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The effectiveness of content marketing activities in Facebook and Instagram: Generating leads and improving sales for a B2C experiential service company.

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays a majority of society is using social media, which increased the number of social network sites (SNS) users. Business to consumer (B2C) companies have started to use SNS in order to gain from its close connectivity to customers and to attract new customers. Becoming of most self-interest to master the art of online marketing through SNS for B2C companies.

The aim of this thesis is to study the effectiveness of visual user-generated content (UGC) versus own branded content for sales conversions on Facebook. Additionally, the study compares the effectiveness of own branded visual content vs UGC in generating leads on Instagram and Facebook. By analyzing the effectiveness of content marketing activities on SNS, we are contributing to the discussion on strategic marketing decisions for B2C enterprises.

Having an interaction effect between the type of social network platform and type of content that is not statistically significant different, we can truthfully reject hypothesis one.

The difference between conversion rates indicates that UGC inspires more confidence, achieving higher conversions rates over the five days the campaign occurred. Although the sample size was restricted which can affect the power of detecting meaningful difference and not allowing a statement on significance.

SUMÁRIO

Atualmente, a maior parte da nossa sociedade usa redes sociais, o que aumentou o número de usuários de redes sociais. Muitas empresas (B2C) começaram a usar redes sociais para contribuir ao bem do negócio. Tornando-se do maior interesse saber dominar a arte do marketing online através de redes sociais, estas plataformas sendo Facebook e Instagram.

O objetivo desta tese é estudar a eficácia do conteúdo visual gerado por usuários (UGC) versus o conteúdo de marca própria para conversões de vendas no Facebook. Além disso, o estudo compara a eficácia do conteúdo visual de marca própria versus o de usuários (UGC) na geração de leads no Instagram e no Facebook.

Ao analisar a eficácia das atividades de marketing com o conteúdo das redes sociais contribuindo para a discussão sobre decisões estratégicas de marketing para as empresas (B2C). Resultados revelam um efeito de interação entre o tipo de rede social e o tipo de conteúdo que não é estatisticamente significativo, rejeitando a hipótese 1. A diferença entre as quotas de conversão indica que o conteúdo visual gerado por usuários (UGC) inspira mais confiança, alcançando taxas de conversão mais altas nos cinco dias em que a campanha ocorreu. Embora o tamanho da amostra tenha sido restrito, o que pode afetar o poder de detectar diferenças significativas e não permitindo uma declaração com significância.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Background Problem Statement

People today enjoy spending a lot of their time in social media. In 2017 the daily social media usage of internet users reached up to 135 minutes per day (Statista, 2017). This converted Social Network Sites (SNS) like Facebook and Instagram into second nature for most of us, forming habits that affect both our on- and offline- lives (Bennett, 2013). Business to Consumer (B2C) companies can use SNS to their advantage by staying connected to current customers and as a tool for engaging prospect customers. Indeed, effectively reaching targeted consumers in SNS has been made easier by the possibility to display branded content in their feeds. Among other features, branded content has the capacity to arouse and persuade consumers by enabling them to experience services and products vicariously and in unique ways.

As audiences move to social media and are more effectively targeted by branded content, traditional advertising methods are becoming less and less effective in many consumer segments (Holden, 2014). But there are still many small businesses that lack the necessary strategic and tactical marketing resources and expertise to efficiently create or curate the right content for each type of social media audience. Indeed, such businesses have a notable disadvantage compared to established corporations when it comes to marketing power. Smaller enterprises, in particular, may find digitalization to be a challenge, as they often do not know their social media audiences well, or do not have the basic know-how about content marketing or search engine optimization (Reijonen, 2010).

Any company with a digital presence can implement marketing strategies through social media. SNS users have become audience multipliers, disseminating marketing messages and sometimes also promoting a product or service as an active middleman. However, many still lack the knowledge for effectively using SNS as marketing channels. Although it might be easy for companies to have profiles and be present on SNS, this does not mean that they will automatically benefit from it. Still, several companies that started small have managed to excel in social media marketing and constitute paradigmatic cases of success. Technological advances have turned user-generated content into compelling marketing tools. GoPro©, for instance, started off as an action camera start-up, but, thanks to its social media activities, evolved into a global media company.

GoPro© learned early on that each consumer with a camera has the power to potentially create content that is highly shareable online and appealing to other internet users, while gaining an audience. GoPro© became a specialist in user content creation and ownership, understanding early on that User-Generated Content (UGC) is the next marketing and advertising frontline (Gillet, 2014). Accordingly, and over the past two years, GoPro© built and developed a platform, hardware and special applications supporting o the creation and sharing of original independent content by its users, especially targeting athletes, action oriented, and adventuring users. In line with this, GoPro© encourages users worldwide to submit photos and videos in return for cash rewards. In parallel, the company also develops and publishes its own, high quality content, in the form of short and long videos, creating brand-owned original, unscripted and documentary-style movies that reinforce brand values and keep audiences engaged (GoPro, 2017).

Uber Technologies Inc., is another example for a company that makes extensive use of social networking marketing. Uber© vivaciously promotes ‘word of mouth’ - marketing (WOM) by awarding incentives such as free rides and price reductions to customers for mentioning and promoting their brand on SNS. The hype of using the expression “We are going to Uber home tonight!” is an example for a publicity phrase, used extensively by Uber users of all ages and backgrounds. Uber© did not create this phrase itself. Customers created this publicity phrase and disseminated it through social media, which resulted in Uber actively promoting WOM marketing by awarding incentives for app-users in exchange for shares on social media and recommendations. This includes my own experience as an Uber user, promoting the application among my contacts in return for benefits such as higher ratings and free rides. New customers are attracted through the offer of an initial single free ride with no distance limits, while the promoting customers also benefit from profile ratings. The word “Uber” became synonymous for successfully leveraging marketing opportunities through SNS, managing to allocate marketing budgets / resources for promotional rides for new customers and for the promoters who acquire new customers (Uber, 2017) By using the power of social media, GoPro© and Uber© managed showcase their products and engage their communities.

To create strategies that incentivize ‘early bird’ users to use and to promote their platforms, helping to popularize these former startups and powering their fast growth into large multi-billion dollar enterprises. Important to remember that both companies build their social media strategies around their contributor’s content.

From the above examples, it is clear that marketers have a lot to profit from learning how to skillfully balance branded and user-generated content, including designing, developing, launching and curating content that is well targeted to, and effective for specific audiences. Indeed, the lack of know-how knowledge on designing branded content may restrain marketers from achieving lead generation and other marketing goals. Providing product related information on SNS can help brands to increase the number of reactions and the reach of the post, but not necessarily leading to increase sales. Indeed, research shows that although the dissemination of brand-related information through electronic WOM helps reduce negative reactions and spread brand awareness, however the majority of e-WOM-related posts are ineffective when it comes to increase engagement and sales (Stephen et al, 2015).

1.2 Aims and Scope

This thesis aims to contribute to the discussion on strategic marketing decisions of B2C companies, by analyzing the effectiveness of content marketing activities on SNS. In particular, it compares the effectiveness of own branded visual content vs user-generated content (UGC) for lead - generation on Instagram and Facebook. The study also compares the effectiveness of visual UGC versus own branded visual content for sales conversation on Facebook. In view of this, the following research questions are investigated:

Research Question 1: Which type of image post generates more leads and positive user reactions / engagement on Instagram and Facebook: User – generated content or branded content?

Research Question 2: Which type of image posts generates higher conversion rates on Facebook: User – generated content or branded content?

To answer these questions, general information, marketing strategy details and operational data on the content marketing activities of a small B2C experiential service company operating in Portugal,

with presence on two SNS (Facebook and Instagram), was compiled and analyzed for the year 2017. In addition, a content - driven campaign was implemented for the same company, to collect and to analyze primary data on the effects of branded visual content versus user-generated visual content. For privacy reasons, the name of the company will not be disclosed, because company internal data was analyzed. During the study, the company's digital marketing activities were managed by VAN©, a digital marketing agency focusing on the management of social media presence and activities. By studying the association between content marketing activities on social media platforms and the direct referral to companies' e-commerce sites, VAN© provided the relevant data on lead generation and conversions resulting from content-based marketing activities. Analyzing and understanding the reactions, engagement and potential impact on purchase decisions generate by visual content is fundamental for refining marketing strategies.

1.3 Research Methods

To answer Research Question 1, the frequencies of leads generated from brand owned visual content and leads generated form UGC were counted and compared for both SNS, Facebook and Instagram. Facebook and Instagram where the two platforms used to compare the effectiveness of the two different types of visual image posts (branded vs UGC) because they are the biggest social media platforms and the company has presence on both SNS.

Secondly, the paid advertisement campaign was run on Facebook, comparing the conversation rates generated from branded and user generated visual content. For this purpose, data from the company's social media platform traffic; generating referrals to the E-commerce platform; and resulting conversions were analyzed. The objective is to understand which visual content category is more effective in driving leads and online sales.

1.4 Relevant Associations

From a managerial perspective, the objective is to achieve a maximum of 'capacity utilization' of the air vehicle fleet and to get the bookings as early as possible. For the company, it is important to know how many air vehicles and pilots have to be prepositioned; or eventually be able to redirect

air vehicles and pilots to other activities / business segments in times of low usage. A certain minimum degree of capacity utilization of the air vehicles is needed to make the business financially sustainable. Being a relatively newly established enterprise, it is essential to strategically announce and promote its offer of experiential scenic flight services, positively engaging viewers and awaking their curiousness for a unique experience and adventure, with the final objective of turning some of interested SNS visitors into paying customers. Also, the company wants the maximum amount of booking / purchasing transactions generated through its own website (e-commerce platform). This is because booking through its own e-commerce platform avoids the payment of commissions to search engines and / or other booking platforms. The final marketing objective is to redirect interested consumers to its own e-commerce platform and to buy the services by using the most effective social media content marketing strategy.

1.5 Managerial and Academic Relevance

Important marketing decisions should be driven by evidence and that are driven by the data. Especially for small and medium size companies it is of existential importance to make best use of limited marketing budgets. Analyzing data helps companies to better understand corresponding audiences, their usage patterns of SNS, comparing the effectiveness of SNS for emotionally engaging users, and their potential for directing viewer to e-commerce platforms and converting them into paying customers.

Information should be used to ensure you are reacting to the right trends in your market making it timely and relevant content. Using this information to create content strategies that fit your target customers and exposing it to those whom only it will plea. So ultimately you could look at data as the currency of the future, but as for now it can be used as a marketing tool, since data is real-time information (data delivered immediately after collection) about your customers (Zhangm et al, 2015).

Experiential service companies sell customer experience. In the case of this study, the company sells scenic round flight experiences. As described by Williams (2016), UGC can have the advantage of transporting trust to the audience and communicating a real-lived–experience. UGC

has also the advantage that it is normally made available without costs, in contrast to branded content that is produced or commissioned and often incurring considerable production costs.

The thesis aims to help companies selling consumer experiences to become more effective in engaging with customers through content marketing activities in SNS. For this purpose, the study compares the effectiveness for lead generation of UGC and branded content and their potential for converting viewers into customers. Social media users worldwide continue to grow and many businesses have taken advantage of social media platforms, which have positively influenced revenues and sales. Companies agree that creating compelling content for social media is both the most effective (82%), and most difficult (69%) part of social media marketing tactics (Ascend2, 2015).

Not always the case, but predominantly the business size can be an advantage for a number of reasons. Small businesses can be subject to a disadvantage compared with larger businesses in raising capital; purchasing power; the talent GAP and the name recognition. So, it is of most self-interest to master the art of online marketing through SNS (Kurt, 2017).

1.6 Dissertation Outline

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on content marketing, focusing on social networking sites (SNS), and the potential for small and medium enterprises. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology. This includes the description of campaign conducted in association with a marketing agency; the data collection; and the data analysis. Chapter 4 describes the finding of comparative data analysis from the two SNS; and results of the campaign run with visual content on Facebook. This chapter also discusses the acceptability of the hypothesis which had been established initially. The dissertation closes with chapter 5 describing the main conclusion, limitation and further research is clarified.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Network Marketing

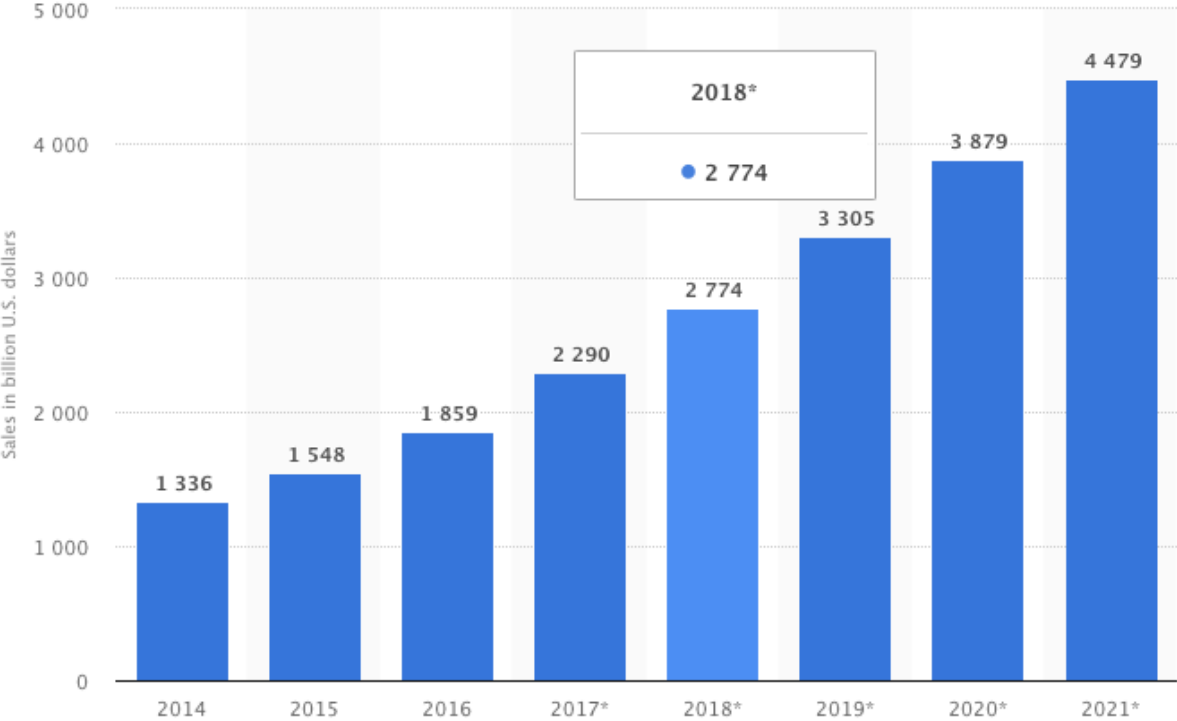
Social Network Marketing (SNM) enables businesses to interact with prospect and customers over the Internet via SNS like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. For instance, it helps companies increase brand awareness by leveraging the networks of active online relationships established between SNS users. Moreover, SNS often offer an important opportunity for organizations to put a more effective and efficient customer relationship management system in place (Ridings & Gefen, 2004). As they enable a better understanding of consumer demand and continuous, direct contact with customers and prospective customers. Finally, SNS can also be used as an advertising channel, providing global audiences that can be yet highly segmented and effectively targeted (an additional citation might be good).

In today's business world it is essential that small enterprises understand the dynamics of SNS and the strategies that can be used to develop profitable marketing activities on the platforms. Large enterprises tend to be more bureaucratic than SME, becoming harder to navigate through the organizational maze. While in a SME you can usually straightforward away see who is in charge and how the company operates. Also marketing activities in small medium enterprises are usually internal, whereas larger enterprises can outsource such activities (Glassdoor, 2012). In most cases, small companies make their own rules in marketing, meaning that they are considered to be self-directed informal customer centered philosophies (McPherson, 2007).

Coviello et al. (2000) state that small enterprises tend to have a natural and interpersonal relationship with primary customers, investing in personal relationships by focusing on direct contact with specific customers and other participants in the market network. They consider this to be simply part SME's where they tend to be simple in structure; limited scope and resources, and the high level of customer contact by all employees of a company. According to Barnes (2001) SME's have the perfect competitive position to develop genuine relationship with customers. Barnes listed several drivers, which he believes are responsible for this relationship, these drives embrace: knowing the customer personally, feeling of locality, easy accessibility, lack of bureaucracy and concentration on long-term profitability.

Figure 1 shows the retail e-commerce sales worldwide from 2014 to 2021, bringing a total amount of 1.86 trillion US dollars in 2016. With revenues expected to raise up to 4.48 trillion US dollars by the year 2021, large companies started particularly investing in social media marketing over the past years. With aims of presenting their products to the millions of social media users in a more personalized shopping experience (O’Hara, 2015). Whereas big corporations can hold large social media investments, SME’s too can control social media developments to growth profits. Personal user engagement on social media can often result in a long lasting loyal customer relationship. Moreover, SNS are great hosts for brand promotions, including non-product-related promotions and visual content creating excitements that lead to users sharing the content (O’Hara, 2015).

Figure 1 - Retail e-commerce sales worldwide from 2014 to 2021 (in billion U.S. dollars)



Source: Statista, 2018

In electronic commerce, success is often measured by ‘conversion rates’. The ‘conversion rate’ is the proportion of visitors to a website or a SNS who take action to go beyond a casual content view or website visit and become paying customers, as a result of subtle or direct requests from marketers, advertisers, and content creators (Marketing Terms, 2017). Conversion marketing is the

act of marketing with the intention of increasing conversions, while conversion rate optimization refers to the process of increasing conversion rates and converting a higher proportion of users of an e-commerce website into paying customers. Optimizing conversion rates is the core interest of any operator of an e-commerce website, directly related to sales and businesses generation, generating more sales per leads with the same amount of traffic. High conversion rates depend on several factors, all together these factors should amount to a pleasing level in order to yield needed results: the interest level of the visitor, the attractiveness of the offer, and the ease of the process (Marketing Terms, 2017). In other words, knowing your conversion rate(s) helps you understand how your sales funnels stand and analyze the performance. The conversion rate(s) is calculated by taking the number of conversions and dividing it by the number of total ad clicks. For instance, say you have 50 conversions from 1000 clicks giving you a conversion rate of 5% by doing $50 / 1000 = 5\%$.

Reach is a metric of a potential audience size, becoming very powerful when compared with other engagement metrics. As we use reach as the denominator in the measurement equations. In marketing terminologies; leads are an individual or an entity that is potentially interested in purchasing your service, providing contact information pointing towards sales opportunities. In a business context lead is information that indirectly points towards sales (Leap, 2015).

The internet is one of the most important marketplaces for transactions of goods and services worldwide (Marketo, 2016). Marketing has been making a smooth transition from traditional to online, understanding the basics of the digital world is fundamental since it allows brands to be direct sellers. Digital marketing is a form of direct marketing where the consumer and the sellers are connected electronically by using shared technologies such as: emails, websites, online newsgroups, mobile communications (Kotler and Armstrong, 2009). Digital marketing strategies are implemented when promoting a service or product it has to be in a significant, cost efficient and timely manner. This because electronic media eases companies' communication process with the customers by having a high level of connectivity it's important to approach consumers with the relevant content (Bains et al., 2011).

In late 2011, Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg noticed that the community would keep growing as long as users kept sharing “things” about their lives. Zuckerberg realized that Facebook was no longer a “mirror” for the real community but instead, the “mirror” had turned into an “engine”, he wrote in a post commemorating the 10th anniversary of the company. According to Zuckerberg

(2014) the user are the data that help to fuel the “engine”, this being the software that has grown into the world's biggest online community. The traffic, statistic and analytics website Alexa (2018) references the top ten most visited social media platforms until December 2017. These being; Facebook being top three with Google and YouTube. Facebook being on that list with the highest daily user time on site, with an average of 10:01 minutes of daily page view time per visitor, centered on the data collected from a three-month trailing period (Alexa, 2017).

Characteristics, such as the uncertainty of SNS lifespan, encourage its use and popularity. But understanding why users are utilizing your tools is important to develop new marketing efforts through these channels. That’s when paid, earned and owned channels come together to help elements of your sales and entire content marketing campaign (Stern, 2017).

Paid media contains purchased advertisements for any channel type such as social, search, print or direct mail. The most effective way for any sort of ad is paid media, attracting different users by using strong and valuable content (Stern, 2017). Once you managed to get your users to interact with your brand, you have progressed users to the next phase of the sales funnel. Earned media goes around channels where marketing is achieved through promotional efforts instead of ads. The content is very trustworthy, helping brands to build credibility and being channels with high user engagement levels (Stern, 2017). Owned media are channels were your company controls all content engagement and delivery. The content is authoritative, allowing you to transform fans into customers and create content that encourages user engagement as well as building customer trust (Stern, 2017).

The collectivism of numerous companies on the internet creates power for communities, and thus offers people support and advanced knowledge (Business Wire, 2009). Companies such as Uber Airbnb, Facebook and Alibaba allow members to be independent while constantly promoting their communities to attract new members (Moravick, 2016). Communities are highly valued by brands, if you have an established community your business can simply be sustained by the individual users of the community. The larger the community the higher the value provided to individual members. Uber’s community is actual large, being actively present in 84 countries (Uber, 2018), turning the product into the community itself. Once the community has reached this level it should be part of your marketing strategy (Moravick, 2016).

2.2 Content Marketing

According to the Content Marketing Institute (2017), content selling is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content over the Internet. With aims to attract and retain a clearly defined audience and ultimately, drive profitable customer actions. Content communities are formed on SNS gathering all online users that seek for the common sharing of media content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). YouTube is a known example of a content community serving videos. Companies see these highly populated communities as an opportunity to reach consumers by using the platform as contact channels.

Businesses have to make offerings attractive by designing them to become relevant in context. Trust and value proposition are two fundamental components that must be contained within your content marketing strategy, to make consumer buy products from you. In today's digital marketing era trust is essential, enterprises have to be and show transparent business practices living up to those values. At the same time companies need to continuously develop their value proposition to adapt to the constant change in the competitive market environment, this way you can guarantee that the content you are offering will truly be recognized. Seth Godin (2016), a well-known marketer, entrepreneur and public speaker explains in his 15-minute interview with the *Nordic Business Forum* why trust and awareness should be implemented in your marketing content strategy as customers buy from you for those reasons:

“People only buy from you for two reasons, they know you exist and they trust you. Awareness and trust that's all. The thing about awareness is they are not making any more of it, the about paying attention is if I pay you my attention, I don't have it anymore. It's gone forever so we're getting more and more focused on keeping our attention to ourselves not giving it to whoever shows up. Marketers have a history of just taking attention and wasting it. But by going forward marketers who treasure that, who cherish it, who grow it and nurture it (content marketing). Those marketers do better than the ones who are just racing around with an emergency” (Seth Godin, 2016).

Content marketing is considered to be the present and future of marketing goods, by being efficient and convincing you'd think it is an expensive practice, but it's not (Content Marketing Institute, 2017). Content marketing contributes to the bottom-line of companies and their customers and enterprises practice it for three main reasons; cost savings; increased sales and

devoted customers. In order to produce relevant content for your existing and growing digital channel demand you need to invest in time and labor. Companies are constantly sending SNS users brand information, unfortunately irrelevant and invaluable content (Content Marketing Institute, 2017). There is a reason for why marketing agencies exist, you simply will be better off working with people that have the know-how to extract information and analyze demographic data.

2.3. User-Generated Content versus Brand Owned Content

Brand owned content is the trend of where brands are becoming publishers. Brands started to produce their own content and micro-sites to publish relevant and educational content about the products which are produced internally (StackAdapt, 2015). Doing so, it allows brands to build and to engage with their target audience by delivering only relevant and useful content. Brand owned content is exposed through web properties such as social media channels, websites and blog sites. Gaining more exposure to web properties with search engine optimizations (SEO) and leverage brand owned content for a comprehensive marketing strategy (Machin, E., 2017). Brand owned content might sound similar with sponsored content and its frequently mistaken, but there is a clear distinction. Sponsored content differs in two aspects, from who the content is produced by and where the content is published.

Through the support of internet based information, SNS have shaped a new approach of coordinated effort, public online communities for UGC. According to Crowston and Fagnot (2018) UGC refers to content developed and shared by SNS users and includes in the following characteristics:

- Mostly unpaid contributors;
- Large number of distributed contributors, commensurate with the popularity of the activity, ranging from dozen to thousands or more; and
- Jointly-focused activity, in which contributors collectively develop new content (e.g.: text, images or software) of value to a larger audience.

Recent research shows that SNS usage is driven by a desire to boost individual social capital and improve one's psychological state of mind (Ashley and Tuten, 2015). The process of generating and sharing individual content concerning shopping, transaction and consumption experiences

seems to be one of the major ways users satisfy their psycho-social needs online, particularly in social media, being hence increasingly fueled by SNS platforms and companies alike (Ashley and Tuten, 2015).

However, it is worth noticing that not all SNS users become content creators for brands; mostly are just viewers or spectators of other users' content. Still, both types of users must have some level of engagement with brands to either view or create content. Previous studies on the motivation for users to create and contribute for a brand show that, among other benefits, users get a sense of enhancement in their professional reputation (Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

Meanwhile, company's marketing communication strategies shifted over the years. While previous strategies focused on influencing directly the consumers, e.g., via advertising, we now see companies arbitrating the influence consumers have on other consumers. This pattern is consolidated in the growing trust consumers have in UGC, with consumers paying attention to other consumer's choices and their options influencing the interests and buying decisions of other users (Financial Times, 2016). Whenever a brand commits resources and opportunities to the integration of UGC in their content marketing strategy, this means that it has noticed that it already has dedicated fans that willing to take time to create content, on top of that having a product worth talking about between consumers (Sumari, 2015).

2.3.1. Types of Content

According to Steimle (2014), there are four main types of online media content: Infographics; webpages; podcasts; videos.

Infographics are simple vertical graphics that include statistics, charts, and a couple of other information that can be useful to spread easily around social media for a long time and over different type of generation. When creating an infographic, you should make sure that you have your company's logo imprinted on the infographic, so when shared by other viewers know it's yours. This type of content is one of the easiest to make and it will cost nothing but time (Steimle, 2014).

Webpages have to be different and stand out from all the other regular webpages. The marketer has to make sure that he is not simply putting content on the website, he has to make sure that is really marketing content (Steimle, 2014).

Podcasts is one of the most powerful content tools because you have no time restriction, allowing you to speak to your audience for as long as you want. It is not restricted like the television news, where guest speaker only speaks for about 2-3 minutes generally. In podcasts, you can have a guest speaker talk about one subject over 3 hours and make valuable debates that last long enough to be interesting until the end. Podcasts have surpassed certain book sale numbers, which show that increase in attention to podcasts. According to Gary Vaynerchuk, or better known as Gary Vee, a social media guru, entrepreneur and four-times New York Times bestselling author, said at the Vid Summit 2017 that the future of marketing is not video but podcasts (Vaynerchuk, 2017). He believes that the ability to do two things at the same time is the reason for its success and current growth.

Videos are just as effective as podcasts; both these content types are extremely good in transmitting emotions to our customers. Unfortunately, many companies think that these two types of content are expensive, but they are wrong. With the rise of technology, the prices for the equipment necessary to create this type of content have fallen, however one downside of videos is that when the video becomes outdated you have to upload a new video, and not simply replace a picture or text (Steimle, 2014).

2.3.2. Visual Content

With the increase of companies, we have an increase in advertisement in different industries, in order to engage properly with customer, you have to stand out merely by your content strategy. With the increase of content marketing, we find a lack of quality in advertisements and un-useful to attract customers. Marketing experts already found and developed new strategies that are currently working and gaining more attention, that being: visual content. According to John Medina (2017) a developmental molecular biologist and research consultant, customers who hear a piece of information remember 10% of the content three days later whereas content presented as visual content, in this case a picture is likely to recall 65% of the information.

Video is a great option for content marketing. Videos are highly appealing to users and relatively easy to repost and spread through various platforms including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn. Using videos allows companies to display complicated and unique storytelling of businesses in just 60-second clips. Videos can also be a great way to transmit company's testimonials and vitrine the product. Internet video grew 50% in 2016 compared to TV, slowly replacing traditional methods (Cisco, 2017).

Visual content has become more influential than written content in the marketing plans of large B2C and B2B enterprises. Research developed by HubSpot (2015) indicates that B2C companies who blog, post and maintain an online presence more than 11 times per month are getting 4 times as many leads than those that blog only 4-5 times per month (HubSpot, 2015). However according to a study conducted by the Social Media Examiner Report 2017; blogging (posting content on a regular basis) dropped from 38% to 32% in 2017, and B2B marketers are more likely to use blogging than a B2C enterprise. Instead, it shows that visual images are 41% up from 37% in 2016, exceeding blogging for the first time (Social Media Examiner, 2017). This indicates that visual content is becoming more popular and effective than written content in recent years. Worldwide the internet protocol (IP) video traffic will account for 82% of the entire consumers generated internet traffic by the year 2021, predicting a 9% growth from the years 2016 (Figure, 2). To put the size of this data, every second a million minute of video content will pass the network by 2021 (Cisco, 2017).

Figure 2 - Global consumer internet video, 2016–2021

Consumer Internet Video 2016–2021	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	CAGR 2016–2021
By Network (PB per Month)							
Fixed	38,369	51,022	65,413	83,172	103,341	125,988	27%
Mobile	3,660	6,094	9,696	15,010	22,512	33,173	55%
By Category (PB per Month)							
Video	29,325	39,518	51,722	68,279	89,181	116,905	32%
Internet video to TV	12,704	17,598	23,387	29,903	36,672	42,255	27%
By Geography (PB per Month)							
Asia Pacific	13,845	19,228	25,854	35,024	46,423	61,352	35%
North America	15,254	20,114	25,778	32,329	39,275	45,485	24%
Western Europe	6,290	8,520	11,005	14,035	17,533	21,760	28%
Middle East and Africa	1,170	1,944	3,068	4,754	7,218	10,895	56%
Central and Eastern Europe	2,527	3,350	4,369	5,824	7,754	10,170	32%
Latin America	2,943	3,960	5,035	6,215	7,650	9,500	26%
Total (PB per Month)							
Consumer Internet video	42,029	57,116	75,109	98,182	125,853	159,161	31%

Source: Cisco VNI, 2017

2.2.5. Content Marketing Effectiveness

According to the Content Marketing Institute (2017), content marketing has six times the power of traditional marketing tools (e.g., advertising) when it comes to converting users into leads and customers. Companies use social networks to attract new customers and expand the business, these strategies can differ from business to businesses even though contributing to most brands bottom line (Kasteler, 2016).

Prosor Sabate and his colleagues (Sabate et al., 2014) studied the popularity of branded posts by analyzing 164 Facebook posts of five different travel agencies. Importantly, they studied how post effectiveness was affected by type of post content and posting schedule. They concluded that having videos and images on posts increased the number of user likes, whereas posting images on

a scheduled time frame generated more user comments. Moreover, they uncovered that having links embedded in posts decreased user's interactions with them, something that is only possible on Facebook since Instagram has several limitations when it comes to sharing.

UGC is more trustworthy from the user's perspective when looking into products and brand information (Leibowitz, 2017). Marketing agencies and active businesses can't get the same trustworthiness that a fellow connection on individual social media transmits, overshadowing traditional marketing on Instagram mostly. A study by Chari et al (2016), conducted on a visual marketing company with a platform designed to help company's digital media, proved that 92% of SNS users trust UGC over traditional advertising methods. The fact that a mutual user is sharing content about a product that is not paying them to publicize it, adds credibility for fellow followers to turn into potential users.

Recent research shows that SNS usage is driven by a desire to boost individual social capital and improve one's psychological state of mind (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). The process of generating and sharing individual content concerning shopping, transaction and consumption experiences seems to be one of the major ways users satisfy their psycho-social needs online, particularly in social media, being hence increasingly fueled by SNS platforms and companies alike (FT, 2016).

However, it is worth noticing that not all SNS users become content creators for brands; mostly are just viewers or spectators of other users' content. Still, both types of users must have some level of engagement with brands to either view or create content. Previous studies on the motivation for users to create and contribute for a brand show that, among other benefits, users get a sense of enhancement in their professional reputation (Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

Meanwhile, company's marketing communication strategies shifted over the years (Kasteler, 2016). While previous strategies focused on influencing directly the consumers, e.g., via advertising, we now see companies assessing the influence consumers have on other consumers. This pattern is explained by the growing trust consumers have in UGC, with consumers paying attention to other consumer's choices and their options influencing the interests and buying decisions of other users (Chen et al, 2016). Whenever a brand commits resources and opportunities to the integration of UGC in their content marketing strategy, this means that it has noticed that it already has dedicated fans that willing to take time to create content, on top of that having a product worth talking about between consumers (Sumari, 2015).

2.5. Conclusion & Research Hypotheses

To conclude, social network marketing strategies and content marketing being growing industries therefore have many studies and recent academic researches on these subjects. Approximately 94% of SME use social media in their marketing tool kits (Smith, 2017). Large companies are more resourceful and tend to be more prosperous than SME's when it comes to investing in marketing strategies (O'Hara, 2015). But being wealthier does not always mean that you are using social media efficiently, it depends how you interact with your followers on the SNS. The key is personal user engagement on the platform which can regularly end in long lasting customer base. Facebook has the power to help businesses start a strong digital presence, with over 1.3 billion daily users turning it into a resourceful platform to generate high visibility among users. The platform is impeccable for companies to distribute product related information, whereas Instagram is a platform subject to better user engagement (O'Hara, 2015). SME's should not be discouraged because larger corporations can invest larger amounts in the online marketing departments. Capital certainly can benefit the process of making the e-commerce pages of companies' profitable, but simple user engagement on SNS can bring you a loyal customer's base. Using social media for business purposes is free simply time consuming but marketers worship SNS's due to branding reasons (O'Hara, 2015).

In order to keep our focus on content marketing and not drift away into irrelevant evolving literature, it was important to focus only on relevant studies about effectiveness of content marketing in relation to generating leads. With respect to the research questions established in chapter 1 and the general information extracted throughout the literature review, the following hypothesis were framed:

- Hypothesis 1: User generated content generate more leads and better user engagement than branded content on both Social Network Sites, Facebook and Instagram.
- Hypothesis 2: User generated contend generates has higher conversation rate on Facebook than branded contend.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Research Approach

The following chapter describes the methodology used for the comparative analysis as well as of the advertisement campaign comparing the effectiveness of UGC vs. branded content.

Quantitative methodologies were used to count and compare frequencies of proxy- indicators (reach, leads, likes and conversions) and to test the hypothesis. The quantitative data was gathered directly from the company's SNS. Instagram and Facebook data was analyzed to compare the reach and the user engagement of branded and user generated image posts. Facebook was the platform used to run the advertisement campaign for comparing the conversation rates achieved through branded and user generated image posts. By conducting a t-test with the primary data, the statistical significance of the findings was tested.

3.2. Primary data

Collecting primary data was achieved through an online marketing campaign that was managed in cooperation with the digital marketing agency VAN in charge of the SNS for the company. For answering Research Question 2, an advertisement campaign was designed and run on Facebook. The main object was to back-track conversions / business transactions to the visual content, through which the customer initially had engaged. After consultations with the VAN, it was decided that the campaign would only be run on Facebook, because Facebook's business analysis tools allow this backtracking and association analysis. Because of data collection and analysis constrains, that campaign was not run on Instagram. The visual content advertised was monitored for five days on Facebook, which consisted of five user-generated images and five branded images. With Facebook analytic tools, it is possible to study traffic rate and count the conversions. Doing so we understand from where the established conversions are originating and due to which correlations. By studying the traffic redirected from Facebook, we comprehend how the traffic translates into bookings and what type of content is more effective. In order to research which type of image posts generates higher conversion rates on Facebook (research question 2).

3.2.1. Sample and Population

Demographics about our population sample weren't available, neither necessary to answer the research questions. By studying the following metrics and frequencies: reach, leads, likes and the associated conversions, it was possible to test the hypothesis. Reach is a metric to measure the audience size and clearly the larger the audience the better are the chances for engaging potential customers. Social action (engagement) is the number of users that engaged in liking or commenting the content. Sessions are the number of users that entered the website through the ad on the SNS. And most importantly the conversions, indicating the number of users that took the desired action of purchasing the product through the website.

The sample consists of 10 image posts, five image posts being UGC and five branded visual content posts. In order to compare the reaches, likes and the associated conversions, the images were advertised for the same amount of days. The paid campaign was advertised on the social media feeds of people who are right for the business, this done by the audience selection tools Facebook ads have. By using user information such as demographics; interests and behaviors the campaign targeted the appropriate users.

The data analysis will be conducted with a student t-test, finding out if there is a significant difference between the two groups of data sets. Then helping us to reject our bias when writing the conclusion and telling us if the data is sig or not sig through the p-value. When calculating the t-test you are trying to check if it is greater or less than the p-value, because this indicates the probability that the data is just random and there is no significance. We are seeking as much confidence as possible and the smallest p-value possible, demonstrating if the data is significantly different or just random.

In order to see these differences happened by chance and to test the significance results the t-test was run. The t score is the ratio between the difference between two groups and the difference inside the groups. The bigger the t score the larger the difference between the groups while the smaller t score the more similarity within the groups (Stephanie, 2013). With every t-value, there is a p-value, which is the probability that the findings happened by chance ranging from 0% to a 100%. Generally written in decimals, for example a p-value of 5% is 0.05. This would point

toward that the data did not happen by chance, while a p-value of 0.01 states that there was a 1% probability that the results happened by chance. It is commonly recognized that with a p-value of 5% the data is confirmed (Stephanie, 2013).

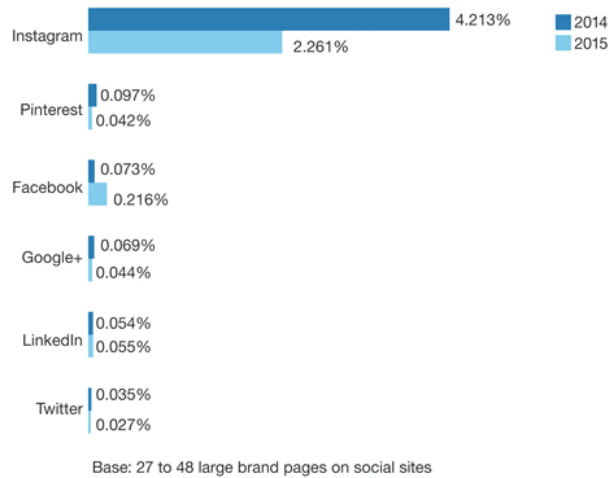
Whilst helping the company in improving and selecting marketing strategies within SNS. Thus, would bring new economic values as the ultimate goal but not only, qualitative data would help the company establish a long-term social media strategy.

3.2.2. Data collection

Facebook was the platform used to run a five-day campaign, using the tools the platform offers to access data and metrics. The agency in charge of the e-commerce page of the business, supported running the campaign on companies Facebook site. The platform offers you the possibility to share unlimited links to your website and e-commerce page. Specially for companies that seek to distribute informational posts to promote their website and products, it is a better alternative than Instagram. Together with marketing agency and by looking at historical data, it estimated the five days would be enough to reach over thousands of users and to assess how many sales the campaign with the image posts might contribute in one week.

A study by Forrester Research (2015) analyzed the level of user engagement with the top 50 global brands in different SNS. Results showed that user engagement in Facebook is outperformed by that in Instagram (Figure 3). It is practically every small business first choice to use Facebook as the main consumer channel, being the largest pools to generate an audience. Even with Instagram outperforming Facebook in the category of user engagement, when it comes to reach, Facebook has more power over Instagram (Brandon, 2017). With a larger user base and a wider acceptance across most age groups, we had a bigger chance at boosting visibility using Facebook (Brandon, 2017). Specifically, advantageous since this dissertation does not target any specific age clutch. That's why SME need to be strategically exceptional when it comes to organic and paid content and engaging your followers. While Instagram has numerous limitations when it comes to linking (sharing content), users are not allowed to share links that will lead you to the company's e-commerce page.

Figure 3 - User interaction with brands as a percentage of brands fans or followers



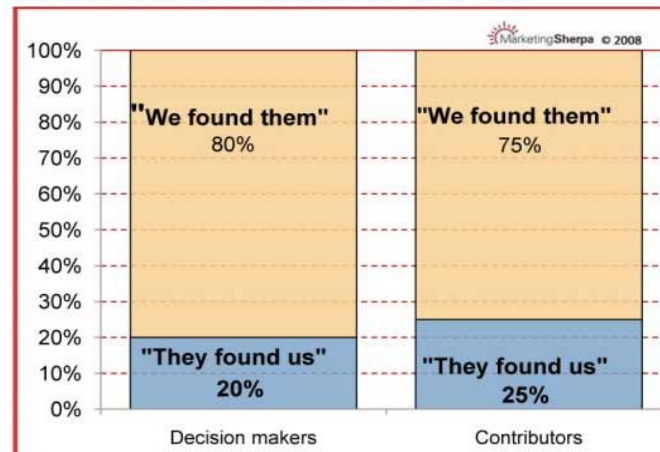
Source: Forrester Research Inc, 2017

3.2.3. Lead Optimization and Facebook

Lead generation is an important concept to understand when using social media platforms for business purposes, also known as referrals, which account for most online advertisement spending. Lead optimization or known as leads is a metric which is the key competent used to analyze the contents value. It is the number of potential sales contacts earned through social media per time period (Seiter, 2015). The amount of extensive information available online has led to the rise of new marketing techniques to improve potential leads before transitioning them to sales (Marketo, 2016). Most SNS are designed or changed over time to become lead generation devices due to the constant change over the years in new online and social techniques (Marketo, 2016). The continuous change and content upload over the years forced marketers to concentrate on being found, becoming “self-directed buyers” and developing loyal customer relationships. Figure 4 shows this shift in how decision makers and companies (contributors) are approaching the customer and not vice-versa anymore.

Figure 4 - Did the Customer Find the Product Vendor or Vice-Versa?

Chart 1: Did the Customer Find the Product Vendor or Vice-Versa?



Source: Business Products Buyers Survey, March 2017

Facebook is much more than just a social media platform; it is also a marketing company working as the intermediary to connect users and consumers worldwide. So, what can Facebook sell in terms of content marketing and advertisements? Offering you help to target your customers, get their attention and see the results. Helping you find users based on demographics, behaviors and contact information. Grabbing their attention with eye-catching advert formats and being available on all types of devices and different connection speeds. It is the most popular platform within social networks and a market leader, reaching 1 billion registered users and 2.2 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2018). While these numbers are expected to rise with the increase of mobile device usage for SNS, reason why the content you put out on Facebook has to stand out among most. All this can be done through the advert-reporting tool, Facebook Manager, which allows the client to see the impact of advertising campaigns. It will authorize the client to purchase, create and buy Facebook adverts. Concurring to Facebook Manager (2017) using the service in order to purchase and create content is simple, explained as followed:

- Purchasing the Adverts: In order to purchase adverts for Facebook, Instagram and for your Audience Network you have to use Facebook's adverts management tools.
- Creating an Advertisement: According to Facebook it is easier than ever to extend your customer reach by creating an advert. Then displaying the post on Facebook, Instagram and the Audience Network to improve your reach.

Understanding the following terminology is crucial to understand how Facebook Manager operates paid advertising:

- Campaigns: the campaign houses all of the company's assets

Facebook adverts can be purchased at different price ranges. There are various steps that go into buying a Facebook ad, the first step is to define your campaigns objective. Facebook has a list of suggestions for your advertising objective that will help you set and reach your business goals. The ad objective is your goal when users see your ad, what is it you want them to do? If your aim is to show Facebook users your business website, you can create ads that will lead/urge users to visit your website or generate leads. Once you have decided to create an ad, you need to set your objectives, which will then align with the whole business goals that fall into three categories: awareness, consideration and conversion. The ads manager will help choose your objectives by giving you a list that need to be covered.

In the awareness category, we have two objectives *Brand Awareness* and *Reach* are the objectives that will generate interest and spark buzz about your product or service. *Brand Awareness* will help you reach more customers that will pay attention to your ads and ultimately increase the attentiveness of your brand. The *Reach* objective will assist you in showing your ad to the highest amount of users possible.

The second category we have consideration objectives that help you to get users to start thinking about your business but also look for further information. There are five major objectives being (Facebook Manager, 2017): *Traffic*, *Engagement*, *App installs*, *Video views*, *Lead generation* and *Messages*:

- *Traffic*: redirect or send more users to a destination on or off Facebook like your business website or app.
- *Engagement*: will promote your post to get more people to see and get involved with your content.
- *App installs*: redirect users to the app store to purchase your application.
- *Video views*: promoting and spreading videos about your products, about previous customer experience stories raising awareness.
- *Lead generation*: gather all the lead information from users that showed interest in your product / service.

- *Messages*: have your users interact and ask questions about your products over the messenger on your business page providing a somewhat customer support at all times.

Conversions is the last marketing objective the one that encourages interested and potentially interested users in your business to make the purchase or the decision to use your service. In order to make this happened the Ads Manager sets you up three key objectives Conversions, Product catalog sales and Store visits (Facebook Manager, 2017):

- *Conversions*: ultimately the goal is to make users take the final decision to purchase and trusting you by adding credit card information. To measure the conversion rates the managers tells you to: “Use the Facebook pixel or app events to track and measure conversions”.
- *Product catalog sales*: creating ads that will include your product from your product catalog based on your target user audience.
- *Store visits*: recommending your store or business location to people nearby.

3.2.4. Data analysis

The campaign was monitored over five consecutive days, separately posting content for UGC and brand owned content. So, all together this campaign included ten posts, posting separately for each day of the five-day campaign UGC and a brand owned content. In order to understand how the content was perceived by the user, the number of sessions were evaluated. Sessions are the number of people that entered the company’s website through the ad, bringing a brighter insight of the customer that actually converted and the customer journey completed by the users. We are seeking as much confidence as possible and the smallest p-value possible, demonstrating if the data is significantly different or just random.

3.3. Indicators and Proxy-Indicators

The reach and positive viewer reactions to thirty randomly picked images posted on both Instagram and Facebook were compared. Twenty of these images were branded and brand owned image posts, while ten were user generated image posts. The following indicators were used:

- **Reach:** the number of users that see a specific piece of your content (Seiter, 2015).
- **Social Action / “Likes” content engagement**

For measuring positive content engagement, the frequency of ‘likes’ (or “thumbs-up”) were counted for each image. Instagram only allows the reaction through ‘likes’ while Facebook has also the “like”, but added since February 2016 five additional types of reactions (love, haha, wow, sad and angry). Nevertheless, an extensive ‘Facebook Reaction Study’ analyzing 105,000 Facebook pages showed that the newly introduced reaction types only count for 5.6% (116 / 2056) of the average amount of reaction per image post. For Facebook pages with up to 1000 fans, reactions other than the classical ‘classical like’ only count for 2.7% (Quintly, 2016). Therefore, the number of ‘likes’ per image post on Instagram were compared to the ‘likes’ per image post on Facebook.

The comparative marketing campaign posted on each five consecutive days one branded image post and simultaneously one user generated image post, measuring over a one week period the following indicators:

- **Social Action:** see above.
- **Reach:** see above.
- **Sessions:** the number of users that entered the website through the ad on the SNS (Peters et al, 2013).
- **Conversion rate:** number of users that took the desired action of purchasing the product through the website (Peters et al, 2013). Found by dividing the number of conversions by total traffic per period (Seiter, 2015).

3.4. Secondary data

Secondary data was obtained by an assembly of thirty random posts on both Instagram and Facebook. In order to acceptably answer what type of content generates more leads and if this depends, on which SNS is used. In order to compare leads generated by the different content types, it is essential to have the frequency analysis for UGC and brand owned content for the same time period. Generating leads is the process of attracting and converting new users into well-informed customers about your company and product.

To successfully answer the research question about content engagement it was required to study the quantitative data obtained with 'likes'. Engagement is measured by the number 'likes' established on each post. Since we consider likes as a metric of engagement, they are quantitative data.

3.4.1. Sample

The sample size consisted of 30 pictures that had been previously posted on Facebook and Instagram. Out of these, 10 pictures were generated by users, and 20 pictures were brand owned content which had been taken or commissioned by the company. The decision to have a sample size of brand owned pictures twice as big as the sample size of UGC, was established with VAN company by knowing that users see UGC as a more trustworthy content type (Leibowitz, 2017). The pictures of both categories, the brand owned and the user-generated images were randomly collected from the social media feeds of the company. The number of sample was casually established to ensure we have sufficient influence over the statistical analysis results to the overall population.

3.4.2. Data collection and analysis

The data set was obtained by a collection of thirty randomly chosen posts on both Instagram and Facebook. Out of the thirty posts ten were user generated content, while the remaining twenty brand owned content. The sample content was randomly collected from the social media feeds companies SNS. The content had been posted in the course of the past year, but both the UGC and brand owned content were always posted simultaneously on Facebook and Instagram. The data include the following metrics the number of users reached, the number of likes established from users and evidently the type of content; UGC or brand owned content. On the cut-off date, when reach and likes were collected, they had been posted for the same number of days on both platforms.

Chapter 4. Results and Analysis

The following chapter presents the findings of the data analysis and the advertisement campaign done in association with VAN marketing company. Since there was no qualitative, research conducted and the quantitative data is presented and discussed below.

The table 1 shows the amount of ‘Reaches’ and ‘Likes’ Brand Owned Content and UGC received on both SNS, Facebook (FB) and Instagram (IG).

Table 1 - Data Set 30 Pictures: Brand Owned Content & UGC

Data Set - BRAN OWNED CONTENT					Data Set - USER GENERATE CONTENT				
<i>Picture Code</i>	<i>Reaches FB</i>	<i>Likes FB</i>	<i>Reach IG</i>	<i>Likes IG</i>	<i>Picture Code</i>	<i>Reaches FB</i>	<i>Likes FB</i>	<i>Reach IG</i>	<i>Likes IG</i>
2	1460	29	914	84	1	951	25	887	90
3	6645	141	1091	184	9	1394	36	971	114
4	869	30	1095	188	11	1166	22	1038	91
5	879	22	904	102	18	1845	27	998	97
6	749	21	959	139	21	2025	21	878	79
7	2172	29	1024	128	23	1440	14	906	88
8	3045	23	879	93	25	834	13	1021	105
10	2270	18	977	90	28	471	7	1207	114
12	2071	25	939	107	29	977	30	1091	141
13	2514	22	782	55	30	639	8	1074	140
14	2121	10	837	53					
15	778	23	988	114					
16	1198	42	1041	139					
17	1558	20	869	53					
19	795	12	860	57					
20	1251	11	1019	125					
22	1095	11	713	50					
24	1010	43	1086	198					
26	1003	14	635	42					
27	503	21	1033	96					

The secondary data was conducted with a t-test analysis on SPSS, see table below with the independent samples test and the t-test group statistics. The independent sample testing was conducted for the first group UGC (0 1) with respective variables ‘reach’ and ‘likes’ followed by the independent t-test with group IG (Instagram). The criteria to teste the hypothesis was 0.95 (=95.) and a level of significance of 0.05.

Below find the non-parametric tests displaying asymptotic significances that allow us to answer our hypothesis. The first table shows the t-test independent samples 'reach' and 'likes' in group Instagram.

Table 2 – Secondary Data: T-Test Independent & Robust Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

Group Statistics					
	UGC	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
REACH	No	40	1335,77	1033,255	163,372
	Yes	20	1090,65	363,692	81,324
LIKES	No	40	66,60	54,696	8,648
	Yes	20	63,10	46,788	10,462

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
REACH	Equal variances assumed	3,916	,053	1,026	58	,309	245,125	238,937	-233,159	723,409
	Equal variances not assumed			1,343	53,926	,185	245,125	182,494	-120,765	611,015
LIKES	Equal variances assumed	,292	,591	,245	58	,808	3,500	14,306	-25,136	32,136
	Equal variances not assumed			,258	43,860	,798	3,500	13,574	-23,859	30,859

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
REACH	16,272	1	58	,000
LIKES	10,374	1	58	,002

The following conclusions were established with the hypothesis-testing summary. The distribution of 'LIKES' is the same among the sets (Facebook & Instagram) of UGC. Findings also exhibited that the distribution of 'REACH' is the same among the sets of UGC. Posts on Instagram have less reach but more likes than posts in Facebook, and both differences in means are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). There are no significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in mean 'REACH' and 'LIKES' between UGC and non-UGC content posts. Having an interaction effect between the type of social network platform and type of content that is not statistically significant different, we can truthfully reject hypothesis one.

The results gathered from the collection of thirty posts do not tell us what type of content generates more leads and if users actually purchased a product from the sightseeing company.

When comparing brand owned content versus UGC 'reach' for both platforms we obtain the following means:

- Brand Owned Content:
 - 'Reach' Facebook 1699.3 and 'Likes' Facebook 28.35;
 - 'Reach' Instagram 932.23 and 'Like' Instagram 104.85.
- UGC:
 - 'Reach' Facebook 1174.2 and 'Likes' Facebook 20.3;
 - 'Reach' Instagram 1007.1 and 'Likes' Instagram 105.9.

On Facebook, brand owned content achieved an average of 1699.3 user 'reach' compared to an average of 1174.2 user 'reach' achieved by UGC. Therefore, we can determine that on Facebook, brand owned content has more 'reaches' than UGC. On Instagram, UGC achieved slightly more 'reach' with an average of 1007.1 users compared to brand owned content achieving an average of 923.23 user 'reach'. Not only has UGC a bigger 'reach' impact on Instagram, it also slightly

contributes to generating more ‘likes’. By measuring the positive user engagement with the average of likes, we can conclude that Instagram prompts its users proportionally to more positive engagement than Facebook user. Although Facebook allows also other type of user reaction, under 3.3.1 we described that ‘likes’ are still the most important form of feedback (Quintly, 2016). Dividing the ‘like’ by its respective ‘user’ universe, we can well calculate a rate giving us a proxy for positive user engagement. This positive-user-engagement-rate (‘likes’ divided by ‘reaches’) is more than six times higher on Instagram compared to Facebook. This difference true for both types on visual contend, UGC (6,1) as well non-UGC (6,7). As there is no significant difference between this ‘positive-user-engagement-rates’ for UGC and for non-UGC, the conclusion is that this difference is due to the interaction dynamic triggered by the SNS type and not due to the different content types.

Table 3 – Facebook Campaign: UGC vs Brand Owned Content

Content	Metrics	Day					Average
		1	2	3	4	5	
<i>UGC</i>	Reach	2045	2339	2520	2368	2775	2409.4
	Social Action	81	75	97	59	92	80.8
	Session	32	49	46	39	34	200
	Conversion	0	1	0	1	1	0,015%
<i>Brand Owned</i>	Reach	1855	2405	2576	2359	2228	2284.6
	Social Action	63	85	67	63	51	65.8
	Session	36	42	38	24	34	174
	Conversion	1	0	0	0	0	0,0057%

In the data set ‘Facebook Campaign: UGC vs Brand Owned Content’ presented above we see primary data with the total means achieved thru the frequencies. The data was achieved through a paid ad campaign conducted on the Facebook. The analysis of the data was conducted with an Independent Two-sample *t* Test.

Table 4 – Primary Data: Group Statistics & Independent Sample Test

Group Statistics					
	UGC	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reach	Yes	5	2409,40	267,092	119,447
	No	5	2284,60	270,511	120,976
SocialActions	Yes	5	80,80	14,973	6,696
	No	5	65,80	12,296	5,499
Sessions	Yes	5	40,00	7,382	3,302
	No	5	34,80	6,723	3,007
Conversions	Yes	5	,60	,548	,245
	No	5	,20	,447	,200

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reach	Equal variances assumed	,002	,970	,734	8	,484	124,800	170,009	-267,241	516,841
	Equal variances not assumed			,734	7,999	,484	124,800	170,009	-267,252	516,852
SocialActions	Equal variances assumed	,297	,601	1,731	8	,122	15,000	8,665	-4,981	34,981
	Equal variances not assumed			1,731	7,709	,123	15,000	8,665	-5,114	35,114
Sessions	Equal variances assumed	,333	,580	1,165	8	,278	5,200	4,465	-5,097	15,497
	Equal variances not assumed			1,165	7,931	,278	5,200	4,465	-5,113	15,513
Conversions	Equal variances assumed	1,524	,252	1,265	8	,242	,400	,316	-,329	1,129
	Equal variances not assumed			1,265	7,692	,243	,400	,316	-,334	1,134

The independent-samples t-test was run to test the effect of UGC and non-UGC post performance. The results show that UGC posts always outperforms brand owned content, yet there is no statistically significant difference between them. This may be due to the fact that the sample size is also very small, which can affect the power of detecting meaningful difference. With no significant frequencies, we can reject hypothesis 2.

The observation made on Table 3, between the differences in conversation rates for both UGC and non-UGC was calculated for the five days of the campaign together. The UGC displays 3

conversions out of 200 sessions during the 5 days with a conversion rate of 0.015%. Brand owned content with 1 conversion out of 174 sessions has a conversion rate of $0.0057\% = 0.006\%$. This would mean that the conversion rate for UGC is 2.5 times higher than the conversion rate for branded content. Results show that there is no statistical relevance between the data. The difference between the conversion rates indicates that UGC inspires more confidence, which resulted in higher conversion rates throughout this campaign although the sample size being too small to significantly test it.

Chapter 5. Main Conclusion, Limitations & Further Research

5.1. Main Conclusion

Content marketing can directly affect companies profits and their customers. Corporations use it to increase sales, to encourage new customers and to save costs. However, it is important to create relevant content to attract and keep your customers. Since everyday companies are creating brand content and sending it to SNS users, unfortunately unrelated content (Content Marketing Institute, 2017). Within the different forms of content, visual content is becoming even more popular and effective than written content (Cisco, 2017). When entering social media platforms to perform a marketing strategies, Facebook is great platform to generate an initial audience (Smith, 2017). While Instagram the fastest growing SNS, it is a prodigious platform to visually showcase brands to younger audiences, if you know your demographics (Smith, 2017).

Adopting UGC marketing strategies is key to a handful of potential customers that trust in the brand being dealt with. Results helped explain findings by Stern (2017), the differences between the content frequencies paid, earned and owned contents. The investigation made with the campaign shows that UGC offers a unique perspective, something that is not always acquirable by the business itself.

The literature reviewed that reactions or “likes” are forms of customer engagements on SNS, however increased customer engagement (i.e. “likes” or “reaction”) do not necessarily translate into an increase of sales.

Results from secondary data showed that there is no significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in means 'REACH' and 'LIKES' between UGC and non-UGC content publications rejecting hypothesis 1.

The fact that the literature reviewed and the research process it pointed towards the fact that user generated content generates more conversions and the fact that results lead us to reject the hypothesis, might be due to the sample size of the research.

The campaign results show a insignificance of the data results, leading us to reject hypothesis 2. Which most certainly can be explained by the minor sample size. Nonetheless, results indicate that UGC generates more conversions, which is also backed up by the literature reviewed.

5.2. Limitations

Not able to make a causal statement as desired originally – if the cause for more or less leads is the type of network. There might be confounding factors. Cannot say which platform generated more clients / business, because it is not possible to see conversation rates (or traffic that resulted in purchase) originating from Instagram. The collection process for the data was restricted by only being able to use Facebook as the social media platform to run the analysis. As mentioned previously, Instagram has limited access to share links and certain content. Therefore, strained to perform the analysis on one of the two platforms the company has a social media presence.

Uber is a good example of companies that involve users into their marketing strategies. The success of both, Uber and Airbnb through their exponential growths was also due the fact that they do not offer the services themselves, but rather connect through their platforms users with service providers.

5.3. Further Research

Further research could be hold in the field of discovering the disadvantages and advantages of all different dimensions (i.e.: cost analysis; managerial aspects). This dissertation studies the effectiveness of lead generations and conversions rates; it could be interesting to follow up this

thesis with a significantly larger sample and a study that analysis the advantages and disadvantages. We are not analyzing ‘customer data’ in this dissertation. We analyze the effectiveness and usage of customer create content or UGC and compare it to own content. Further research could analyze the ‘customer data’ with purposes of studying consumer’s behaviors within SNS and how they perceive the content exposed.

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Appendices

1 - Primary Data: ANOVA & Robust Tests of Equality of Means

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Reach	,002	1	8	,970
SocialActions	,297	1	8	,601
Sessions	,333	1	8	,580
Conversions	1,524	1	8	,252

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reach	Between Groups	38937,600	1	38937,600	,539	,484
	Within Groups	578058,400	8	72257,300		
	Total	616996,000	9			
SocialActions	Between Groups	562,500	1	562,500	2,997	,122
	Within Groups	1501,600	8	187,700		
	Total	2064,100	9			
Sessions	Between Groups	67,600	1	67,600	1,356	,278
	Within Groups	398,800	8	49,850		
	Total	466,400	9			
Conversions	Between Groups	,400	1	,400	1,600	,242
	Within Groups	2,000	8	,250		
	Total	2,400	9			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

		Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
Reach	Welch	,539	1	7,999	,484
	Brown-Forsythe	,539	1	7,999	,484
SocialActions	Welch	2,997	1	7,709	,123
	Brown-Forsythe	2,997	1	7,709	,123
Sessions	Welch	1,356	1	7,931	,278
	Brown-Forsythe	1,356	1	7,931	,278
Conversions	Welch	1,600	1	7,692	,243
	Brown-Forsythe	1,600	1	7,692	,243

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

**2 - Primary Data: Independent T-Test / Variables= Reach, Social Action, Sessions & Conversions / Criteria= CI (0.95)
Teste-T**

Group Statistics

	UGC	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reach	Yes	5	2409,40	267,092	119,447
	No	5	2284,60	270,511	120,976
SocialActions	Yes	5	80,80	14,973	6,696
	No	5	65,80	12,296	5,499
Sessions	Yes	5	40,00	7,382	3,302
	No	5	34,80	6,723	3,007
Conversions	Yes	5	,60	,548	,245
	No	5	,20	,447	,200

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Reach	Equal variances assumed	,002	,970	,734	8	,484	124,800	170,009	-267,241	516,841
	Equal variances not assumed			,734	7,999	,484	124,800	170,009	-267,252	516,852
SocialActions	Equal variances assumed	,297	,601	1,731	8	,122	15,000	8,665	-4,981	34,981
	Equal variances not assumed			1,731	7,709	,123	15,000	8,665	-5,114	35,114
Sessions	Equal variances assumed	,333	,580	1,165	8	,278	5,200	4,465	-5,097	15,497
	Equal variances not assumed			1,165	7,931	,278	5,200	4,465	-5,113	15,513
Conversions	Equal variances assumed	1,524	,252	1,265	8	,242	,400	,316	-,329	1,129
	Equal variances not assumed			1,265	7,692	,243	,400	,316	-,334	1,134

3 – Secondary Data: T-Test / Groups= UGC (0 1) / Variables= Rach & Likes

Group Statistics

	UGC	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
REACH	No	40	1335,77	1033,255	163,372
	Yes	20	1090,65	363,692	81,324
LIKES	No	40	66,60	54,696	8,648
	Yes	20	63,10	46,788	10,462

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
REACH	Equal variances assumed	3,916	,053	1,026	58	,309	245,125	238,937	-233,159	723,409
	Equal variances not assumed			1,343	53,926	,185	245,125	182,494	-120,765	611,015
LIKES	Equal variances assumed	,292	,591	,245	58	,808	3,500	14,306	-25,136	32,136
	Equal variances not assumed			,258	43,860	,798	3,500	13,574	-23,859	30,859

4 - Secondary Data: T-Test / Groups= Instagram (0 1)

Group Statistics					
	INSTAGRAM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
REACH	No	30	1550,93	1163,089	212,350
	Yes	30	957,20	122,200	22,311
LIKES	No	30	25,67	23,639	4,316
	Yes	30	105,20	40,404	7,377

Independent Samples Test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
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		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
REACH	Equal variances assumed	16,272	,000	2,781	58	,007	593,733	213,519	166,329	1021,138
	Equal variances not assumed			2,781	29,640	,009	593,733	213,519	157,448	1030,019
LIKES	Equal variances assumed	10,374	,002	- 9,306	58	,000	-79,533	8,547	-96,641	-62,426
	Equal variances not assumed			- 9,306	46,770	,000	-79,533	8,547	-96,729	-62,338

5 - Secondary Data: Nonparametric Tests: Independent Samples (UGC)

Resumo de Teste de Hipótese

	Hipótese nula	Teste	Sig.	Decisão
1	A distribuição de REACH é a mesma entre as categorias de UGC.	Teste U de Mann-Whitney de amostras independentes	,962,000	Rejeitar a hipótese nula.
2	A distribuição de LIKES é a mesma entre as categorias de UGC.	Teste U de Mann-Whitney de amostras independentes	,832,000	Rejeitar a hipótese nula.

São exibidas significâncias assintóticas. O nível de significância é ,05.

6 - Secondary Data: Nonparametric Tests: Independent Samples (Instagram)

Resumo de Teste de Hipótese

	Hipótese nula	Teste	Sig.	Decisão
1	A distribuição de REACH é a mesma entre as categorias de INSTAGRAM.	Teste U de Mann-Whitney de amostras independentes	31,000	Rejeitar a hipótese nula.
2	A distribuição de LIKES é a mesma entre as categorias de INSTAGRAM.	Teste U de Mann-Whitney de amostras independentes	,000	Rejeitar a hipótese nula.

São exibidas significâncias assintóticas. O nível de significância é ,05.

7 – UNIANOVA ‘REACH’ by Instagram UGC

Between-Subjects Factors

	Value	Label	N
INSTAGRAM	0	No	30
	1	Yes	30
UGC	0	No	40
	1	Yes	20

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: REACH

INSTAGRAM	UGC	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No	No	1739,30	1353,812	20
	Yes	1174,20	503,127	10
	Total	1550,93	1163,089	30
Yes	No	932,25	125,737	20
	Yes	1007,10	102,914	10
	Total	957,20	122,200	30
Total	No	1335,77	1033,255	40
	Yes	1090,65	363,692	20
	Total	1254,07	872,861	60

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

Dependent Variable: REACH

F	df1	df2	Sig.
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7,266	3	56	,000
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Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Instagram + UGC + Instagram * UGC

8 – UNIANOVA ‘LIKES’ by Instagram UGC

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
INSTAGRAM	0	No	30
	1	Yes	30
UGC	0	No	40
	1	Yes	20

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: LIKES

INSTAGRAM	UGC	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No	No	28,35	28,042	20
	Yes	20,30	9,615	10
	Total	25,67	23,639	30
Yes	No	104,85	47,689	20
	Yes	105,90	21,408	10
	Total	105,20	40,404	30
Total	No	66,60	54,696	40
	Yes	63,10	46,788	20
	Total	65,43	51,820	60

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

Dependent Variable: LIKES

F	df1	df2	Sig.
5,856	3	56	,001

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Instagram + UGC + Instagram * UGC

9 – ONEWAY ‘REACH’ by UGC / Descriptives Homogeneity Brownforsythe Welch

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
REACH	3,916	1	58	,053
LIKES	,292	1	58	,591

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
REACH	Between Groups	801150,208	1	801150,208	1,052	,309
	Within Groups	44150193,520	58	761210,233		
	Total	44951343,730	59			
LIKES	Between Groups	163,333	1	163,333	,060	,808
	Within Groups	158267,400	58	2728,748		
	Total	158430,733	59			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

		Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
REACH	Welch	1,804	1	53,926	,185
	Brown-Forsythe	1,804	1	53,926	,185
LIKES	Welch	,066	1	43,860	,798
	Brown-Forsythe	,066	1	43,860	,798

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

10 – ONEWAY ‘REACH’ ‘LIKES’ by Instagram / Descriptives Homogeneity Brownforsythe Welch

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
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REACH	16,272	1	58	,000
LIKES	10,374	1	58	,002

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
REACH	Between Groups	5287789,067	1	5287789,067	7,732	,007
	Within Groups	39663554,670	58	683854,391		
	Total	44951343,730	59			
LIKES	Between Groups	94883,267	1	94883,267	86,600	,000
	Within Groups	63547,467	58	1095,646		
	Total	158430,733	59			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

		Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
REACH	Welch	7,732	1	29,640	,009
	Brown-Forsythe	7,732	1	29,640	,009
LIKES	Welch	86,600	1	46,770	,000
	Brown-Forsythe	86,600	1	46,770	,000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.