. The presence of these companies on different platforms influences consumers and their purchasing decisions with regard to products and offers. This is why the theme of digital marketing has retained our intention and pushed us to carry out our research.

The objective of this research is putting a theoretical framework on the concepts related to social media, then in a second place, knowing the meaning of consumer decision making and determine the factors influencing his decision to purchase and finally a survey to analyze the impact of social media on consumer decision making.

After the presentation of these theoretical foundations, it turned out that social media have upset the purposes of internet users by changing their behavior and their purchase decision.

According to the work done in the third chapter and more specifically in the second and third sections, the results we achieved at allowed us to validate all the hypotheses and consequently to answer the initial problematic.

1. Reminder of the results

We recall the key results of our research:

We have asserted the first hypothesis which is: “The consumer depends on social media when searching for information and evaluating alternatives”. 44.17% of respondents use social media to search for information and 30.83% to evaluate alternatives. So the consumer uses social media before making a purchase and not after and he uses it to search for internal or external information about a product or a service. During the stage of evaluating alternatives, consumers evaluate all of their products or brand options on a scale of attributes which have the ability to deliver the benefit that they are seeking.

The second hypothesis is: “The majority of customers inquire about offers when consulting the company's official pages and social media ads”. Indeed, this hypothesis has been

General Conclusion

confirmed due to 79.1% of respondents that interact with Ramy's social media to inquire about exclusive offers because it facilitates the interaction between the brand and its customers in terms of getting informed about offers.

Finally, the third and last hypothesis: "It is for sure that opinions and comments of other on social media affect the purchase decision of consumers". 85% of respondents have a tendency to vary their consumption of a Ramy product in order the influence of offers on Social Media. Also, the purchase decision of 80.84% of respondents is influenced by opinions and comments of others on Social Media. So it is for sure that opinions and comments about an offer on Social Media affect the purchase decision of consumers and this confirms the validity of this hypothesis.

According to the methodological plan the results on which we arrived, allowed us to validate the hypotheses posed in advance and consequently to answer the initial problematic according to which the social media has an impact on the decision-making of the consumer of the brand Ramy.

3.4. Suggestions

Based on the results and analyzes carried out, we suggest the following:

- Conducted beverage trading have a bigger scale on online social media, hence, for the quantitative research can be for further study about the extent of online social media influence on consumers' purchasing decision process.
- This study covers only the consumers' perspective on online social media, further study can study online social media from company's perspective.
- Ramy should Strengthen its presence on platforms that best corresponds to consumers like LinkedIn for a more professional target then the one that is present on Facebook and YouTube and the same thing for Twitter, Google+, Instagram to influence more consumers to make more purchases.
- Ramy's company has to deal with consumer's criticisms and messages that are not very rewarding for the brand and assume them by answering them with the most diplomacy possible to win them back and earn their trust.
- Ramy should more make known its site because its notoriety is weak.

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Annex n°1: Quantitative study questionnaire

Dear Sir, Madame;

In the context of the realization of an end-of-cycle dissertation with a view to obtaining a master's degree in commercial science, option marketing and communication, from the Higher School of Commerce. On “The impact of Social Media on consumer's decision-making”, I would like you to answer this questionnaire, which will take you only a few minutes knowing that your answers will be anonymous.

1 / - Do you use social media?

Yes

No

2 / - If yes, how often do you use social media?

	Never	Rarely	Often	Always
Facebook				
Twitter				
Instagram				
LinkedIn				
Google +				

3 / - Do you know the brand "Ramy"?

Yes

No

4 / - Do you follow the brand "Ramy" on its social media?

Yes

No

If no, stop the questionnaire and thank you for your participation.

Appendices

5 / -If yes, why?

	Never	Very Rarely	Sometimes	Several times	All the time
Submit a Complaint					
Ask for information					
Purchase					
Follow the news of the brand					
Learn about new offers					
Give and have opinions					

6/- Why do you use social media?

- To recognize a problem
- To search for information
- To evaluate the alternatives
- To purchase
- To evaluate your purchase

7 / - Are you aware of offers and promotions made by "Ramy" via social media?

- Yes
- No

Appendices

8 / - Have you ever interacted with "Ramy" via social media?

Yes

No

9 / - If yes, for what reason?

	Never	Very rarely	Sometimes	Several times	All the times
Submit a Complaint					
Ask for information					
Purchase					
News					
Get informed about exclusive offers					

10 / - What do you think of the content of the brand "Ramy" on social media?

Not satisfied

Unsatisfied

Average satisfied

Satisfied

Very satisfied

11 / - Do opinions and comments on social media about an offer influence your purchase decision?

Yes

No

Appendices

12 / - Have you ever expressed your opinion about Ramy's offers, products and services on a social media post?

Yes

No

13 / - Do you think social media facilitates interacting with users of the brand?

Yes

No

14 / - Have you seen the ads of "Ramy" on social media?

Yes

No

15 / - If yes, on which social media?

Facebook

Twitter

LinkedIn

Instagram

Youtube

Google +

16 / - Do you increase your consumption of a "Ramy" product in order of the influence of offers on social media?

Yes

No

Appendices

17 / - If no, why?

- You're loyal to the brand you're used to
- "Ramy" offers on social media are not convincing enough to influence someone to increase his consumption
- Other

18 / - What does Ramy's presence on social media contributes to the brand?

- Influence consumption
- Win the loyalty of customers
- Improve Ramy's brand image
- Other

19 / - Sexe

- Male
- Female

20 / - Age

- Under 20 years
- From 20 to 35 years
- From 35 to 45 years
- Over 45 years

21 / - Socio-professional status

- Student
- Employee
- Liberal profession
- Unemployed