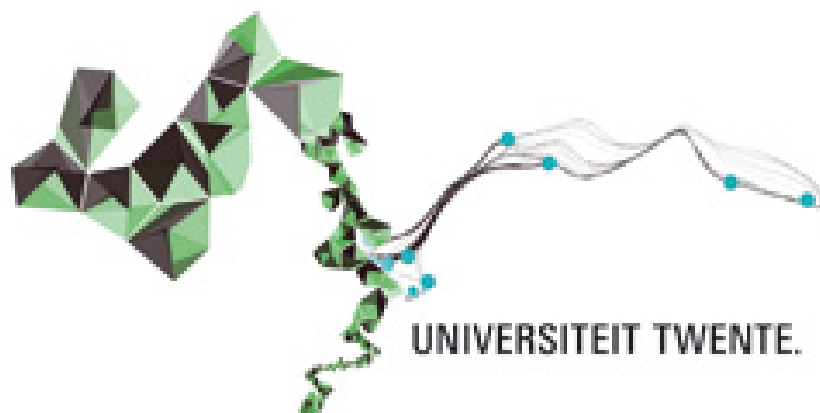# Football Community Strategies

A research about designing Football Community Strategies and applying them to football clubs.

UNIVERSITEIT TWENTE.

Jeroen Schoon,
2013

Football Community Strategies

A research about designing Football Community Strategies and applying them to football clubs.

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Preface

As a Master Business Administration track: International Management student, I have a great field of studies. A broad field ranging from Human Resources to Marketing and from Sales to Accountancy. I like them all, still I prefer one more than the other. When looking for a subject in which to do my Master Thesis in, I asked to myself:" Are you just choosing the first subject which comes a long or do you want to research something where your professional and personal interests meet?"

Football and Internet applications are two of my passions. I enjoy spending time on the internet and playing and watching football. Therefore the choice to do research in the football world was a great chance to examine my beloved world in a scientific way. The football world isn't a world where many scientific studies were done. On one hand this could have been a problem, due to the low amount of useful material. On the other hand this is a great chance to start a discussion in the scientific world. I chose to take the challenge and aim to write a scientific research about the football world. I haven't regret making this decision.

This research was great to exclude. I've been to several stadiums of some of the biggest football clubs in Europe. I was granted tours through the stadium, met some players and was able to interview important employees of the football clubs.

I saw that I was not only the interviewer, but also the interviewee. During the interview many times I was asked about my opinion. The football clubs all had their own ideas about their communities, I enjoyed listening to their opinions, validating them and using them in this research.

It was a challenge to set up this research due to the low amount of scientific papers, but after I passed this phase the research was great fun to do. Therefore I would like to thank the participating clubs for taking the time for me. Also I would like to thank my graduation committee for the time to read my research and the suggestions in the initial phase of setting up my research. They have always reviewed my Master Thesis with great expertise and helped me when I had to be helped.

I hope you will enjoy reading my thesis and are able to validate my content.

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Management summery

Football is arguably the biggest sport in the entire world. Almost every country known to men has a national football union. The popularity of football is growing and growing. For example the World Cup in South Africa (2010) yielded over an 'average in-home global audience' of 530.9 million views in more than 200 countries for the final played on 11 July, 2010, at Johannesburg's Soccer City stadium. The Union of European Football Associations (Uefa) claimed that the Champions League final of 2009 had a total of 210 million live views in more than 130 countries over the world. (fifa, 31 May 2012)

Looking at these numbers, football clubs know that there are massive international expansion possibilities. Besides these possibilities domestic markets become saturated. Football clubs mostly find their fans geographically; if you live in the east of the Netherlands you're a FC Twente supporter and if you live in the north you're a FC Groningen supporter, or at least in 90% of the cases. This results in very few possibilities for domestic expansion of your football clubs fan base.

Due to the explosion of internet over the last 15 years, internet becomes a great mean to reach your supporters in other countries, geographical distance isn't an issue anymore. Social Media is a mean to reach your supporters in a user friendly way. For Social Media there are few to none strategies for football clubs. Therefore this research designs several strategies for football clubs so that they can handle their community in an online world.

This research aims to answer the question *What are appropriate Football Community Strategies to design a selection model?*

Hereby classifies this research three distinct Football Community Strategies. These strategies are based on two dimensions. The first dimension is community activity and the second dimension is image. These two dimensions are used to create a selection model. The selection model is a 3x3 matrix with on the horizontal axis community activity and on the vertical axis image. This selection model helps classify the Football Community Strategies for the football world.

The first strategy is that of the Sole Content Aggregator. This strategy proposes that the football club is the only provider of content. The football club ensures good (or bad) image. The football club uses their legal division to fight every other provider of content. It is a very aggressive approach which can either have a good or a bad effect on image. The community activity is none, since no other content is allowed. Typical characteristics are group communication, low member care and low importance of public relations.

The second strategy is that of the Influenced Content Aggregator. This strategy proposes that community activity is so important that the football club should do everything to please the Online Community. By responding quickly to your Online Community, the football club believes it can ensure a good image, but harmful messages have a big influence on image. Many clubs find themselves in this strategy and depending on the exclusion this isn't a bad thing. Typical characteristics are high responsiveness, reactive communication and high member care.

The third strategy is that of the Influencing Content Aggregator. This strategy proposes that you can't compete with your communities' activity. It is better to place justifiable content and let this content flow among your Online Community. Not only flow among your Online Community, but also reach supporters that aren't a member of your Online Community. The football club is the one that starts this flow. By being the official Social Media page, other supporter owned Social Media pages can use the official pages to generate their content. The football club can ensure that the right content flows among the internet. This takes a lot of start up time, but in return to exclude, after you claimed the spider in the web position, the time spent will diminish.

Typical characteristics are unique content, proactive communication and one way communication.

This research doesn't say one strategy is better than the other, but does say that if you are a football club and want to strategize your Online Community approach, please look for similarities among the researched football clubs. In general if you are a small football club the Sole Content Aggregator strategy might be best. If you are a growing football club and want to expand your Social Media, but don't really know how the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy might be best. If your are a big incumbent football club or have a large Online Community in might be better to use Influencing Content Aggregator Strategy. It is possible to combine of move between these strategies. Do note that they are merely ideal types which make them only perfect in their own favourable environment. There are more strategies possible, nine in total. Other strategies are made up of hybrids between the ideal types. This research doesn't map them. The end product is a selection model that maps three ideal types of strategies within the dimensions community activity and image.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Over the last few decades theorist have argued that a growing organization cannot aim its goals inside their national boarders. Helen Deresky, 2000, argued that companies around the world are spending increasing amounts of time in reaching outside their national boarders. These companies are searching for profitable new markets, acquisitions or plain foreign direct investment (FDI). Lane et al, 2009, adds that in the twenty-first century, begin a global player is no longer a nice-to-have capability; it is a must-have for those who want to create a substantial amount of value for their organization. Also the former CEO of international company Hewlett-Packard John Young says:" *there is no longer any such thing as a purely national economy. The rest of the world is just too big to ignore, either as a market or as a competitor."*
It becomes clear that the past decade is over flown by research about the many possibilities that lie beyond an organizations national border. Football clubs and their market within their national border can become easily saturated. International business can be compared with international football clubs. Only the human factor of a football club has to be weighed in. If a club performs well on the field, they can reach a lot of potential supporters. Important in the expansion is that a football club can create feeling with their target group/region/country not only on sports success. The feeling about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities, the feeling about myths that are being told or perhaps the reason that a player from the target region plays for the football club can be used to reach new supporters. Football clubs use many tools to acquire new supporters. There are many different reasons to support a football club. Football supporters meet on the internet to share their believes, talk about matches and to gain other football club related information. These supporters are a part of the Football Community of the football club. This research is about how to design Football Community Strategies that can be implemented by the football club. This research designs and applies these Football Community Strategies.

1.1 Internationalization background

Internationalization is an inevitable fact for many corporations. If you operate in service markets, product markets or industrial markets corporations that want to grow have to go International. Especially the Dutch companies have to expand their business since the domestic market can never expand beyond the 16 million or so inhabitants.
Successful football clubs can become saturated in their domestic market, especially football clubs in smaller countries. If these clubs want to expand their business and keep growing, they shave to improve their international scope. The international possibilities are enormous for successful football clubs. Some of the biggest football clubs in the world identified their need to go international. (Som, 2009 p. 9)
Manchester United, arguably the biggest football club in the world, had many foreign projects. One for example being football schools in South East Asia. Manchester United states: "In *November 2008 a team of Manchester United Soccer Schools coaches from the UK travelled to Singapore to launch the latest series of programs to be delivered across South East Asia. The inaugural program in Singapore was a great success and provided young players from throughout the region with an introduction to the beliefs and coaching ideals of Manchester United Soccer Schools."* (South East Asia, 12 April 2012)
Real Madrid, one of the biggest football clubs in the world, sees the necessity to intervene internationally. Real Madrid states:' *Its primary purposes are to promote the intrinsic values of*

sport and to use these values as an educational tool in the comprehensive development of those who practice it, to be used as a method of social integration which benefits those who may find themselves marginalized from society, and to stimulate and disseminate all cultural aspects related to sport "(Why a foundation, 12 April 2012)

Dutch football club Ajax Amsterdam established an overseas football academy in Cape Town, South Africa. Next to the domestic benefits for the South Africa community, Ajax Amsterdam sees tangible benefits for their own company. Ajax Amsterdam states: "No youth, no future" is a simple Dutch viewpoint that has given the South African youth development market a new direction, which we proudly lead. Our search for talent knows no boundaries with young players from all over South Africa pulling on the famous red and white Ajax shirt."

Attracting well educated new players from Ajax Cape Town, for example Eyong Enoh. (Ajax Amsterdam, 12 April 2012)

Not only football clubs use countries to enhance/improve their image, but also companies use football clubs to create a sustainable image. Gazprom, a leading gas producing company, is the major sponsor of the German football club Schalke 04. Gazprom states: "*Germany is a large consumer of Russian gas and a long-standing partner of Gazprom. Beginning from 2007 Gazprom has been a sponsor of the most popular Bundesliga club – FC Schalke 04. Thanks to the established partnership, the logo of Gazprom may be seen now on the sporting gear of the club boasting deep-rooted football traditions.*" (Schalke, 12 April 2010)

1.2 Football

Football is one of the biggest, arguably the biggest, sport in the World. The international impact of the World Cup or Champions League is huge. For example the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) claimed the World Cup in South Africa (2010) yielded over an 'average in-home global audience' of 530.9 million views in more than 200 countries for the final played on 11 July, 2010, at Johannesburg's Soccer City stadium. The Union of European Football Associations (Uefa) claimed that the Champions League final of 2009 had a total of 210 million live views in more than 130 countries over the world. (fifa, 31 May 2012)

1.2.1 Football History

The global history of the world's favorite game spans over 150 years. Football finds its roots in 1863 in England. Rugby being a traditional sport in England got damaged by a newer form of ball sport, which at first claimed it was part of rugby. The national rugby association didn't agree with this new game and took distance from this initiative. Leaving only one option possible for this new game, they had to go at it alone. And so they did. Association football (later know as football) was born.

The first forms of football where to primitive to match the modernization of the society. Primitive football was more disorganized, more violent, more spontaneous and usually played by an indefinite number of players. For example 'mob football', where the number of players was unlimited and the rules were fairly vague, it was not uncommon that players ended up in the hospital. Curiously, it was not until nine years after the rules of football had first been established that the size and weight of the ball were finally standardized.

Sheffield and London claimed the first game with a prearranged duration of 90 minutes, matched had to be prearranged by a discussion about the rules, including length of a match.

The first national football competition was the FA Cup, established in 1872 and the first league championship was underway in 1888. Internationalization was a slowly growing process. (fifa, 31 May 2012)

1.3 Football Internationalization

Football being a traditional British sport found its first international match between England and Scotland in 1872. England decided to professionalize their football due to the growing number of players and small amateur clubs. Around 1885 the first professional football clubs found their existence. Adding to the foundation of the English FA in 1863, Scotland, Wales and Ireland founded their own national football associations (FA). Respectively for Scotland in 1873, for Wales in 1875 and for Ireland in 1880.

Football became a worldwide popular sport and more countries started to adapt professional football. The first two countries that decided football needed professionalism besides the Great Britain and Ireland countries were the Netherlands and Denmark. Only four years after the first domestic league in England (1888) these two countries founded their own associations. Quickly followed by New Zealand (1891), Argentina (1893), Chile (1895), Switzerland, Belgium (1895), Italy (1898), Germany, Uruguay (both in 1900), Hungary (1901) and Finland (1907).

Around the year 1900 football was a worldwide known sport, which consisted of autonomous football associations in many countries. Football was still developing and saw that there was an international body needed to make statements about the rules and to create an international competition. (fifa, 31 May 2012)

Thus the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was founded in Paris in May 1904 it had seven founder members: France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain (represented by Madrid FC), Sweden and Switzerland. The German Football Federation cabled its intention to join on the same day. This international football community grew steadily, although it sometimes met with obstacles and setbacks. In 1912, 21 national associations were already affiliated to the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA). By 1925, the number had increased to 36, while in 1930 - the year of the first World Cup - it was 41.

As the society modernized the need for football to organize grew. Between 1937 and 1938 FIFA leaded by president Stanly Rous created the modern-day Laws of the Game, they would be revised in 1997. Besides the revision the Modern-day Laws of the Game are the one that are still used. FIFA made it possible to lead every national association affiliated with FIFA. By the late 1930s there were 51 FIFA members; in 1950, after the interval caused by the Second World War, that number had reached 73. Over the next half-century, football's popularity continued to attract new devotees and at the end of the 2007 FIFA Congress, FIFA had 208 members in every part of the world. Football became the largest sport in the world and is still arguably the most popular sport in the world.

The various international competitions like the European Championships, World Cup, Champions League, Copa Libertadores, Asia cup, Africa cup, Asia cup et cetera are some of the most popular sporting events around the world. With no doubt football has earned its International populism over more than 130 years. (fifa, 31 May 2012)

1.4 Management problem

Domestic football markets become saturated. Football supporters tend to concentrate to the football club that is geographical in the area or that is traditional family club. Concluding in a few possibilities for football clubs to expand within their domestic market. Internationalization can tackle these domestic problems. Key is to maintain domestic markets and reach foreign markets. Foreign markets are mostly far away regions, which are costly to reach. A tool is needed which can at low cost reach far away regions, but for the same cost can also reach fans in the football clubs' hometown.

Football clubs who desire to reach a greater fan base or aim to maintain their current fan base, started to use Social Media. Online Communities is best for creating a community feeling, still Online Communities are very much undefined in the football clubs' context.

A research that maps the use of Online Community in football clubs doesn't exist in its purest form. This research aims to design several strategies within a selection model and applies these strategies to football clubs. With this research football clubs, theorist and researchers can find a start to the scientific debate on how to use Online Communities in football. This research will rename the Online Communities simply as Football Communities, so that the context is clear. The main part of the research is to identify which strategies can be used, design these strategies and applying them to the researched football clubs. It is not the intention to write application rules for football clubs in general, this researched doesn't intentionally look beyond the design phase. So this research aims to design Football Community Strategies (FCS) and a part of their design is to see if they can and how they can be applied to the researched football clubs.

1.5 Research questions

After a careful analysis of the management problem the following research problem will be used.

What are appropriate Football Community Strategies to design a selection model?

To answer the research problem the following research questions will be used.

- What is a Football Community and why can a football club benefit from Football Community activity?
- What is a selection model?
- Which two dimensions make up the selection model?
- What are the strategies for Football Communities?
- How can the Football Community Strategies be applied to football clubs?

To answer the research problem I use these five research questions. I start with a general question which defines the need for this research. Than I discuss how the selection model is made up, including its dimensions. After the relevance of these dimensions is explained, I want to examine which strategies there are for Football Communities. These Football Community Strategies have to be placed within the selection model. The strategies are the main part of the research and are extracted from theory. Next to shaping these strategies it is important to view how they can be applied within football clubs. Therefore the last question is a specific question that explains how the strategies can be used by the researched football clubs.

1.6 Research Model

The research model to be used can be found below. I started with the empirical research to see which possibilities exist in Online Community research and the football world. Here I found out that there isn't many literature available that tackles Football Communities. This made me curious about what would be possible to achieve in this field of research. Resulting in that I wanted to do my research within the football world tackling the subject of Football Communities. I stated my research problem and distilled several research questions which helps me to answer my research problem. To answer the research questions I need a solid theoretical framework, which uses a literary review to shape a useful theoretical model. To test this model within the football world I chose to design a multiple case study where I use firstly questionnaires and secondly interviews. I do two types of research to get a greater in depth analysis, without two types I believe that there isn't enough data available. The data will be quantitative. After stating the theory and methodology I will exclude the research and collect all the data. This data will be used to answer the research questions in the results section. In the results section it will become clear how every Football Community Strategy can be applied and how the researched football clubs can be placed in this model. Finally the conclusion will answer the research problem, together with the discussion, limitations and recommendations for further research it will finalize the research.

Empirical Research

Define research problem and research questions

Literary review and theoretical framework

Theoretical model

Methodology and research design

Collect data and answer the research questions

Conclusion, Discussion, Limitations and Recommedations for further research
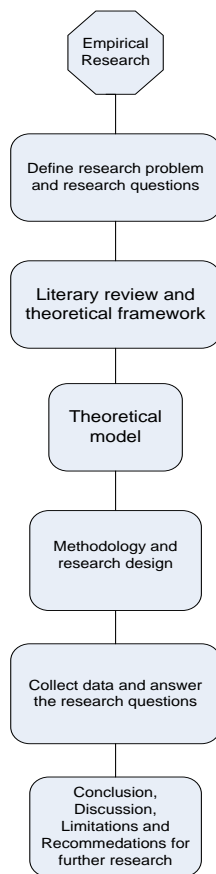
(Figure 1: Research Model)

1.7 Football Communities

Football Communities are derived from the theory of the Online Community. Therefore a brief explanation about the content of Online Communities. In this research Football Communities follow the same definition as Online Communities, but for the relevance they are called Football Communities. Online Communities is one of the five main categories of a new type of media, the so called web media or web 2.0. (Constantinides and Fountain, 2007). Other categories include blogs, social networks, forums and content aggregators. Online communities are defined as web sites organizing and sharing particular types of content. Examples are applications of Video sharing,

Photos sharing, Social Book marking and publicly edited content sites like online encyclopedias. (Constantinides and Fountain, 2007). Together with Social Networks, allow users to build personal websites accessible to other users for exchange of personal content and communication, they make up the core of this research. To better understand how online communities fit it Social Media below is a description of how theorist see Social Media as a hole and some examples from the 'real' world.

According to Kaplan and Haelein, 2010 Social Media distinguishes itself from traditional 'web' media. Social Media is a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion, thus Kaplan and Haelein, 2010.

Social Media provides tools for the changing mindset of internet users. People once went online seeking the anonymity it offered (McKenna & Bargh, 2000); they now more often use the Internet to socialize with people they do know and expand their circle of friends (Jones, 2009). Users like to use Social Media to create a circle of friends who have their identity. They want to feel connected with their online friends (Jones, 2009).

The user is the creator. The user is the most important customer, they no longer have a solely using-the-sources-role, they are participating in creating the sources. Almost every self-respecting business, government, NGO or sports organization can't neglect the importance of Social Media. For example Axe (shower gel, deodorant and eau de toilette) hosts several contests every week to keep their customers involved, or controversial sites as Wikileaks find Social Media the ideal form to (1) represent their ideas and (2) discuss with their users about the content. Professional football clubs are no stranger to Social Media. Especially twitter.com and facebook.com are popular Social Media platforms. In Appendix B an insight in the amount of Facebook likers and twitter followers for the top 30 ranked European football clubs.

Also all the Eredivisie clubs which are internationally ranked are added. Interesting is to see which clubs are the biggest on Facebook and twitter. The top ranks there do not match the top ranks in sports success. Football clubs like AC Milan, Real Madrid and Liverpool FC are respectively ranked 12, 6 and 9, but their Facebook communities are much bigger than clubs like FC Internazionale Milano, FC Bayern München and FC Porto. De differences between the top 10 and bottom 10 of the list are substantial, with the exception of some football clubs. Differences exist through historical factors. Europe has many traditional football clubs which are successful since the start of the international football leagues. Many of these football clubs (think of Real Madrid, FC Barcelona, Internazionale Milano et cetera) became a part of the culture of a lot of people. They can always count on a good amount of fans, in good and bad times. For instance AC Milan (rank 14) has 8 million + likers on Facebook, where Villareal CF (rank 15) has 50.000 likers.

1.8 Relevance of the research

To show the relevance of the research in the academic world Social and Scientific relevance have to be explained. This research is a Master Thesis for Business Administration track International Management, meaning that the International relevance has to be explained too.

1.8.1 Social relevance

Internationalization of football has been a social affair since the beginning of the expansion of the sport. First to colonize were the British who introduces football to native inhabitants of many European countries around the year 1865. From this point on football became an international sport. Many countries fell in love with the game and thus football became international. (H. Dolles & S. Söderman, 2005)

Hall, 1992, p. 69, argued that there are some positive and negative effects caused by sport events on a social region. He shows that positive effect can be found in building community pride and identity, increased community participation, expending cultural perspectives et cetera. Negative effects can include negative community image, bad behavior, social dislocation et cetera. The study of Hall enhances the effects of sports, in this case Football, on the social region. Social media can enhance these positive and negative effects. The question is not whether social media can be used to create the international image, but how it can maintain the international image and how it can expand the international image. Since more and more people all around the world are being active on social media platforms.

Football can create a lot of positive effects explained by Hall, 1992, still football clubs have to be aware of their perceived position in the world. They have the possibility to change people lives, change social regions and change the globalization of sports.

Internationalization can be measured on a lot of scales, from developmental work to plain Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). This research aims at FDI based on the surplus that can be achieved by creating a bigger international community.

Evans, 2008, p. 81, argues that from the perspective of your audience, especially if they are using the Social Web already, participation is easy, simple, and natural. Evans, 2008, p. 82, continues; *being part of n Online Community can enhance the group feeling of and raise social capital*. Socially people aim to identify themselves with what is written on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube et cetera.

1.8.2 Scientific relevance

Football is a social aspect of life. The first thought when talking about football is not a scientific one. S. Ohmann, I. Jones & K. Wilkes, 2006, state that research based on football studies almost always use economic outcomes. They have neglected the empirical (or social) impact of football. Notably internationalization has to have economic benefits, but this shouldn't be the sole reason to internationalize. Scientific research of the impact of culture, politics, technology or environment can yield more relevant results for football clubs. This research bases its results upon consumer behavior and desired consumer behavior enhanced by international brand management. Internationalization can contribute to the improvement of corporate image; it's interesting to research what the influence on football clubs could be. Social media is one of the rising sources to acquire this international image. But not many researchers have linked social media with football clubs, therefore research is needed.

1.8.3 International relevance

As stated in the topic 'Social relevance' the internationalization of football ensures some positive and negative effects. The international relevance of football is a valid one. Every football club that is active in the Champions League, Europa League, Copa Libertadores, Asia Cup or in friendly matches with foreign football clubs is active in an internationalization process. Not every football clubs is active on the same internationalization level. Big clubs like Manchester United or Real Madrid have a high degree of Corporate Social Responsibility whereas Dutch clubs like N.E.C Nijmegen do not have the resources to acquire this level. The internationalization process can be facilitated by the rising power of Social Media. The possibility to follow a Dutch football match when you are based in New York contributes to the internationalization process. With one mouse click you can read all you want of your favorite club all over the world.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

To answer the research problem a theoretical framework is needed. This theoretical framework contains the theory needed to explain and answer the research questions. It starts with explaining what Football Communities are and which dimensions are important when designing a selection model. The main part of this research contains explaining which possible Football Community Strategies there are. The latter part explains how these strategies can be applied.

2.1 Community

The first entity that needs explaining is Football Community. This research is made up around Football Communities, therefore the question *"What is a Football Community and why can a football club benefit from Football Community activity?"* has to be answered. First the term community has to be explained and second the term Football Community has to be explained. These two paragraphs will give more insight in: why would a football club use a Football Community?

Community is a new concept that was introduced with the rise of Social Media. A community is defined by the dictionary as **1. a.** A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government. **b.** The district or locality in which such a group lives.
2. a. A group of people having common interests, **b.** A group viewed as forming a distinct segment of society, **3. a.** Similarity or identity**.** Sharing, participation, and fellowship. (vanDale, 2013). A community in the society is a group sharing a particular interest, identity or fellowship. This could mean people that like to go to formula one races or people that like reading Stephen King books. The definition is rather broad. It suggests that my barber and I are a community because we both like black coffee. Especially in the online setting a more narrow definition is necessary. If the above definition is used in the online setting everybody who interests in a page, views a page or shares a page is a community. If somebody in Australia views the website www.axe.com and decides to share this on his Facebook account, somebody in Canada who does the same will be a part of his community? According to the definition provided by the dictionary: Yes. Still cognitive sense will say it is very unlikely for these two persons to actual meet. They will not share the same feeling of similarity, identity or fellowship.

The Online Community is defined as a network of people who communicate with one another and with an organization through interactive tools such as e-mail, discussion boards and chat systems. (Online community, 02 May 2012)

With this definition it becomes clear that people do not only have to share common interests, but have to communicate with each other through the use of interactive tools such as e-mail, discussion boards and chat systems. The person from Australia and the person from Canada can only be a part of each other community if they (actively) communicate with each other or with other people from their community. If they are both members of the www.axe.com Facebook and respond to topics posted by Axe or other members, they are a part of this community, thus according to the definition. This is, in the online setting, a valid one. Figure 2 shows all posts made by FC Bayern München and the amount of likes, responses and shares, after they won the match against Real Madrid in the semi-final of the Champions League (25 April 2012).

Time:	Post content	# Likers	# Responses	# Shares
19:48	*Nur noch eine Stunde / Only one hour remaining*	33.713	3.375	3.201
20:00	*Nur noch 45 Minuten / Only 45 minutes remaining. Auf geht's Bayern!*	23.318	1.243	902
20:16	*Nur noch 30 Minuten / Only 30 minutes remaining. Real Madrid vs. LA BESTIA NEGRA*	14.956	770	365
20:30	*Nur noch 15 Minuten / Only 15 minutes remaining. LIKE = PACK MA'S*	27.916	978	303
20:45	*Anstoß / Kick-off @Estadio Santiago Bernabéu. Auf geht's Bayern! Let's go Bayern! Vamos Bayern!*	16.992	1.123	397
21:12	*TOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOR. Robben (27 Min. nach Elfmeter). Real Madrid 2 - 1 FC Bayern München. WAS EIN SPIEL!*	6.051	515	283
21:31	*Real Madrid 2 - 1 FC Bayern München (Insg. // Agg: 3:3). Robben (27 Min.). Beschreibt die erste Halbzeit mit einem Wort! // Describe the first half with one word!*	3.056	1.299	110
21:47	*Die zweite Halbzeit geht weiter... Auf geht's Bayern, kämpfen und siegen!*	60.890	2.662	4.763
22:17	*Spielstand nach 75 Min. / Score after 75 min. Real Madrid 2 - 1 FC Bayern München (Insg./Agg.: 3:3). Like = ♫ ♪ Auf geht`s Bayern schiesst ein Tor ♫ ♪*	2.659	200	48
22:34	*VERLÄNGERUNG / EXTRA TIME. Spielstand nach 90 Min. / Score after 90 min. Real Madrid 2 - 1 FC Bayern München (Insg./Agg.: 3:3)*	2.553	331	113
22:39	*MIA SAN MIA. Auf geht's ihr Roten in die Verlängerung!*	65.084	2.926	6.159
22:45	*Auswechslung / Substitution (96 Min.). Franck Ribery <<>> Thomas Müller*	6.542	726	84
23:12	*Elfmeterschießen / Penalty shoot-out. Daumen drücken! / Cross your fingers!*	30.973	1.399	449
23:16	*ALABA TRIFFT!*	20.339	277	84
23:17	*UND NEUER HÄLT! WAHNSINN! Super Manu!*	33.881	460	285
23:17	*GOMEZ erhöht auf 2:0 nach Elfmeterschießen!*	23.388	153	104
23:18	*JAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA. NEUER HÄLT WIEDER!*	51.210	1.108	591
23:21	*Kroos und Lahm verschießen, Ramos auch!*	16.633	364	94
23:22	*JAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA SCHWEINSTEIGER TRIFFT! FINALE DAHOAM!*	160.513	8.484	6.455
23:25	*FINALE DAHOAM! LIKE LIKE LIKE*	123.326	6.417	15.426
23:41	*Bayern through to final after shoot-out thriller - Bayern's greatest dream has come true!*	17.550	1.655	1.299

(Figure 2 : FC Bayern Munchen Facebook, source: http://www.facebook.com/#!/FCBayern)

FC Bayern München posted 21 posts before, during and at the end of the match. A total of 741.543 'likes' were given, 36.465 responses were posted and 41.515 times a post got shared. Fc Bayern München retains their community by actively posting updates of running matches or events. The participation rate of their community is high.

Evans, 2008, p.81 agrees with Bayern Münchens approach. He states: '*In an online social community, loyalty and engagement are certainly possible, although they take a different form, and are much more easily lost given the power and presence of the collective. The online community – because it is measurable and therefore tangible – fosters participation, through which engagement at the individual level occurs'.*

The more people like, respond and share posts made by Bayern München, the more feeling an individual gets with Bayern München.

Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden, 2011, see the need for participation; still they don't feel that participation is at the end of the Online Community. They feel that social engagement needs to be achieved. They state that marketing is not purely a reach problem, with this they argue that marketing isn't only about sending messages to the customer. Social Media makes it possible to belong more from your customer. Customers can, but also want, to be more active. Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden, 2011, talk about the need for marketers to focus on both capturing and continuing attention via engagement. Bayern München aims to reach engagement by providing the latest developments during a match and the latest news during a week on Facebook.

Another way to retain your community is to create a feeling of fellowship. Many deceased actors, musicians, athletes or other popular figures still have Facebook, Twitter or YouTube accounts. These accounts are kept up to date by fans and family.

For example the Facebook account of Michael Jackson. Michael Jackson (29 August 1958 - 25 June 2009) was considered one of the biggest musicians the world has ever known. He had a huge community, people identified themselves with the music and person which Michael Jackson stood for, when he was alive and after his death his community finds closure in each other. Currently (3-May-12) the Facebook of Michael Jackson has 48.172.888 'likers'. Figure 2 shows which posts were made from 9th of April till 23th of April.

Date:	Post content	# Likers	# Responses	# Shares
9-apr-12	Concert memorabilia: Check out this official jacket from the DANGEROUS World Tour! What's your favorite item of Michael memorabilia?	20.454	1.896	840
10-apr-12	Video of the day: "Black Or White".	118.671	4.240	18.428
11-apr-12	Photo of the day. Does anyone recognize this ensemble?	59.109	6.390	4.936
12-apr-12	Yesterday's MJ costume was from Captain EO!	14.555	1.206	203
13-apr-12	Today in HIStory: On April 13, 1989, Michael won four awards at the Soul Train Music Awards.	31.484	2.071	779
16-apr-12	Magazine cover of the day: Check out MJ on the cover of Yes Music magazine, April 1985!	34.518	2.161	1.681
17-apr-12	Quote of the day: "I'm really very self-confident …… That's how I am."	20.711	1.504	770
17-apr-12	Michael always put his heart and soul into his work. What are you most passionate about in your life?	18.006	2.658	390
18-apr-12	Check out MJ's handwritten lyrics for "Best of Joy."	34.583	3.815	2.686
19-apr-12	MJ ESTATE REMEMBERS DICK CLARK, "Dick Clark …… with gratitude".	16.391	931	473
19-apr-12	Today in HIStory: On April 19, 1988, the BAD World Tour rocked the Rosemont Horizon in Chicago, Illinois. Were you there?	15.459	1.730	346
20-apr-12	Here's a promo ad for "Blood On The Dance Floor," released 4/21/1997.	20.816	2.127	906
23-apr-12	Check out MJ on the cover of News of the World's April 1985 issue!	19.972	1.642	724

(Figure 3 : Michael Jackson Facebook, source: http://www.facebook.com/#!/michaeljackson)

The Michael Jackson Facebook account posted 13 posts in 15 days. A total of 424729 'likers', 32371 number of responses and 33162 times a post got shared. The feeling people still get with a deceased musician is clearly a good one. In this case a fairly big amount of people likes, responses and shares, which shows that the community is still actively identifying with Michael Jackson. The true meaning of a community.

2.1.1 Football Community

Paragraph 2.2 showed what a community, in line of its definition, is. A community is about creating and identity for a collective group of people. In the online setting participation and engagement is the key to retaining the community. To create an Football Community the context has to be understood. With the context the collection of facts and circumstances that define a particular state, in this case Football Community, is meant.
The Football Community is a combination of a 1. Social Network and 2. Online Community. Social Networks are held together by pre-established interpersonal relationships between individuals. Sp you know everyone that is directly connected to you. Each person has one social network. But a person can have different social graphs depending on what relationship we want to focus on. (Community vs Social Network, 1 May 2012)
A Social Network is about friends, where a community is about interests. Of course somebody from your Social Network can be a part of one of your community, but that doesn't have to be the case. To help understand what a Football Community actually is, it is best to put it in a model that provides two axes with web content and online community.
The content-community model proposed by Gautam Ghosh in his blog covering the ambiguity of the Football Community. He proposes that on the horizontal axis community is explained as a shared identity between a group of people who may or may not know each other.

On the vertical axis content is explained as the text, photos, videos as well as reactions to that content. The reactions can be in the form of comments, votes or ratings. (content-community, 1 May 2012)

(Figure 4. The Content-Community model.)

A brief explanation of the model.
- (1) Low Content and Low Community. This is best characterized as static websites which offer no commenting, interaction and have few changes made to it every month. The website stays mostly the same and people cannot create a community based on the information given.
- (2) High Content and Low Community. Highly informative websites which usually have a vote up, vote down or like application, but not more. They create a lot of content on their site, this content is almost always up to date and the content is verifiable. Community takes a backseat in these platforms. People cannot interact with each other, they can only vote or like, but the interaction between visitors is nil.
- (3) High Community and Low Content. Communities that starting to exist, but do not have a social website to interact with each other. The assumption in these communities is that the shared interests and self-identity of the community will need trigger more and more content in the future. People around the world who interest in a new musical band, but do not have a media to interact fit in this category.
- (4) High Community and High Content. Arguably the perfect use of community and content. People who share a same identity and are able to vividly interact with each other fit in this category. These are full featured community platforms with content creation platforms. They are given the means and share the interests to create an active community.

The idea of creating a Football Community can best be characterized by analyzing category four; High Community and High Content. Quick and easy contact between Community members can help to expand the Community. Still it is difficult to reach category four, because you need an active content aggregator, a media which is compatible for interaction between members and active community members.

2.1.2 Football Community benefits

The last two paragraphs explained what a Football Community is and what the context of a Football Community is. Still two questions are left unsolved. Why should an organization create a Football Community? Are the benefits substantial enough to create and sustain the Football Community?
To illustrate what potential benefits could be, Beeline Labs, Deloitte and the Society for New Communication Research conducted a study in which they measured responses from around 140 organizations – business-to-business, business-to-consumer, and non-profits – which have created and maintain online communities. The online communities ranged from 100 members to 10.000 plus members. Companies that were getting started creating online communities, but also companies that already created an online community were surveyed. This study was called "The 2008 Tribalization of Business". (word of mouth insights customer loyalty big benefits of online communities, 28 June 2012)
In their research Beeline Labs, Deloitte and the Society for New Communication Research concluded that community members work most effective when the following features are met in the online community. (1) The ability for community members to connect with other like-minded people, (2) ability for members to help others, (3) the community is focused around a hot topic or issue and (4) quality of the community manager/community management team. Community members tend to respond positive to other community members who let them be a part of the whole community. The feeling of creating the same identity is leading the community. A positive community will enhance the benefits of the community. The benefits are, as most business want, somehow quantifiable. An increase of image, increase of commitment or an increase in community feeling is difficult to quantify. But these are some of the most important reasons to create and maintain a Football Community. The Social Media provides a platform that lets companies contact their community members more easy than the platforms being used in the Football Community. For example Facebook vs. Forums. Facebook is a platform where information can be displayed in a member friendly way. Members can read, respond, share and like messages posted by the community manager. One of the (better) differences with a Forum is that the lay-out of Facebook is more member friendly. Members feel they get a greater oversight of post made by the community manager. Photo's, clips, podcasts, messages are all more accessible. Forums have limited possibilities in their lay-out.
Benefits are, according to Ecademy Consulting (2004), best explained through three factors. (1) Product and Service development, (2) Smart interactions and corporate communities and (3) business outcomes. Ecademy consulting (2004) aimed to develop some measures which are indeed quantifiable. These measures are suggested in 2004 to create a better Football Community, still in 2012 after the development of New Media these measures have not changed. The new platform has created more possibilities to reach goals.
Football Community benefits:

(1) *Product and service development*. Social Media provides a platform for high-end consumer interaction. The ease of asking questions and getting responses are just a minute away from each other. Due to the growing popularity of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other Social Media platforms, organizations can use these platforms to create better product and services which are more compatible with the needs from the consumer or community member. Ecedemy Consulting (2004) adds that brands are creating customer centric communities for joint collaborative product and service development, intelligence gathering, real time focus groups and a means of maintaining a constant dialogue with their community members or stakeholders.

One of the most popular approaches by organizations is the 'listening platform' approach. Community managers post information about a product or service and community members can like, dislike, comment, share or retweet this information. Social Encouragement and Audience engagement of the six-factor model provided by Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut, 2007 are needed to create a proactive community. Outcomes are mostly measured by amount of good ideas obtained and revenues after this process. Greg Icenhower, CEO of Proctor and Gamble, and early adapter of the listening platform, says:" in general, I can tell you that it (online community) is impacting our products and packaging. It's impacting the way we intend to go to market. And it's feeding our continued thinking about product improvements down the road". Ecademy Consulting (2004)

(2) *Smart interactions and corporate communities*. Not only product and service development can use community member input also the business process can use member input. Social Media also provides a platform for employees to interact with each other and generate new ideas. Research by consultancy agency McKinsey and Company indicates that "half ore more of a company's spending on labor may be devoted to basic interaction activities, many of them internal to the organization" Smart or non smart interactions between employees are managements' feed to change their business process more effectively.
Measures like decreased amount of informal complaints or increase in process effectiveness are linked to smart interactions. According to Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut, 2007 social control is the key to success. Note that it is internal social control, not external.

(3) *Business outcomes*. Football Communities can be used to generate more direct sale or as a marketing tool. Accessible web shops, advertisements or contests used on Social Media are being used to generate more sales. Creating commitment through fun contests or flashing advertisements are key in increasing sales. Ecademy Consulting (2004). Key here is to have a good infrastructure and content provision according to Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut, 2007. A well structured approach of marketing strategies, will add to direct sales, if these marketing strategies are adjusted to the Social Media platform. Members like to be approach that is accustomed with the platform they are active on. Changing lay-out appearance can work in a negative way and marketing tools can be misunderstood. Measures like increase in revenue, increase in volume or increased clicking behavior are linked to business outcomes.

Members are key in developing a Football Community. The above model proposed by Butler et al. provides tactics to reach and retain your Football Community.

2.2 The Selection Model

What this research aims to do is to design Football Community Strategies that are applicable in (inter)national context. Internet gives football clubs the possibility to reach supporters all over the world. Before designing the Football Community Strategies it is important to see within which dimensions they have to be put. The selection model follows design structure matrix' rules and are modified to fit in this research. The decision matrix is a method that is used to handle dependences and relations between items. (Steward, 1981)

A decision matrix represents the elements in a system and their interactions between dimensions. Three reasons to use a decision matrix are when a list of options must be narrowed down to one option, when the decision has to be made on the basis of several criteria or after the list of options have to be reduced to a manageably number by list reduction. (Browning, 2001) Stuart Pugh (1991) designed a decision matrix which he called the Pugh Decision Matrix. In his matrix he argued that there are several reasons to use this decision matrix. If you have a decision to take for which you're doubting between several viable choices. If you have a decision that has split your team into camps with no consensus. If you have a design decision or policy that keeps being attacked or reconsidered. Or is you are exploring several design alternatives, looking to pick the final choice for this version as being the last responsible moment. (Pugh, 1991)

In this research the decision matrix will be used to show what the options are for Football Community Strategies within two dimensions. These dimensions are community activity and image, they are elaborated in paragraph 2.2.1. The decision matrix is not used as a method in this research, but more as a template for Football Community Strategies to be mapped in. The following model is a schematic model of how the matrix is used. The horizontal axis shows community activity and the vertical axis shows image. These are the two dimensions. Football clubs have the opportunity to choose between nine strategies, but later on we will see that there exist three

Image	Good	Strategy 1	Strategy 4	Strategy 7
	Neutral	Strategy 2	Strategy 5	Strategy 8
	Bad	Strategy 3	Strategy 6	Strategy 9
		Low	Medium	High
		Community activity		

(Figure 5: The selection model)

This matrix states that there are nine strategies possible and they are made up of the three values each per dimension. In the next paragraph the dimensions will be explained and in the following paragraphs the matrix will be filled with three ideal type Football Community Strategies. Again this matrix is not used to design the Football Community Strategies, but to place them within two dimensions.

So that football clubs can choose their strategy and see how they can evolve within the matrix to other strategies. In the next paragraph the two dimensions will be explained. It is to select a strategy, therefore it's called the selection model.

2.2.1 Dimensions of the selection model

The last paragraph explained why and how the matrix is made up, now the question remains why are the two dimensions community activity and image? In paragraph Football Community is explained as having high content and high community. So it would have been easy to call these two the main dimensions of this research and use them as the dimensions. Still if content and community were the dimensions, the true reason for Football Community Strategies is not explained. Football clubs don't start to use Football Communities just to find a way to place content on internet of start a community. Their reason is that football clubs want to maintain or improve their image. Besides image an other important dimension is community activity. When Social Media grows the amount of community activity grows alongside Social Media. Football Clubs have to deal with the rise of Social Media and all the means supporters have to follow a football club and talk about a football club. Dealing with community activity has a direct influence on the image of the football clubs. The following two paragraphs deal with an explanation of the two dimensions. They answer the question: Which two dimensions make up the selection model?

2.2.2 Dimension Image

The first dimension to be explained is image. Image is a difficult phenomena so in this paragraph real experiences by football clubs are used along side theories to explain why Football Community Strategies have to do with image. It is important to not use image only as an outcome of the research, but as a dimension which has to be dealt with. Therefore it remains closer to the research and won't just be seen as an outcome. So why is image a dimension of the selection model?
There are many Football Community benefits like *Product and service development, Smart interactions and corporate communities and Business outcomes,* which all are dependent on image. (Ecademy consulting, 2004) Image is one of the most difficult parts of marketing, whereas it can't be measured perfectly. There are few to none theorists that researched how football clubs should measure their image. Also to blindly rely on theory would be inconclusive. Every football club is different, has different values, needs different supporters or uses their image different.
To show how football clubs see their international image and how they use it, one can better look at their publications about Social Media.
Manchester United is one of the biggest football clubs, their history sais it al. Winning the English Premier League 19 times, winning the European Champions League 3 times and winning the domestic FA cup 11 times. (trophy room, 26-02-2013)
On their investors relations site they post their views on their Football Community. They state that:

- During the 2010/11 season, our games generated a cumulative audience reach of over 4 billion viewers, according to the Futures Data, across 211 countries. On a per game basis, our 60 games attracted an average live cumulative audience reach of 49 million per game, based on the Futures Data.

- Over 5 million items of Manchester United branded licensed products were sold in the last year, including over 2 million Manchester United jerseys. Manchester United branded products are sold through over 200 licensees in over 130 countries.

- Our brand and content have enabled us to partner with mobile telecom providers in 42 countries and television providers in 54 countries.

- Our website, www.manutd.com, is published in 7 languages and over the last 12 months attracted an average of more than 60 million page views per month.

- We have a very popular brand page on Facebook with over 26.5 million connections. In comparison, the New York Yankees have approximately 5.9 million Facebook connections and the Dallas Cowboys have approximately 5.0 million Facebook connections.

- Premier League games at our home stadium, Old Trafford, have been sold out since the 1997/98 season. In the 2010/11 season, our 29 home games were attended by over 2 million people.

- We undertake exhibition games and promotional tours on a global basis, enabling our followers to see our team play. Over the last 4 years, we have played 21 games in the United States, Canada, Ireland, Mexico, Malaysia, South Korea, China, Sweden, Norway and South Africa. (Investor relations site, 25 February 2013)

So Manchester United sees their international experience as very positive. They are through good target marketing able to reach many different countries. In this Social Media plays a huge role. The accessibility of Social Media makes Manchester United one of the biggest football clubs on Social Media. Where of course the record of Manchester United speaks for itself, Social Media can create the necessary accessibility for international supporters. These international supporters can become a member of the Football Community from behind their desks. Manchester United is a base example of how an incumbent football club can conquer foreign markets. Clearly they base their image on records and accessibility. This works for them perfectly.

What if your football club isn't an incumbent, but rises in the world ranking? How do they view their international image?
A good example is the other club from Manchester, namely Manchester City. Manchester City used to be an average performer in the Premier League, with some European adventures, but not a lot. This dramatically changed in the summer of 2007. The Thai Thaksin Shinawatra took over the club for 81 million pounds. He decided that new players where the key to success, so he pumped a lot of money into the club. The financial abilities grew even more in 2008 when the Abu Dhabi United Group (ADUG) decided to take over the club for 185 million pounds. Their motive was to promote Abu Dhabi on sportive and cultural means. Not only Abu Dhabi got promoted, but mainly Manchester City rose to great heights. The board of Manchester City agreed that they had to create a sustainable image that can measure itself with the greatest football club images in the entire world. (Overname, 26 February 2013)
As a rising club in the international scene, Manchester City had a huge image problem. They where that club that can only perform due to Arab money.

Using Social Media appeared to be a major mean to create a positive image. After investing for years in Social Media they have some great outcomes. They state in their annual report of the season 2011 – 2012 that they are leading the European clubs on Social Media. A summary:

- The number of fans registered on the Club's Facebook page has more than tripled to around 3 million by May 2012, with over 90% coming from outside the UK.

- The Club's number of Twitter followers has increased by 400% during 2011-12, where the #together hash tag was used to rally support for the team in the countdown to the end of the season.
- The Club's social media outreach to Arabic-language supporters has also been popular. The City Arabia Facebook page attracted an additional 23,000 Likes while the @CityArabia Twitter account gained an additional 50,000 followers between October 2011 and early-June 2012.

- The Club also created a groundbreaking partnership with Foursquare in March 2012 he Club's award-winning website experienced a 33% increase in visits during 2011-12 with average time spent on the site up by more than 40 seconds per visit. Unique visitors to the English website were up nearly 30% on the previous year.

- The Club has modernized its content creation capabilities setting new standards in the provision of free and original video content that takes viewers behind-the-scenes on match days and at training. Video views on the website have doubled in the last year.

- Following its significant efforts to engage with Chinese audiences using Social Media, Manchester City had the second-highest number of followers of any football club on micro blogging site Sina Weibo by June 2012, while Patrick Vieira and Sergio Agüero were amongst the five most followed global football players on the network.

- The new Manchester City International Schools of Football have been launched with the first established in Abu Dhabi in January 2012, the second in Lebanon in April 2012, and additional locations to follow. The International Schools of Football provide children with Manchester City-led coaching techniques and draw upon the Club's traditional strengths in youth development and community engagement.

- Visits to mcfc.co.uk from users outside the UK were up by almost 50% in the 2011-12 season, with overseas visitors accounting for almost half of all visits to the site. Meanwhile, visits to the Arabic website trebled in 2011-12, following its successful relaunch in July 2011 with a dedicated editorial team. (Annual Raport Manchester City, 26 February 2013)

Major efforts and clear strategies can lead to a great rise in international image. Manchester City made efforts to physically conquer foreign markets by plating international matches, creating football school et cetera. To create social awareness they used their Social Media to reach out to the different countries. Of course they have the financial and organizational means to reach out to many different countries at the same time. Do note that the use of Social Media is almost cost free and is already used by almost every football club in the entire world.

Manchester City is an example how Social Media can boost your, but they are hard to copy. Image remains difficult to understand, but the theoretical effects of the Football Community Strategies on image can be researched. Therefore image is a necessary dimension within the selection process. Football clubs, as explained, generate a lot of benefits from good image.

2.2.3 Dimension community activity

The second dimension that needs explanation is community activity. When a football club wants to be active on Social Media, a football club has to deal with all their supporters within and outside of their Football Community. First of all community activity goes hand in hand with the amount of Social Media users that are liking, sharing, subscribing and commenting on a message posted by the football club. If a football club has over a million 'likers' on Facebook than it has to deal with high community activity. Still it isn't as easy as that. It is hard to define a cut off point when you only look at amount of 'likers', 'followers' or subscribers. A clearer explanation is required. So what does completely define community activity?

Community activity has a great impact on the success of a Football Community. This success can be defined in different ways. One way to define the success of a Football Community with respect to community activity is member loyalty. (Lin and Lee, 2006). Other theorist claimed that besides member loyalty other measurements are also applicable. For example Hew (2008) discussed that retaining community members, members' perceived professional development or community activity in terms of topic response rate are more useful. Other theorist discussed the need for community members to feel that they have to schooled, meaning punished, appraised and develop themselves. (Arguello et al., 2006) A higher amount of development will add to the quality of community activity. In most cases more community activity is better, but not always. For example in the case of low quality community activity. A football club could have over 20.000 posts about a single topic, but if these posts are harmful with a lot of foul language, disputes and off topic posts, the quality will be low. Therefore it is not always the intention to generate more community activity, but higher quality activity should always be the intention. Another way to describe the success of community activity is to describe the interactivity of posts. Interactivity can be defined as the manner in which messages relate to one another. (Rafaeli and Sudweeks, 1997) Football Communities aren't designed to have direct (face-to-face) communication between members, members are always active in broader message boards where it becomes difficult to talk to one person in time. Community members post a lot of questions on different Social Media platforms every day, ask for different opinions and want to start a discussion. If they are not responded to or if the responses are harmful they will feel rejected by the total community. Community abandonment also involves interactivity, if members do not receive a reply to their question or inquiry, they may feel ignored or ostracized. (Williams, Cheung and Choi, 2000) In case interactivity quality of posts and response time become more important. For this research interactivity is a good definition for community activity, but the definition is not complete.

To get a complete definition Varik and Oostendorp (2013) talked in their article "*Enhancing Online Community Activity: Development and validation of the CA framework*" about metrics for community activity. They have several metrics, lets summarize:

- Total number of members (absolute community size)
- Total number of created topics (absolute community size)
- Total number of posted messages (absolute community size)
- Number of new members per year (relative community size)

- Number of new topics per year (relative community size)
- Number of new messages per year (relative community size)
- Average number of messages per topic (interactivity)
- Average number of topics per member (member activity)
- Average number of replies in own topics (member activity)
- Average number of messages per member (member activity)
- Average number of posted messages (member activity)

In their article talk about four general variables which are made up of the metrics for community activity. They can be found behind the metric and will also be explained:

Absolute community size: The success of community activity can be found in the size of the community. The bigger the community, the more successful it is. Three metrics have been selected to measure the size of a community. (Schoberth, Preece & Heinzl, 2003; Butler, 1999)

Relative community size: Where absolute community metrics look at just the numbers, relative community size looks at the numbers per year. The reason for this is that older communities are favored at the absolute community size. Relative community size looks more fair, using the latest numbers. Therefore, normalized metrics also need to be considered. (Varik and Oostendorp, 2013)

Interactivity: With the metrics from the first two categories, a view of the overall activity within a community can be generated. Still this doesn't say much about the activity between members and between football club and member. To be able to acquire the activity per topic, a measure of interactivity needs to be used, by looking at an average of messages by each post. (Rafaeli & Sudweeks, 1997)

Member activity: With member activity a football club can use its wiliness of members to measure its activity. It has metrics that take more time to measure, but the results are that a football club can have a in-depth look at his single member. These activity metrics help to compare communities with a different amount of members. While the first community has more posts, the members of the second community are more active, as they each post more messages than the members of the first community. Do note that they might be impossible to measure after an amount of active members. (Varik and Oostendorp, 2013)

This research sees community activity as an aggregation between these four variables. Community activity has the most to do with interactivity between members, but you cant ignore the size of the Football Community. The higher the size of the community the higher the possible community activity, at least if the football club treats his community members kindly. All the variables are relevant, but relative community size and interactivity are favored in this research. So the dimension community activity is contains an aggregation between relative community size and interactivity of members. It is not the intention of this research to examine what kind of community activity a football club, but it will describe its state in order to place it inside the selection model.
In the next paragraph a more in-depth look at the design of Football Community Strategies is desired. The Football Community Strategies are designed within image and community activity. The next paragraphs will explain how.

2.3 Football Community Strategies

The context of an Football Community among the internet became clear in paragraph 2.2.1, figure 3. An Football Community is based on interaction of the highest category. The starting point was prior research made by Sproull & Kiesler, 1991; Sproull and Faraj, 1995 about the use of Internet for social interaction set aside against intellectual or economic purposes. In the year 2012 people can not imagine living without social interaction through Internet, yet 15 years ago this was not the main reason of expanding the Web. Bell et al., 1998, argued that employees of organizations used to corporate networks to organize work, ask for help or exchange advice. They didn't mention social interaction. Constant, Sproull, and Kiesler, 1996 adds that corporate networks are based on the technology provided by the Web. They need to be updated frequently to provide an organization with the necessary means to create a sustainable online network. In the current days this would be classified as Intranet. The Internet has become more a social interaction mean instead of a business mean. In the following paragraph the question "What are the strategies for Football Communities?" will be explained. This is the strategy design part of the research.

2.3.1 The sole content aggregator

The sole content aggregator feels that the environment is not a necessity in creating a sustainable Football Community. Farzan et al., 2011, noticed that Online Communities exist and survive by the commitment and retention of their members. Not every organization feels that these members should have a voice in their Social Media content. Basically every member has to respect and accept what the organization puts out on the web.
Evans, 2008 p.81, states that the community maintains – that is, acts as a curator for – the collective reputation of a brand, based on which an individual may develop or attest to personal loyalty. Where Evans talks about the effect of the collective reputation on an organization, he inadvertently shows a pitfall. When members are as important as Farzan et al. and Evans state, members can make or break your community. Thus members have to be controlled.
The sole content aggregator feels that members are difficult to control. It is not enough to treat the members with respect or punish bad behavior. The members are (mostly) admission free and should respect what the content aggregator puts on the web. Therefore the members are not able to influence the organization in any way.
As figure 6 shows the organization, which finds itself in the middle of the environment, builds a shield against influences. The organization doesn't accept members people telling them what to do, nor tells members what to do. It just places content to read, to discuss and to share.
Turning back to where it all began. Prior research made by Sproull & Kiesler, 1991; Sproull and Faraj, 1995 about the use of Internet for social interaction set aside against intellectual or economic purposes. They saw that economic purposes where the sole reason for accessing the internet. To reach economic benefits an organization only trusted itself. Nobody was allowed to represent the organization on the internet.
If this would happen the organization would take immediately action against these 'violations'. An easy example is the abandonment of music download sites as Napstar, terminated as a free download site in 2001. They where caught for infringing the copyright law. As the years passed the internet rose to uncontrollable heights. Content is places 24/7 on an imaginary amount of websites.

Organizations that want to keep the sole content aggregator strategy use their legal division to terminate any violations. It's a huge job to monitor al the website and punish wrongdoers. Two types of organizations can be distinguished. One is the mega multinational that has all the resources to monitor the activity. The other one is the small organization that has not (yet) achieved the social relevance that their environment wants to influence them. The Sole Content Aggregator has the sole responsibility to ensure a good image. They are the only ones that can make or break their image. Therefore it is difficult to say if they are prone to a bad or good image. Basically their image depends on content and not on community activity.
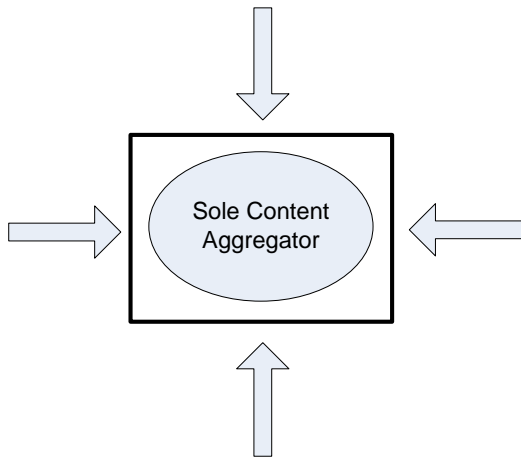
(Figure 6, the Sole Content Aggregator)

The Sole Content Aggregator uses group communication, they provide their community with content as a group. The whole community receives the same information and can not interact with the organization about the content. Therefore this communication is one way. The Sole Content Aggregator doesn't find member care or public relation of high importance. Members and public relations are just receivers of content, they are not necessary for the characteristics of that content. Their content is general and widely used without the organization knowing. They don't use unique content, but mostly prescribed content which reflects current events. The organization doesn't know what happens with this content, but doesn't find it important as the content isn't unique. Sharing is not encourage or important. The organization only finds it necessary that their recipients get content, what they do with it is, except for malicious purposes, not important. As they don't find it important that their content is being shared the environment is an inactive one.

The community is mainly on a read basis. The responsiveness only has to be high at malicious attempts to harm the organization; these are low, because community members know that legal steps can be taken against them. Scare tactics are favored.
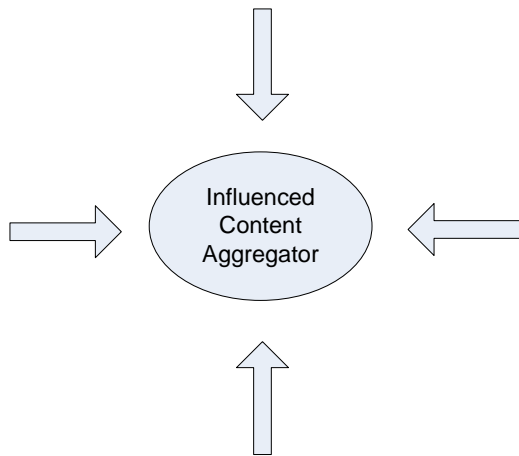
2.3.2 The influenced content aggregator

The influenced content aggregator oversees the possibilities of the internet and the necessity of an active community. He aims to keep the Social Media pages up to date and creates a lively debate. At least he intends to. To deal with an active community Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut (2007) created a model that helps organizations with designing their Social Media pages. The following factors are distinguished. (1) Content Provision deals with the amount of hours per day/week/month the members spend on composing and posting messages within their community page. Also private emails between community members can be explained in this factor. (2) Infrastructure Maintenance concerns with the amount of time members spend on posting, publicizing ancillary files. Sharing and adding content of posts made by other community members. (3) Social Encouragement is reached by encouraging members to post and interact more within their community. Liking, rating and commenting positively on messages can add to an increase of community interaction. (4) Social Control is about controlling people behavior, not only administrators (creators) should socially control community members. It is most important that every member controls the other. Bad behavior has to be reported. (5) External Promotion is marketing oriented. Asking community members to create external links on their own or friend's websites. Or putting a signature under their e-mail. Every form of exposure is desirable. (6) Audience Engagement is a feedback moment to show how many times a member reads messages posted by others and how he/she acts after reading the messages. These six factors give an insight in how communities can be managed. A sustainable Football Community should have implemented these factors. Especially when new Social Media exist, a checklist about what to expect from the community is admirable. (Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut, 2007)

So the Influenced Content Aggregator does use a strategized approach, but fails in several of the factors. Especially in a vivant world as the football world it is almost impossible to control and engage in every member of your community. There are a lot of community members that have their own Social Media page with their own opinions that they state as facts. The organization doesn't have the resources to control all these pages, they are lacking in money, people or knowledge.

As a result the community members monopolize the image on Social Media. In comparison to the sole content aggregator, the influenced content aggregator does let image depend on community activity. The huge problem is that if an organization performs badly their image will be negatively affected.

Jeff Wilson (2012), Partner/Chief Customer Experience Design at Sensei Marketing, published on Forbes magazine the reasons why community members feel they can do whatever they want on Social Media. He claims there are four reasons why Social Media is so popular to 'online bullies'. (1) No guilt, members do not feel that online posts can hurt the organization. (2) The mob, members so other members doing it and this enforce copy cats. (3) Relatively anonymity, physical distance or false information lets people feel anonymous. (4) No accountability, members do not feel accountable for their posts, therefore it punishment becomes obsolete. Thus the influenced content aggregator is surrendered to the mercy of their community members. Where it seems a negative strategy, many organizations find themselves in this situation.

(Figure 7: The Influenced Content Aggregator)

Back to figure 7 the Influenced Content Aggregator first distinct itself from the other strategies in the fact that they use personal communication with to their community members. The organization wants to keep every community member happy and uses the two way communication to better strategize their approach. They believe that member happiness leads to good outcomes in image. Therefore member care has priorities. All the feedback is used to generate content. This content is almost never unique; the meddling of community members in the content ensures that no unique content can be placed. Reacting to the community members leads to an active environment. Not only reacting to community members but also encouraging sharing. The Influencing Content Aggregator does want their environment to be active, but also sees the need for public relations and high responsiveness. They feel that as long as the community members are happy their image is good. In most cases the opposite is the case.

2.3.3. The influencing content aggregator

The Sole Content Aggregator has infinite resources to ensure good Social Media, but has low community activity. The influenced content aggregator doesn't have the resources to ensure good Social Media, but has high community activity. So is it possible to have the resources and high community activity? This research sais it is. This strategy is called the Influencing Content Aggregator. The Influencing Content Aggregator distinct itself from the other strategies in the possibility to deal with high community activity. Their image will benefit. To deal with high community activity in favor of a good image this research wants to extend the model proposed by Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut (2007) into a sports integrated communication mix model. To understand the sports integrated communication mix model it is important to understand where it comes from. It doesn't start at the model from Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut (2007), though it has several similarities. The start is the online communication mix.
The online communication mix describes six factors that are used to sustain good communication with the community.

These factors are (1) *public relations* (Naik & Piersma, 2002), (2) *corporate advertising* (Naik & Piersma, 2002), (3) *recruitement* (Taylor & Bergmann, 1987), (4) *crisis communication* (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2000), (5) *webcare* (Van Noort & Willemsen, 2011) and (6) *direct marketing* (Naik & Piersma, 2002).

Organizations that are active as a business or NGO find these six factors useful. For a football club they are more than useful, but inconclusive.

Next to the online communication mix theorist thrust blatantly on the online marketing mix, this is no different from the traditional marketing mix. A simple example of how theorists think about the emerging online marketing mix is that of Dominici (2009). In his Literary review Dominici discussed how theorist first tackled the problem of the online marketing mix. As far as the beginning of the internet theorist wanted to scope the traditional marketing mix in favor of the internet. Peattie (1997) started to point out how the new communicative capabilities supplied by the digital technology are radically changing marketing in several sectors. Bhatt and Emdad (2001) emphasis on the ability of the marketing mix to adapt itself to the online world

The sport integrated communication mix not only takes the online marketing mix and communication mix in to account, but integrates them on a sports level.

Basically the sport integrated communication mix distinct itself from the online communication mix and online marketing mix in relevance. Beech and Chadwick, 2007, argue that the traditional online communication mix is designed to enhance the sales and result in transactions. They continue: " sport integrated marketing mix has the intention to engage people in sports, which makes some parts of the usual marketing mix inadequate when the activities is based on that ambition. Irwin et al (2002) provides a model in which the online communication mix has altered to fit in the sport world. Beech and Chadwick, 2007, made the model more relevant in the growing sport and online world.

The sport integrated communication mix model consists of.

Relationship building and management.

The relationship between organization and their fans is key in sustaining an active community. Therefore organizations who are aiming at expanding their online community should build successful relations. A relation can be created by understanding customer needs or responding to misbehavior.

By listening to the supporters and what they want the clubs can increase these numbers and create a better relationship with the supporters (Beech & Chadwick, 2007). It is not likely that fans will stop supporting their football club, but they will decline their stadium attendance or reduce their shopping of merchandise.

Advertising.

The organization uses advertising to generate attention and to reach out with persuasive messages. Advertising is non-personal, paid announcements by an identified sponsor. It can be used to reach large audiences, create brand awareness, and help differentiate a brand from its competitors and as an image of the brand. (Beech & Chadwick, 2007). There are several big sponsors that feel they are significantly contributing to the image of the football organization that they want to be named in the name of the football organization.

For example Red Bull Salzburg. Others spend millions of euros on shirt and stadium sponsoring. Big sponsors in return want to officially connect with the football organization and their supporters.

Publicity.

Whereas advertising is good for the sponsors, publicity is the advertising for football organizations. It is of utmost importance that an organization keeps an excellent media relationship. Journalist can make or break the image of your organization. (Beech & Chadwick, 2007) Cases of bad publicity such as racism or other improper behavior damage your image severely. Adequate responses and good media relations can help to downsize the effect.

Personal contact.

Community members feel connected with their football organization, still they might feel more connected if they can take part in club related activities. A popular method is organizing meet and greets or arranging meetings for the community members. (Beech & Chadwick, 2007) These methods are ideal to ask personal questions to the participants or do member happiness research. Good personal contact can enhance community feeling among the members, not only among the member who have participated in meetings.

Incentives.

Incentives are promotional aspects for community members. These aspects can be emotional, social, psychological, functional or financial. It is not enough to just put out one of these aspects. An organization needs to understand what is important to the members. (Irwin et al., 2008) Some members value giveaways, other value reductions or free samples. This will become apparent after several of these aspects might not be treated as positive as the other one. Incentives are a cheap way to keep your members happy.

Atmospheric.

The Social Media pages that are meant for community members need to have a good lay-out, accessibility and have to be clean of any harmful behavior. Members have to feel at home when they visit the Social Media. Surely as members feel good they will act well. (Beech & Chadwick, 2007) It's a small work, but has major outcomes, positive and negative.

Licensing.

Licensing is growing rapidly in the online world. Due to the huge amount of copy cats a simple way of creating an official website is that of the verified status. Against little payment Social Media providers accept one account to be the official account of the organization. It is a form of brand protection. Besides the brand protection licensing can also create profitability through royalties. (Irwin et al, 2008)

Sponsorship.

Compared to advertising, where sponsors advertise on the Social Media pages of the football organization, sponsorship is about the use of the football organizations brand for the sponsoring company.
Beech & Chadwick, 2008 argue that there are several uses of the brand like area signage, hospitality, retail promotional sales and team or league co branding. Both the football organization and the sponsoring organization can benefit. Especially on Social Media where image is important. Adding a popular football organization to your Social Media pages can boost your image.

The sports integrated communication mix is about member care. In active communities discussions, responses or posts might cross the line. Members might get upset and try to decrease the image of the football organization. In this model it is not important which content you place, but how you place your content. Maybe even better how you use your content.
The influencing content aggregator strategy aims at proactively responding to problems, posting messages and care about their members. It is no secret that more than one FTE in an organization is needed to ensure good Social Media. Still the benefits can exceed every expectation. The opportunities of Social Media have no limits for football organizations.
Proactively responding on Social Media will prevent image loss. Several tools could be used. One for instance is the use of certified Social Media pages. Another one could be using RSS pages or forums to provide private owned Social Media pages with the right content.
The influencing content aggregator doesn't terminate other Social Media pages. He feels that these are useful in sustaining a good image. Especially international fan pages are key to ensuring a good image in their country.
Big football organizations like Manchester United, Real Madrid or Bayern München have the resources and community activity to implement this strategy. Smaller organizations might have problems in letting go of the content based model of Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut, 2007. Only if they feel that they have the resources and can act as the center of the universe they might be able to implement this strategy.
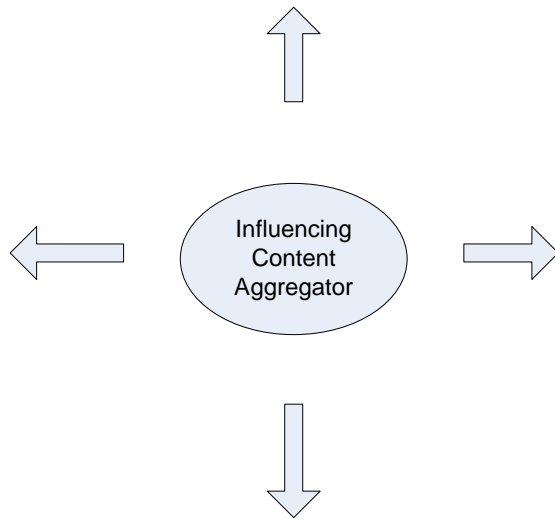
(Figure 8: The Influencing Content Aggregator)

The Influencing Content Aggregator according to figure 8 sees their community as a group. The group communication is necessary to place unique content, in case of the Influencing Content Aggregator. Compared to the Sole Content Aggregator the Influenced Content Aggregator researched the whole internet to ensure that their content is unique. They want to be unique so that community members use their content for their own purposes. This approach can best be explained as proactive communication. This strategy doesn't wait for events to occur they make the events. They don't wait for problems to occur, they make sure that problems can't occur. This is a difficult approach since their environment is an extremely active one. At first this strategy looks like to contradict itself. They want to be the spider in the web of the active environment, but don't want to spend a lot of time for member care, responsiveness or public relations. Basically this strategy is the only one that uses unique content which makes community members and non community members to come to the Social Media pages of the organization that uses this strategy. It has some high startup costs and troubles, but when you can acquire the spider in the web position, the following costs and troubles are low.

2.4 Characteristics of Football Community Strategies

In this research three strategies are distinguished. These strategies are all have their own characteristics which make them unique in their context. For a better understanding every strategy has their own set of characteristics explained in a chart.
Through these charts the similarities and differences will become more understandable. These characteristics are derived from the theories in the last three paragraphs and are supposed to be the key to which every strategy can distinct from one other.
These characteristics are: 1. Personal or group communication. 2. One or two way communication. 3. Proactive or reactive communication. 4. Unique content. 5. Active environment. 6. Importance of public relations. 7. Member care. 8. Encourage sharing. These characteristics are all forms of how to deal with your environment on behalf of your strategy.

Figure 9 shows how each strategy acts within these characteristics. Note that these differences are key in deciding which strategy is the best for an organization. How to deal with the two dimensions are implemented in defining the characteristics of each strategy. The two dimensions are not mentioned in designing the strategies, because this research talks about content. Every characteristic is weighted by both image and community activity, else it cant be a characteristic. It is important to have clear differences between the strategies, because they are ideal types. As will become apparent in the next paragraphs it is possible to move between the strategies or create a hybrid strategy. This research only aims at creating three ideal types.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication	Group	Personal	Group
One or two way communication	One	Two	One
Proactive or reactive communication	None	Reactive	Proactive
Unique content	No	No	Yes
Active environment	No	Yes	Yes
Importance of public relations	Low	High	Medium
Member care	Low	High	Low
Encourage sharing	No	Yes	Yes
Responsiveness	Low	High	Medium

(Figure 9: Characteristic of each strategy)

2.4.1 Processing between strategies

Every strategy has their own characteristics and means with which and organization can exclude these strategies. This doesn't mean that an organization can only use one type of strategy. These three ideal types are the basis from which organizations can strategize their approach. Between these strategize you can move to create your own ideal type. Where it is not recommended that you use more than one strategy to claim your own ideal strategy, it is possible to combine them. Preferably it is recommended that you move between strategize rather than combine strategies. If you feel that the Sole Content Aggregator isn't your strategy anymore, than move to another strategy. Do note that the steps between Sole – Influenced and influenced – Influencing are easier to make than the steps between Sole – Influencing. This model doesn't say that you can only move from the left to the right, it is possible to move from Influencing to all the way back to Sole. If it is recommended is a different subject.

2.4.2 Applying Football Community strategies

The last paragraphs explained what the dimensions of the selection model are and the Football Community Strategies that are active within these dimensions. Therefore one questions remains to be answered: "*How can the Football Community strategies be applied to football clubs?'* Whereas this research is of descriptive nature, showing how football clubs fit with the strategies is necessary to draw conclusions of this model. The football clubs will be put in the selection model and are appointed a ideal type strategy, a hybrid strategy or a movement between strategies.
To answer the question lets head back to figure 9.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication	Group	Personal	Group
One or two way communication	One	Two	One
Proactive or reactive communication	None	Reactive	Proactive
Unique content	No	No	Yes
Active environment	No	Yes	Yes
Importance of public relations	Low	High	Medium
Member care	Low	High	Low
Encourage sharing	No	Yes	Yes
Responsiveness	Low	High	Medium

This figure shows how every characteristic has to be applied to every strategy in order to create an ideal type. Football clubs have to first look at their own reasons to engage in a Football Community Strategy before looking for a specific ideal type or combination. If a football club aims to be highly responsive to their community or if a football club finds it important to aid personal needs, a Influenced Content Aggregator strategy is best. It is not recommended that a football club first looks at this table while deciding which strategy to enhance. First look at your own vision about a Football Community, secondly look at which strategy might be best and thirdly look at their explanation in the theoretical framework to get a better in-depth view. In the result section this research examined how the researched football clubs use these strategies. It is strongly recommended to look for similarities among the researched football clubs when a football club wants to engage in one of these three strategies.

2.5 Summery and Theoretical model.

This research uses three distinct strategies to answer the research problem. These strategies are based on two dimensions. The first dimension is community activity and the second dimension is image. This research feels that after careful analysis of the available theory community activity determines your strategy.

The first strategy is that of the Sole Content Aggregator. This strategy proposed that the football club is the only provider of content. The football club ensures good (or bad) image. The football club uses their legal division to fight every other provider of content. It is a very aggressive approach which can either have a good or a bad effect on image. It depends on the exclusion and the acceptance of your community.

The second strategy is that of the Influenced Content Aggregator. This strategy proposed that community activity is so important that the football club should do everything to please the community. By responding quickly to your community desires the football club believes it can ensure a good image. This research doesn't agree with this statement, because if you let your community determine everything, you will loose your autonomy as a football club. Still many clubs find themselves in this strategy and depending on the exclusion this isn't a bad thing.

The third strategy is that of the Influencing Content Aggregator. This strategy proposed that you can't compete with your communities' activity. It is better to place justifiable content and let this content flow among your community. Not only flow among your community, but also reach supporters that aren't a member of your community. The football club is the one that starts this flow.

By being the official Social Media page, other supporter owned Social Media pages can use the official pages to generate their content. The football club can ensure that the right content flows among the internet. This takes a lot of start up time, but in return to exclude, after you claimed the spider in the web position, the time spent will diminish. Figure 10 show how the three strategies can be placed in the two axes that describe the dimensions.

To see how these strategies work and can be applied a method is needed which not only helps validate the classification, but also shows how they can be applied. In the methodology section three questions have to be answered. The first one is 'Quantitative or qualitative data?', the second one is 'single case or multiple case' and the third one is 'which data collection method?' Also the execution of the questionnaire and interview will be explained. The methodology can be divided into two phases. Phase one explains which methods are being used and phase two explained how these methods are used to generate data.

Image		Low	Medium	High
	Good			*Influencing Content Aggregator*
	Neutral	*Sole Content Aggregator*		
	Bad		*Influenced Content Aggregator*	
		Community activity		

(Figure 10: The selection model filled with the three strategies)

Chapter 3 Methodology

To perform this research a clear methodology is desired. As stated in chapters one and two Football Communities Strategies are not overflowing in the theoretical world. After careful analyzing the theoretical world three strategies have rose above the rest. The Sole Content Aggregator which uses a content approach to image. The Influenced Content Aggregator which uses a defensive community approach. The Influencing Content Aggregator which uses a proactive community approach. So how to measure their influence on the international image of the football club? First of all this research has to choose between the use of quantitative or qualitative data, secondly this research has to choose how many cases have to be researched and thirdly this research has to choose which research method can be used best (data-analysis, survey, interview etc?). A clear methodology made up from a survey and interview using qualitative data will help this research create relevance. How the questionnaire and interview are used will be explained in the second phase of the methodology. The survey and interview will ensure a useful in-depth analysis. Below is explained which methods are used and how they are used.

3.1 Quantitative or qualitative data.

The first discrepancy that has to be solved is the use of quantitative or qualitative data. Frechtling and Sharp, 1997, wrote in their *User friendly handbook for mixed methods evaluations* the differences between quantitative and qualitative. This handbook gives a general overview that is still applicable and will help this research to choose between quantitative and qualitative data. They start with explaining quantitative data.
Quantitative data can best be distinguished as pieces of information that can be counted mathematically. Data is usually gathered through surveys from large numbers of respondents. Secondary data like external statistics from annual reports or from somewhere else are mostly included in quantitative evaluations. This data can best answer when and who questions.
The strengths lie in the fact that data is relatively easy to analyze, data is consistent and data can be generalized. The limitations show that data may not be robust enough to explain complex issues or secondary data might not be available which is severely needed.
Compared to quantitative data, qualitative data emphasis on explaining why people think and behave in certain ways, not emphasizing on counting and analyzing numbers. The number respondents are fewer than with quantitative data. Data can best answer how and why questions, searching the meaning behind pieces of information. The strengths are complementing and refining quantitative data, providing more in detail information to explain complex issues and there is more than one method for gathering data on sensitive subjects. The limitations are findings can not be generalized to the study population, more difficult to analyze and data collection takes a lot more time than collecting quantitative data.
Football clubs are active in highly active environments, especially when focusing on their internet environment. To make a decision whether to use quantitative data or qualitative data the most important factors are complexity and respondents. First of all complexity. With complexity the following is meant: complexity of the internet environment, complexity of a football club and the complexity of the common football supporter. A football club can be in week 43 the best football club in the world according to their supporters after they defeat their biggest rivals and taking over the first place in the league.

After loosing two times in a row the football club is considered as garbage in week 45. To research how a sustainable image can be created it is not possible to consider league standings or match results. Also reviewing annual reports or better financial performances will not disclose the image. The common football supporter is sensitive to results, the common community member is less sensitive to results. The community member likes the football club for who it is. He/she believes in the mission, vision and objectives of their football club. They identify with the name, shirt, logo, stadium, players and other supporters. On one hand this might dissolve complexity, because a football club knows what community members expect. Still community members are all unique, as are humans, they expect different things and can be let down by the club. The possibility of leaving the community with a single click of their mouse gives them great powers. The question remains how to use Football Community strategies to ensure a good international image. The uniqueness of community members is too ambiguous to be solved by merely quantitative data. In case of complexity the best choice is qualitative data.

The other important factor is respondents. This research uses professional football clubs as their sample. These football clubs have to be highly active on Social Media, else they will not be relevant. Approximately 100 clubs in Europe can be used. In a population of 100 it remains difficult to get a big sample. Especially football clubs are hard to reach, they are very busy organizations and receive many student requests. So a small sample would be realistic. To get the best outcomes from a small sample in-depth qualitative research is necessary. In case of respondents the best choice is qualitative data.

No surprise as this research uses qualitative data.

3.1.1 Multiple cases or a single case

The second discrepancy that has to be solved is the use of multiple or single cases.
In respect to this research cases are defined as number of respondents (football clubs) which are thoroughly examined.
Yin, 1993, wrote in his *Applications of case study research* the differences between multiple and singles cases. He started with a summary of what case studies are and later on showed the differences between both multiple and single cases. He starts: a case study is historically used as a detailed research of a single individual or group. The most defining feature of a case study is its holistic approach. The holistic approach makes it possible to make a clear in-depth analysis of a case. Populations that have problems getting a good sample find case studies pleasing. Case studies might be hard to generalize, but provide useful data that a randomized sample will not give. Yin, 1993, continues: cases can be used for descriptive, explanatory or exploratory purposes. For these purposes there are two distinct ways of conducting a case study, namely multiple and single case study. The difference between multiple and single is that of the use of one or more cases in the research. A single in-depth analysis a researcher needs a case that yields more information than average cases. While starting the research it is difficult to determine which case can yield the most information. Trial and error might happen. Multiple case study uses replication, which is the process of choosing different cases that are likely to show similar results. Multiple case studies start with generalizing results, at least it attempts to generalize.
This research uses qualitative data, therefore it aims to use a case study design. A small sample arose from trying to get respondents. A case study would be perfect to give an in-depth analysis of how Football Community Strategies are used, or how football clubs use Social Media to enforce a good international image. A single case study would be great, but inconclusive. The in-depth nature will critically examine a single football club, but lacks validity.

To get more validity this research uses a multiple case study. The possibility to generalize, or attempt to generalize is valuable. Also since every football club is unique it is valuable to get more views on the subject. This research uses multiple cases. The cases are PSV Eindhoven, Feyenoord Rotterdam, FC Groningen and Borussia Monchengladbach. From now on these clubs will be called PSV, Feyenoord, Groningen and BMG.

3.1.2 Research Method

It became clear that the best type of data to be used is qualitative and the amount of cases can be multiple, four in this research. One question remains. Which method should be used to collect data?
Heading back to Frechtling and Scharp, 1997, they stated the differences between quantitative and qualitative data, but usefully also state which methods can be used best in both cases. They state that qualitative data collection can be done through observations, interviews, focus groups and non-statistical general techniques. These are the main groups of data collection. As Bernard, 1988 p. 62, agrees the three main categories are observations, interviews and study of documents. Every category has their own methods to conduct research. This research doesn't have to limit itself to one of these categories, in multiple case studies different methods can be complementary. Observations directly look at what is happening rather than giving a stimulus to participant. A researcher can see his focus group in their own social context, which can yield exceptional outcomes. (Frechtling and Scharp, 1997).
Interviews can reach great in-depth data. This data is rich, detailed and can yield information about experiences, behaviours and opinions. An interview can only work if open-ended questions are used and the interviewer uses his social skills to keep the conversation going. (Frechtling and Scharp, 1997) An interview can be formal or informal. Creating a formal atmosphere will provide the interviewer with smart, business related and well thought answers. An informal atmosphere will provide the interviewer with more behavioural and opinionated answers. (Bernard, 1988 p.68) Very important to see in which kind of setting the interview is taken place. An informal interview can yield the best result, but might not work in professional settings. As well as formal interview doesn't work in lay-back settings.
Focus group is the final category of which this research has to choose. Focus group is the use of group dynamics to collect data and insights. The key to focus groups success is that they are non-randomly selected. They have to share several characteristics, but favourably don't know each other. The use of open-ended questions or statements can stimulate a discussion. Focus groups can insights from more people at one time and observe the agreed consensus. (Frechtling and Scharp, 1997)
Every category has their own characteristics. This research uses qualitative data and has multiple cases (4), so the best way to collect data would be an interview. With an interview in-depth data can be collected in a friendly way. Heading back to the complexity of the research it is desired to get as much data as possible with the low amount of respondents. The idea is to engage in an informal interview since Football Communities are very informal entities. At the club employees that are working in the new media divisions are not people in suits and ties. They are mostly informally dressed and appreciate if you adapt to them. To collect data first an appointment is made with the football club, after this appointment is set the employee will receive an informal questionnaire with open/closed questions about Football Communities and their strategies. The most common strategy, the Influenced Content Aggregator, is leading the questionnaire.

The idea is that the model proposed in this strategy, the communication mix, is theoretically very popular and acts as the base model in this research. From the communication mix it is possible to see if clubs have expanded this model to a sports integrated communication mix or if they have diminished it to a model of Sole Content Aggregator.

The expectation is that most football clubs find themselves in the strategy of the Influenced Content Aggregator. From that point this research attempts to reveal the pro's and cons of every strategy and in general how a football club should implement one of the three strategies. The questionnaire that is the base for the interview can be seen in appendix D.

The content of the questionnaire can be redirected to the research made by Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut, 2007.

3.2 Data collection

The last three paragraphs showed that this research uses qualitative data in multiple cases. Data is collected by a questionnaire and interview. In this paragraph the implementation of the questionnaire and interview is analyzed. Football clubs in Europe were asked if they wanted to take part in this research, four clubs replied positive to this request. Appendix B shows the request made to find football clubs.

The four researched football clubs PSV Eindhoven, FC Groningen, Feyenoord Rotterdam and Borussia Mönchengladbach are used to exclude the questionnaire and interview. These football clubs were chosen as they are all big football clubs with a big national fan base and an growing international fan base. They are all active on Social Media, but all in a different way. This makes them useful to test the three Football Community Strategies at.

First the questionnaire was distributed to the football clubs. The football clubs were asked to fill in the questionnaire and sent them back. The questionnaire is a combination of questions that have to do with the content of the three Football Community Strategies. For the Sole Content Aggregator it are the first four questions, for the Influenced Content Aggregator it is the communication mix and for the Influencing Content Aggregator it is the sports integrated communication mix. It is not that every strategy is restricted to the answers of their own model, even better valuable data can be derived from answers to questions of other models/questions. The goal is to collect as many empirical data as possible which can test the three strategies.

The questionnaire is as followed. The questionnaire is divided into three stages that have to do with the questions from each strategy.

Sole Content Aggregator:

- *What was the initial reason to become active on Social Media?*
- *Does (Football Club) use a structured approach to Social Media?*
- *Do you suffer from other Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages that carry out the name of your football club? If so, how do you deal with them?*
- *How do you deal with Facebook and Twitter behavior of players of your football club?*
- *Do you judge bad behavior? Do you control them daily?*

Influenced Content Aggregator:

▪ *Content Provision*

How many hours per week do you spend on composing and posting messages?
How many hours per week do you spend corresponding in private messages with community members?

▪ *Infrastructure maintenance*

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining list address files?
How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining, posting, publicizing ancillary files?

▪ *Social Encouragement*

Do you share messages from other Social Media pages? If so, why?
Do you praise messages from community members? If so, why?
Do you praise good behavior from community members? If so, why?
Do you encourage community members to promote your Social Media pages? If so, why?

▪ *Social Control*

Do you encourage community members to introduce themselves? If so, why?
Do you judge disputes between community members? If so, why?
Do you reduce off-topic messages? If so, why?
Do you punish inappropriate behavior? If so, why?
Do you remove members from your community list? If so, why?

▪ *External Promotion*

Do you post links to related websites? If so, why?
Do you link to your own (other) Social Media pages in your community? If so, why?

▪ *Audience Engagement*

How many hours per week do you use to read reaction made by community members?

The Influencing Content Aggregator:

Which of the following variables do you use as marketing tool? If you use a variable can you explain why and how?

▪ *Relationship building and management.*
▪ *Advertising.*
▪ *Publicity.*
▪ *Personal contact.*
▪ *Incentives.*
▪ *Atmospheric.*
▪ *Licensing.*
▪ *Sponsorship.*

After the questionnaire result are collected, the interview phase will start. The interview is done face-to-face at their venue. It is important to exclude the interview in a place where the interviewee is relaxed. During the interview the answers to the questionnaire are evaluated. These answers are adjusted by new data gathered during the interview. This data can be verbal and non-verbal, sometimes interviewee's say things, but their body language can mean different things. After the interview the notes from the questionnaire and the interview are compared and combined into one high quality answer to every question. These questionnaires with answers can be found in C to F , they are used in the results section.

So this researched has designed three Football Community Strategies within their dimensions and created a methodology which helps this research to test the strategies. After collecting the data, this data has to be analyzed in the result section. In the result section the three strategies are thoroughly examined with the data from the questionnaires/interviews. This can be found in the next chapter.

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Chapter 4 Results

In the results section this research will analyze the data collected from the questionnaire and interview. Every Football Community Strategy has its own theoretical implications as can be seen in chapter 2, but are these implications practical for football clubs? For this research it is not enough to design a selection model consisting of three ideal types Football Community Strategies. This research wants to know if these Football Community Strategies are applicable to football clubs. For that reason the questionnaire and interview is there to gain enough empirical data. Now two questions remain: *How can the data be analyzed?* And *Are the Football Community Strategies applicable to football clubs?* The results section answers both questions.

4.1 Analyzing the questionnaires/interviews

Qualitative data was used to generate useful insights for this research. One of the reasons is to see the current state of the Football Community Strategy at every football club. It is difficult to analyze qualitative data, since it are opinions which can't be easily measured.
The most serious difficulty in the use of qualitative data is that methods of analysis are not well formulated. For quantitative data, there are clear conventions the researcher can use. But the analyst faced with a bank of qualitative data has very few guidelines for protection against self-delusion, let alone the presentation of unreliable or invalid conclusion to scientific or policy-making audiences. (Miles, 1979:591)
Therefore not all the questions aim to generate qualitative data per se. For example the question "*How many hours per week do you spend on composing and posing messages?*" is a question that at first asks for a general answer in terms of hours. During the interview more qualitative data is generated by asking beyond this question, asking the 'why' question helps out a lot. In this research there are two dimensions, namely image and community activity, image is a clear qualitative dimension and community activity a quantitative dimension. These two dimensions are not designing the strategies, but helps the three strategies to be placed in the selection model. To help to understand which problems can occur during analyzing the data this research would like to borrow the figure from Ryen (2002) and Silverman (2001). This figure talks about the different kind of thoughts interviewers can have during a question and during analyzing the data.
Basically in this research Naturalistic - Positivism is a threat, since the knowledge of the researcher in this field of study is big. What this figure shows is that it is important to stay close to the questions posed at the interviewee. Data has to be interpreted as it is and not being adjusted so that football clubs might look better than they are. This figure helped to get rid of influencing biases by the researcher.

Paradigm	Characteristics	Status of Data	Methodology
Naturalistic – Positivism	• the social reality is real • important that the researcher does not affect/ influence the data • quotes are marked "…" • Focus on "What"-questions	Facts about behaviour and attitudes	Random samples Standard questions Tabulations
Etnometodology – Constructionism	• search for production of meaning reality is produced through interaction • focus on "how"-questions	Mutually constructed	Unstructured Open-ended interviews
Emotionalism	• purpose: to get on the inside • focus on the subject's own feelings both the researcher's and the subject's feeling is empirical material	Authentic experience	Any interview treated as topic.
Post-modernism	• worried about self consciousness • research constructs the reality by producing description on it.	-	De-constructing texts

(Figure 11: Analyzing paradigms)

Where not every paradigm proposed in this figure is negative, they all have to be taken into account. A good example is that of emotionalism. During the interviews many times the interviewee asked about the opinion of the interviewer. It is not a problem if the interviewer gives his own opinion to a question or statement, but it shouldn't influence the data. Every opinion from the interviewer was distilled from the data and any data that looked biased by the opinion of the interviewer was adjusted so that the data is 100% the opinion of the interviewee. This process has to be repeated for every question. Every answer to the questionnaire and interview have to be viewed for similarities and coherence. The end product is four questionnaires with data from the two data collection phases. They can be found in appendix C to F.

To analyse the data after it is being cleared of any bias stated in figure 11 this research uses a iterative analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994). They distinguish three processes in analysis.

- Data reduction: concepts are developed and subjects/phenomenon are selected. In this research this phase selects the useful data from the answers to the questionnaires and interviews.
- Data display: seeking the meaning on a limit part of the data. The data is placed in the right Football Community Strategy with respect to their characteristics.

- Conclusion: comparing, contrasting, searching for patterns et cetera. The data is compared to other data to draw conclusions about every characteristic of the three Football Community Strategies.

The following paragraphs will analyse the data in an iterative analysis for every Football Community Strategy. At the end of each paragraph the table will be filled for every football club. Data from the interview is used to analyze if the design of each strategy can be used by football clubs. Figure 9 shows each characteristic that makes up the three strategies.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication	Group	Personal	Group
One or two way communication	One	Two	One
Proactive or reactive communication	None	Reactive	Proactive
Unique content	No	No	Yes
Active environment	No	Yes	Yes
Importance of public relations	Low	High	Medium
Member care	Low	High	Low
Encourage sharing	No	Yes	Yes
Responsiveness	Low	High	Medium

(Figure 9: Characteristic of each strategy)

In the analysis of figure the following abbreviations will be used.
PSV Eindhoven → PSV
FC Groningen → FCG
Feyenoord Rotterdam → FEY
Borussia Mönchengladbach → BMG

4.2 Football Community relevance

First of all there is a necessity to show the relevance of Football Communities. This research distilled from theory that these Football Communities are relevant and saw the benefits. Still theory is one thing, so what about the opinion of the football clubs? Maybe the football clubs find Football Communities irrelevant en stay with traditional marketing practices. To see what their opinions were about Football Communities some simple questions were asked.
The first question was: *What was the initial reason to become active on Social Media?*
The idea is that this question directly shows the relevance of the Football Community. To know why football clubs see the need to be active on Social Media is an almost solely explaining the Football Community relevance. Lets summarize what the football clubs answered.

PSV: "*It……Social Media.*"
Groningen: "*We……high involvement ".*
Feyenoord: "*Fans……Media world.*"
BMG: "*We……other media.*"

PSV was following the horde, but not after first testing it. They found out that supporters found it very useful to be able to stay in touch with PSV through Social Media.

Groningen wanted to get more out of their supporters. Social Media was a way for them to create an involved community. Fans wanted Feyenoord to create Social Media pages, the (online) marketing department saw the possibilities, but the top management wasn't convinced. The (online) marketing department used it and after some years top management respected the idea.

BMG saw that the fans can communicate in a better and possibly more fun way with the football club. The feeling that Social Media was a good way of creating a more committed community was an aspect that every football club agreed on. If the media is there, why not use it? Football clubs knew that Social Media was useful, but they don't all agree on their approach to Social Media. Besides the relevance of Social Media it is important how the clubs structure their Social Media approach. One the one hand Social Media is relevant, but if you don't know how to use it, the relevance might be lost. The second question was for that reason: *Does your club use a structured approach to Social Media?* The clubs answered as followed:

PSV: "*No……Social Media. "*
Groningen: "*We……making one."*
Feyenoord: "*We……Media pages."*
BMG: "*We…….proper way"*

It's rather weird that all four clubs say that they don't use a structured approach to Social Media, but than state that they have structure. Besides that all the clubs have their own way of dealing with Social Media. PSV and Feyenoord trust on their own expertise to generate ideas. Groningen used several ideas during their pilot phase. BMG uses a committee to communicate among divisions. These are all structures. Groningen needs to structure their Social Media better, they haven't got around making a working structure. During the interview many questions where generally answered, because there wasn't any structure. BMG has the biggest Football Community and in their approach this became notable. They use benchmarks for amount of posts, amount of likes, amount of contest et cetera. They feel that their community has grown to an uncontrollable proportion. At least if you don't use structure. It became clear that amount of community members has a direct link to the in-depth use of a structure. If you are able to control your community without having to put much effort and time in it, you can survive without a structure. Even Groningen doesn't find itself in this situation.

Summarizing Football Communities are relevant, because they are there. There is no reason not to use Social Media to enhance community feeling. The approach by football club differs on community size, but every club uses a structured approach in their own way. Also the Football Communities are growing rapidly in numbers, meaning more and more supporters find their way to Social Media. The support for Football Communities increases. It is important to start with the relevance question, because without relevance the three strategies are not relevant. This paragraph showed why football clubs are active on Social Media and want to have a football community. This paragraph says something about the active environment. Every club except FC Groningen talked about the need to respond to their active environment.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication			
One or two way communication			
Proactive or reactive communication			
Unique content			
Active environment	No (FCG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)
Importance of public relations			
Member care			
Encourage sharing			
Responsiveness			

(Figure 12: Characteristic of each strategy filled before strategy implementation)

4.3 The Sole Content Aggregator

The first strategy to be discussed is that of the Sole Content Aggregator. In the beginning of the Social Media revolution organizations did everything on their own. They didn't had to worry about other people harming their image, since most of the Social Media pages didn't had the option. As the internet became more and more free and as the internet grew to great proportions Social Media became difficult to control. One of the three strategies proposes by this research is that of the Sole Content Aggregator. The sole content aggregator feels that members are difficult to control. It is not enough to treat the members with respect or punish bad behavior. The members are (mostly) admission free and should respect what the content aggregator puts on the web.

Therefore the members are not able to influence the organization in any way. The Sole Content Aggregator is a phenomenon that used to exist more than now. The strategy may be old fashioned, but not irrelevant. The football clubs all agreed that at a given time they use or might use their legal division to expropriate community members.

One of the questions which pretty firmly shows the relevance is the question: *Do you suffer from other Social Media pages that carry out the name of your football club? If so, how do you deal with them?* The football clubs answered:

PSV: *"Yes……that means."*
Groningen: *"Not……other pages."*
Feyenoord: *"It……a blogger."*
BMG: *"There……fully certified."*

PSV started on Social Media almost a decade ago as a Sole Content Aggregator. They were new to Social Media and thought that every harmful page could be taken down. So they did. PSV didn't see a kickback in Social Media use or image. The 14-year old boy was generously dealt with, he received gifts. His page was terminated and PSV didn't loose any credibility among their supporters. A net win for PSV. Also their Football Community kept on growing and became more and more active. In the initial phase of their Social Media process, the Sole Content Aggregator strategy worked for them. Feyenoord agrees with PSV that actions have to be taken against wrongdoers. Feyenoord underlines the importance of trustworthy content on the internet.

The image of Feyenoord is that of a traditional big club in the Netherlands and every aspect of their community should express this image. Wrongdoers are removed, still Feyenoord sees that they have to be careful about their image. As one of the traditional clubs in the Netherlands, Feyenoord is always held under a magnifying glass. There were some problems with supporters that had to be taken actions against. These supporters went to the media and this was harmful to Feyenoord image. Feyenoord sees the problems with removing Social Media pages or other websites. BMG doesn't only remove harmful pages, but also encourages harmless pages. They want supporters to start their own page. Together with Feyenoord BMG sees that with more fan pages a greater audience can be reached.

Groningen feels that they haven't got any wrongdoers; still they claim that they have to control. It is easy for them since Groningen is a small club, so there aren't (m)any other Social Media pages. Every club is copyrighted and verified, this helps them in maintaining the relevance of there Social Media pages.

Controlling the internet for other pages, other sites, and other forums takes a lot of time and energy. At least for big organizations, small organizations see this strategy as a starting point. As do football clubs. When entering Social Media an organization wants a fresh start. In this phase proper control can lead to typify your image. You are the one and only content aggregator, what you say happens, you decide the values, so you are the reason for a good or bad image. No other page should represent your brand. Football clubs like PSV, Feyenoord have documented legal actions against harmful pages. Control isn't only about searching pages from people outside the organization, it also has to do with controlling people within the organization. Therefore the following question was useful: *How do you deal with Facebook and Twitter behavior of players of your football club? Do you judge bad behavior? Do you control them daily?* Summarizing:

PSV: "*It……and values.*"
Feyenoord: "*Younger……every player*"
Groningen: "*We……to this.*"
BMG: "*We……with BMG.*

Where pages made by supporters are strictly controlled, players are mostly monitored. It is not that the clubs don't see the harmful aspects, but they feel that it is not humane to control them severely. Especially Groningen sees that severe control can lead to a hostile environment. Players of the clubs are all expected to behave with in the behavioral norms and values. PSV, Feyenoord and BMG created a code of conduct in which they state these behavioral norms and values. Players are briefed and have to sign the code of conduct. Briefing players about what they can post as facts or as opinions also results in good behavior. If a player decides to engage in a political debate on Twitter than the club has to monitor if he doesn't go too far. In case of PSV this happened in the beginning of 2012 with their ex goalkeeper. He made some strong statements about his religious beliefs and distributed them among Twitter. The club had to take distance from his statements, else it will become harmful.

So there is only control if the necessity is there. All the clubs agree that they can trust their players and want it to stay this way.

It became apparent that the Sole Content Aggregator strategy is useful the right context. If your organization is starting to engage in Social Media or if your organization is a huge incumbent. In both cases direct control is needed to enhance this strategy.

You decide what your image is going to be. Your followers have to agree with what you post on Social Media, as you don't accept them to run their mouth on other Social Media Pages. You don't want all this community activity, because it will harm your organization.

4.3.1 The Sole Content Aggregator applied

As far as the researched football clubs are concerned they all have been there.
PSV and Feyenoord wanted to stay in this strategy, but saw that their community was growing to the altitude of impossible to control. They mainly used the Sole Content Aggregator strategy to pilot the Social Media environment. Sure they want to stay in this strategy, but with the rising community activity it became impossible.
BMG responded after their community asked for the protection of their own pages. BMG see that these Social Media pages can have positive outcomes on the image.
Groningen is acting as a Sole Content Aggregator, they are a small club with a small community. They don't believe in harmful pages, but if they happen they will fight them. It is a strategy which worked great for them. Still they want more commitment from their community. A higher amount of commitment isn't reached in the Sole Content Aggregator strategy. Their quest for commitment might lead them to another strategy.
In the international context the Sole Content Aggregator ensures the right communication. There will be no noise in the Social Media Channel. The football club can use their domestic Social Media plan and international Social Media plan side by side.
Summarizing the Sole Content Aggregator lets you control your image by only allowing yourself to aggregate the content. It is a simple strategy to execute, but timely and costly to apply. Do note that there is little to community activity in this strategy, since no community member is allowed to keep a discussion going on their Social Media page.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication	Group (FCG, BMG)		
One or two way communication	One (FCG, FEY, BMG)		
Proactive or reactive communication	None		
Unique content	No (FCG, PSV)		
Active environment	No (FCG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)
Importance of public relations	Low (FCG, BMG)		
Member care	Low (FEY, BMG)		
Encourage sharing	No (FCG, PSV)		
Responsiveness	Low (FCG, FEY, BMG)		

(Figure 13: Characteristic of each strategy filled after Sole Content Aggregator)

4.4 The Influenced Content Aggregator

The second strategy to be discussed is that of the Influenced Content Aggregator. The Influenced Content Aggregator does use a strategized approach, but fails in several of the factors. Especially in a vivant world as the football world it is almost impossible to control and engage in every member of your community. There are a lot of community members that have their own Social Media page with their own opinions that they state as facts. The organization doesn't have the resources to control all these pages, they are lacking in money, people or knowledge. As a result the community members monopolize the image on Social Media. In comparison to the sole content aggregator, the influenced content aggregator does let image depend on community activity. There you have to problem, the community decides your image. At first hand it seems like a positive aspect, since you only have to please your community to create a good image. If it were so simple everybody would do it. The problem lies in the fact that people or rather football supporter aren't easily pleased. Especially with big media hyped football clubs the common supporter doesn't feel that he has to support his club through thick and thin.

One week when a football clubs beats their local rivals they are the best team on the planet and the next week they are garbage when they embarrass themselves after losing to a small local bottom placed club. When a football club wins there aren't relevant problems, it starts when a football club loses.

You just have to open a local newspaper and you see the problems. A thousand and one opinions, inaccurate about the facts, twisted opinions made by club and so on. Everybody wants a piece of them, everybody wants to speak their mind and everybody wants to leave the club and never come back. Please not that this can all shift to again positive feeling the next week. The community pressures the football club so severely that they have to keep on responding to their community instead of occupying themselves with their own content. The football club can't do as they please, at least viewed from an organizational approach.

The question remains how to ensure a good image in this high activity based environment. To answer this question this research proposes the model from Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut (2007). In the interview all the six factor where used to see if a football club enhances this strategy and how they feel that they are acting to there community. Several questions will be used to discuss how football clubs enhance this strategy. The first question to be discussed is: *How many hours per week do you spend corresponding in private messages with community members?*

PSV: "*We……the sender.*
Groningen: "*We......be relevant.*
Feyenoord: "*Only……private messages.*
 BMG: "*Due……every week.*

Dealing with private messages or e-mails to the Social Media employee happens every single day. One aspect of the Influenced Content Aggregator is that you feel that you have to respond to (a collection of) every private message. If you don't, you feel that the effects are to negative. It takes a lot of time to respond to every private message. Especially for the bigger communities. Responding to private messages has two outcomes. One outcome is that community members are generally happy and feel respected by the football club. The second outcome is that community members feel that they can bother their football club with everything and the private message list expands to uncontrollable heights.

Besides this, community members also are going to expect the football club to respond, if you don't respond, you will lose their interest. BMG is one club that wants to respond to every private message, but sees that there are too much messages to respond to. They want to read them all, but fail to do so. Where BMG wants to responds to every message, PSV does the complete opposite. They do not want to respond to any private message. They feel that this isn't the right platform to resolve complaints. Of course they do read them and if there are some severe problems or great remarks they will use them as feedback. Feyenoord agrees with PSV and adds that they expect that private messaging diminish as they don't respond to any request. They are fairly positive about the effect. Groningen does respond to private messages and even discuses where needed with the community members that sent the message. They want to get more commitment from their community and feel that this is one of the means to reach more commitment.

The community provides the organization with input for Social Media. The general idea for Social Media is to keep your community happy. A happy community is a good community and will result in a good image. At least that's the theory behind the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy. Responding to private messages is a way to ensure good community behavior, but is too costly to do. An other way to keep your community happy is to monitor your Social Media pages for bad behavior. Community members appreciate your actions and will respect your Social Media pages more. At least that's what the theory says. The question: *Do you judge disputes between community members? If so, why?* Explains how and why the football clubs not only judge, and also how football clubs take actions against disputes.

PSV: "*Yes……Media pages.*"
Groningen: "*Yes……bad behavior.*"
Feyenoord: "*Besides……company actions.*"
BMG: "*As……community members.*"

Disputes, a club doesn't want them, community members don't want them, but they exist. They can make or break your image. To much bad behavior on your Social Media pages result in members avoiding Social Media. Especially the international group which only have access to the football club through internet, will diminish. The farther the physiological distance the greater the dependence on internet for your community feeling. There is an obvious discrepancy.
PSV and Groningen claim that every dispute has to be monitored and if the dispute is harmful direct actions have to be taken. Resulting in a ban from the football clubs Social Media pages or other actions. This takes a lot of time, but the clubs feel that this is the way to enhance a good community feeling and a good image. They feel that every community member deserves a clean of bad behavior Social Media page to get their information and support their football club. Especially those who don't visit matches or haven't got access to other media. Feyenoord and BMG of course see that disputes or bad behavior are not allowed on their Social Media page. Their approach differs from that of PSV and Groningen. They feel that the community can judge disputes themselves. They call it social control. Feyenoord even states that social control is more important than company control. At the moment a dispute or bad behavior starts Feyenoord and BMG take note of this particular case, but doesn't remove it. They wait, if socially acceptable, until the community resolves the dispute or bad behavior. Both the football clubs feel that their community is mature enough to solve problems. When a dispute or bad behavior is too severe the clubs have to take fast actions.

For example if a community member feels that he has to post a swastika or other racial content, the club has to respond quickly. Besides these severe cases, the social control is competent enough.

The Influenced Content Aggregator strategy is a strategy in which an organization has to put a lot of time and costs in. The organization feels that they have to please their community so that their image is guaranteed. Your community decides what your image is. Or even better a small part of your community decides what your image is. Only those who are talkative on Social Media decide how the outside world looks at your organization. The community members that are far away or lack in access to traditional media, are dependent on the Football Community. They will feel that what is stated and discussed are truths, even if a disgruntled community member posts something. Meaning that your image can change every week.

This strategy only works if you can guarantee to please your community every day.

4.4.1 The Influenced Content Aggregator applied

As far as the researched football clubs, Groningen is moving toward this strategy, PSV is using this strategy and Feyenoord is moving out of this strategy. Groningen is acting as a Sole Content Aggregator, but wants more commitment from their community. They feel that their community is small enough to let them involve in the Social Media pages, without it becoming harmful. In the Sole Content Aggregator strategy their isn't much room for community activity, so FC Groningen has to move to the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy. Within this strategy they can interact more and more with their community and use the activity based approach.

PSV is prone to high community activity and feels that they have to monitor every Social Media page to ensure a positive image among their Football Community. They let their image depend on community behavior. International community members are therefore surrendered to the mercy of active community members. PSV doesn't state that they have problems with their community, but do feel that it becomes harder and harder to monitor every Social Media content and please their community. Feyenoord witnessed their community grow and grow to uncontrollable heights. They used to act the same as PSV, knowing that high activity has to be monitored. As time passed Feyenoord saw that it became impossible to control every piece of content. They need a different approach which can handle their high amount of community members, but can also ensure their good image. Nationally and internationally.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication	Group (FCG, BMG)	Personal (PSV, FEY)	
One or two way communication	One (FCG, FEY, BMG)	Two (PSV)	
Proactive or reactive communication	None	Reactive (FCG, PSV, FEY)	
Unique content	No (FCG, PSV)	No (FCG, PSV)	
Active environment	No (FCG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)
Importance of public relations	Low (FCG, BMG)	High (PSV, FEY)	
Member care	Low (FEY, BMG)	High (FCG, PSV)	
Encourage sharing	No (FCG, PSV)	Yes (FEY, BMG)	
Responsiveness	Low (FCG, FEY, BMG)	High (PSV)	

(Figure 14: Characteristic of each strategy filled after Influenced Content Aggregator)

4.5. The Influencing Content Aggregator

The third strategy to be discussed is that of the Influencing Content Aggregator strategy. The Influencing Content Aggregator distinct itself from the other strategies in the possibility to deal with high community activity. Their image will benefit. To deal with high community activity in favor of a good image this research wants to extend the model proposed by Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut (2007) into a sports integrated communication mix model.
The Influencing content Aggregator aims to please its community and uses the optimal company resources to ensure a good image.
Where the Sole Content Aggregator uses content to ensure a good image and the Influenced Content Aggregator uses community activity to ensure a good image, the Influencing Content Aggregator wants to approach their community in a different way. This way is best explained by the word flow. The Influencing Content Aggregator doesn't structural post messages, structural response to community members or structural judge disputes. They let their Social Media pages flow among its whole community. Flow is a difficult concept, but the researched football clubs all saw that flow is something that can help them on Social Media. Still the football clubs must have the organizational capabilities to reach a good flow. It takes a lot of start up time, but maintenance is low. The concept might be a bit blurry. Lets explain with one of the questions in the interview. The football clubs were asked which of the variables of the sports integrated communication mix they use as a marketing tool for their Social Media. The first variable was that of *relationship building and management*. Lets see if and how the researched football clubs use this variable.

PSV: *"This……the members."*
Groningen: *"Feedback……our fans."*
Feyenoord: *"Very……during transport."*
BMG: *"We……professional."*

A good relationship with your community, every football club wants it. Some football clubs have a good relationship with some members of the community, other football clubs with more members. In a perfect world a football club has a good relationship with 95% of the whole community. There are always some wrongdoers, that's inherent to life. The idea of the Influencing Content Aggregator is not how the relationship is between community and football club, but how they attempt to build and keep the relationship. Lets start with Groningen. They use personal feedback to ensure a good relationship. They want to build along side their community a relationship.
Groningen has an idea what community members expect from them, but want a constant feedback of how to better there approach. Groningen along side all the other football clubs use Social Media to warn people about hazardous circumstances. Where Groningen wants a constant feedback PSV wants to involve their community in the football club. This doesn't differ that much from Groningen, only PSV does actually let the community members involve in their Social Media pages. As said in chapter 4.4..1 PSV lets his image be decided by their community. Also stated before PSV doesn't have the strategy to build a relationship in any other way. Feyenoord and BMG do have an other strategy. Feyenoord and especially BMG know that they have a loyal group of community members that mostly make up the image of the football club. This is best described by the use of relationship building and management by BMG. They state that they want to provide their community with all the right data. The community in turn can distribute this data on their own Social Media pages, Social Media pages of friends or other fan pages. They feel that this will respond in a positive relationship as they are very open and trustworthy to their community. Basically this is what the Influencing Content Aggregator is all about. This strategy wants to lay the responsibilities at the community by providing trustworthy data. The last sentence of the answer by BMG actually perfectly states the whole idea of the Influencing Content Aggregator: *By providing trustworthy content we hope that our community members respect our openness and they act professional.* This is how it should be. Still it remains difficult to achieve.

A football club wants their community to act as a wave of content. You place content on your Social Media pages, your community reads it, likes it, retweets it, shares it, and after that the flow begins. By sharing or retweeting a whole new discussion starts on other Social Media pages. This is what you want. You accept that there is a whole gray circuit with opinions, facts and other assumptions of which you have idea that they exist. The best way to cope with this gray circuit is to attempt to be the creator of content. If you are accessible enough for your community it is expected that community members use your Social Media pages for content. In this way content that is diffusing among the internet is the right content and the gray circuit can't be more harmful to you as it can be. Another reason for flow is the audience that flow can reach. Not every supporter is a member of your Football Community, therefore he/she will not be reached by all the 'great' content you post on your Social Media pages. Mostly these supporters have friends, forums or other media in which they discuss about their football club. By letting your content flow these supporters might be reached through your community members, who are their friends, family or colleagues.

This is what you want, because without extra effort you reach a greater audience. Some questions remain how can a supporter know which page is relevant? What is the official page made by the football club? Which page can be used to acquire content? In theory the answer is one word: *licensing*. Not everybody uses licensing, so lets see why or why not.

PSV: *"Licensing……official pages."*
Groningen: *"We feel……copy cats."*
Feyenoord: *"Feyenoord……licensing methods."*
BMG: *"We……from BMG."*

Licensing gives the football club a little bit of security on Social Media. This security is all they have. Without licensing a supporter has no idea where to get the right information and he might use the wrong sources. This supporter distributes this information on his own page and on pages from friends, concluding in an informal circuit full of falsifiable information. All the football clubs expect from Groningen feel that licensing is a must. Groningen states that they have a small enough community which all knows where to get their information. If they state that they are the official site, their community believes this, no licensing is needed. Also there aren't many other Social Media pages related to Groningen, so the supporter is almost completely limited to the Football Community for his/hers information. For Groningen this isn't a problem. PSV uses its licensing as a tool for terminating copy cats. By stating they are the official page of PSV, PSV can take actions against other PSV related pages. They feel that their image can only be guaranteed if their pages are licensed and other pages are challenged. Where PSV uses a very direct approach BMG and Feyenoord use an indirect approach. BMG and Feyenoord use licensing as a tool in which supporters can be guaranteed the right information. They feel that their Football Community strategy starts at licensing. Their information can from this point flow to all the other Social Media pages, websites, e-mails and so on. Of course if necessary they don't shy away from legal action, but this shouldn't be the main approach.
The Influencing Content Aggregator strategy is a strategy which has high initial time and cost, but after everything is in place, the time one spent on Social Media management is low. The key in succeeding is creating a sustainable flow among your community. With this flow you can reach more supporters and expand your community. Your image is distributed by you and sustained by your community. This is a strategy which works especially well on international scale. By letting (international) community members distribute your correct information more and more international supporters can be reached. Internet here dissolves the physiological distance completely. International supporters as well as domestic supporters don't have to question the authenticity of the information.
Supporters can always get their information, it doesn't mind how far away, but this strategy ensures that they get the correct information. A major certainty for you image.

4.5.1 The Influencing Content Aggregator applied

As far as the researched football clubs, BMG is moving towards this strategy and Feyenoord uses this strategy or at least aims to use this strategy. BMG initially didn't use this strategy, but saw as their Football Community grew and grew, they had to react in a more proactive way. This proactive approach can help BMG ensure their image, nationally and internationally. They started to respond less to individual cases and used the collective approach to Social Media. By not responding to individual cases and distributing correct information on Social Media, BMG feel that they can start a flow.

Where BMG want to start a flow, and are starting it, Feyenoord is already using this flow. Feyenoord can use a flow, because they have very loyal fans. Feyenoord is a special club. They are a traditional big club, with a big city behind them. Their current image is the still the same as their foundation in 1908. Feyenoord had a few bad years behind them and saw that their loyal supporters were angry, but didn't leave their club as a supporter. Every day there was a sold out stadium, there were great retail sales and their supporters amount grew. Feyenoord used this image to let their information flow among their supporters on Social Media. Feyenoord can trust their supporters. This trust can used to ensure their image on Social Media. By distributing correct information and ask your loyal community to distribute this among their own pages and friends, Feyenoord can reach great numbers in a proactive way.

The Influencing Content Aggregator strategy is a useful strategy if you can trust your community and if you want to reach great amounts of supporters. This will result in high community activity and a good image. Internationally and nationally.

Strategy Characteristic	Sole	Influenced	Influencing
Personal or group communication	Group (FCG, BMG)	Personal (PSV, FEY)	Goup (FCG, BMG)
One or two way communication	One (FCG, FEY, BMG)	Two (PSV)	One (FCG, FEY, BMG)
Proactive or reactive communication	None	Reactive (FCG, PSV, FEY)	Proactive (BMG)
Unique content	No (FCG, PSV)	No (FCG, PSV)	Yes (FEY, BMG)
Active environment	No (FCG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)	Yes (PSV. FEY, BMG)
Importance of public relations	Low (FCG)	High (PSV, FEY)	Medium (BMG)
Member care	Low (FEY, BMG)	High (FCG, PSV)	Low (Fey, BMG)
Encourage sharing	No (FCG, PSV)	Yes (FEY, BMG)	Yes (FEY, BMG)
Responsiveness	Low (FCG, FEY, BMG)	High (PSV)	Medium

(Figure 15: Characteristic of each strategy filled after Influencing Content Aggregator)

It became clear that every content of the three Football Community Strategies is validated by the researched football clubs. They all have their own implications on every characteristic and therefore find themselves all in different strategies. The next chapter will answer the research problem and explains the position of the football clubs in the selection model, because what the selection model does is place each strategy in an overview for the ease of use.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

Football Communities can have great outcomes for your organization. This research aims to design three Football Community Strategies. In the exploration phase of the Social Media theories it became clear that there were few to none useful Social Media theories in the football world. This was unpleasant, but not a problem. This research saw that theories from general Business Administration researcher were more than useful. First to explain the Social Media phenomenon and later to create three strategies. Especially in the explanatory phase every variable in this research that needed explaining used the Business Administration theories. Knowing that these theories were useful it became possible to answer the following research problem: *What are appropriate Football Community Strategies to design a selection model?*

This research noted that there are two dimensions important when talking about Social Media. These dimensions are placed in the two axis of the selection model and within the selection model the three ideal type strategies are placed. First this chapter will explain what the appropriate Football Community Strategies are, the second part is about which football club uses which strategy and the third part is how they can be placed within the selection model

The Sole Content Aggregator strategy.
Without proper control an organization can't be the only one that places content on the internet. Controlling the internet for other pages, other sites, and other forums takes a lot of time and energy. At least for big organizations, small organizations see this strategy as a starting point. As do football clubs. When entering Social Media an organization wants a fresh start. In this phase proper control can lead to typify your image. You are the one and only content aggregator, what you say happens, you decide the values, so you are the reason for a good or bad image. No other page should represent your brand. If anyone decides to post content about the football club, whether positive or negative, they will be removed by legal actions. There is little to none community activity, your community is an inert part of your Social Media.

The Influenced Content Aggregator strategy.
The community provides the organization with input for Social Media. The general idea for Social Media is to keep your community happy. A happy community is a good community and will result in a good image. At least that's the theory behind the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy. Responding to private messages is a way to ensure good community behavior, but is too costly to do. An other way to keep your community happy is to monitor your Social Media pages for bad behavior. Community members appreciate your actions and will respect your Social Media pages more. This strategy takes a lot of time and actions to ensure a good image and than the question still remains if your image is good. Supporters that don't belong to your Football Community might feel different by all the contradictory information they receive.

The Influencing Content Aggregator strategy.
A football club wants their community to act as a wave of content. You place content on your Social Media pages, your community reads it, likes it, retweets it, shares it, and after that the flow begins. A reason for flow is the audience that flow can reach. Not every supporter is a member of your Football Community, therefore he/she will not be reached by all the 'great' content you post on your Social Media pages.

Mostly these supporters have friends, forums or other media in which they discuss about their football club. By letting your content flow these supporters might be reached through your community members, who are their friends, family or colleagues.

To your community it might feel that they have the control by posting your information on their pages. This is great, you will keep your community happy and your image good, as there is almost none false information on the web. Negative opinions made by community members are of course unpleasant, but if these opinions are distilled from correct information supporters can weigh the opinions themselves.

Concluding the three strategies are valid and ready to use by football clubs. A football club has to look for similarities with other football clubs to see which strategy is useful. If you are a small football club than you shouldn't think that the Influencing Content Aggregator strategy is good for you. You don't have the resources to keep up with your community in this strategy. A negative use of a strategy will directly result in loss of image. Therefore many football clubs find themselves in the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy and from this point they can move to other strategies or stay at the same. Every strategy has their own implications and is therefore useful in their own optimal situation. Again do note that this research designed three strategies within a selection model. It doesn't write application rules for football clubs.

5.1 Which strategy applies which club?

The conclusion together with the result section showed which strategies are ideal types in the selection model. What remains is to implement them to the researched football clubs. This isn't a main part of the research, but it is good to see how football clubs can be put in the model and how they aim to move inside the selection model. First the current situation is explained and second their desired situation is explain. The arrow in the selection model shows how they want to move.

Current:

FC Groningen finds itself using a Sole Content Aggregator strategy with several characteristic from the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy. They have one way communication that reached the whole community. Their environment is inactive and not able to participate in their Football Community. FC Groningen does ask members to share, does see the importance of public relations, but they don't get many response from their community.

PSV has an active environment. Their environment is powerful, they are personally dealt with and PSV reacts to them in every case. PSV clearly has an Influenced Content Aggregator strategy. Especially the high amount of member care has to control their Football Community. PSV spends a lot of time reacting to individual cases.

Feyenoord finds itself between the Influenced Content Aggregator and Influencing Content Aggregator strategy. Feyenoord doesn't want to respond to single cases anymore, they see that their Football Community has became to large to control. Group communication and medium responsiveness helps them not to over control their Football Community. Still Feyenoord doesn't always let their information flow among their Football Community. Many times they severely monitor what happens on their pages. They do spend a lot of time on controlling wrongdoers.

Borussia Mönchengladbach knows that their Football Community is far to large to control. They cant react to single cases, because than you have to answer to too many requests every day.

Instead they use unique content which flows among their Football Community. Proactively responding to their Football Community is the way that they can not spend hours every day, but are ensured of a satisfied Football Community.

Desired:

FC Groningen is looking for more participation and commitment from their supporters. They want to receive feedback and get a higher activity from their environment. Member care is of utmost importance, just as reactive communication is. They slowly move from the Sole Content Aggregator strategy to the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy. This strategy can help them reach their objectives in order to achieve greater commitment from their supporters or aspiring community members.

PSV is dealing with an active environment. They receive a lot of feedback and feel that they have to respond in order to ensure a good image. Member care is high and responsiveness is also high. They do feel that are getting more and more constraint with they rising amounts of community members, but do not see the need to change approach. PSV finds itself in the Influenced Content Aggregator strategy and wants to stay here. When their community member's numbers are too many to control they want a different approach. This is 'not' yet the case.

Feyenoord and Borussia Mönchengladbach are both experiencing the need for a more general approach to they community. They saw that personal and reactive communication is not possible due to the greater amounts of their community members. Therefore they both have to take the spider in the web approach and let their unique content flow.

Feyenoord is moving from the Influenced Content Aggregator to the Influencing Content Aggregator, whereas Borussia Mönchengladbach is mainly acting as an Influencing content Aggregator.

Image	Good			*Influencing Content Aggregator (BMG)*
	Neutral	*Sole Content Aggregator (FCG →)*		
	Bad		*Influenced Content Aggregator (PSV ↑ FEY ↗)*	
		Low	Medium	High
		Community activity		

(Figure 16: the selection model filled with desired movement)

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Chapter 6 Discussion and Recommendations.

When starting this research there wasn't much written about Social Media implications in football or sports at general. Therefore theoretical models were lacking. This wasn't necessary a problem, because theories provided by Business Administration backgrounds are applicable. A football club is much like a business organization. A football club has revenues, costs, marketing, media, product development and so on. Where a football club distinct itself from general businesses is that their users, in this case supporters, are prone to weekly outcomes. Lets take into account the difference between the Apple concern and major football club Bayern Munich. Apple is a popular brand with many users covering the entire world. Bayern Munich is a popular football club with many users covering the entire world. Their difference is that Apple's image changes with every new product on the market, if people like the new product their image improves, if people dislike the new product their image declines. This apple product comes to market twice a year in general. Bayern Munich's product comes to market two or three times a week. Every week people change their opinion about Bayern Munich, mostly directly related to their results on the field. The point that I'm trying to make here is that Bayern Munich has to deal with much more uncertainty than Apple. Of course there are more variables to image, but product to market is an important variable which shows how users respond to a product. Also Apple develops it product twice a year (at least this is how the users see it). Bayern Munich develops it product twice a week. The media keeps track of the development and all the supporters have continuous access to these developments.
There are many differences between businesses and football clubs, but they have one important thing in common, they both have users. Therefore marketing tools used by businesses are useful in the context of football. Especially those that reach out to communications and new media.

The first point of discussion is: *are the theoretical models used in this research reliable?*

This research uses several theoretical models, but two stand out the communication mix by Butler, Sproull, Kiesler and Kraut (2007) and the sports integrated communication mix by Beech and Chadwick (2007). The communication mix is a model used in the marketing and communications of businesses. Therefore they are outcome related, every business needs good outcomes, else they won't implement a model. A football club wants good outcomes, but content is more important, since they are not directly dependent of their product for their revenues. The way this researched implemented the communication mix is outcome based. This researched feels that the communication mix is ideally used as a content based approach to Social Media. With this content based approach football clubs can structure their Social Media in a way that has proven itself to work in the business world. By implementing the variables of the communication mix football clubs can use this structured approach to enhance their image. I believe that the communication mix proved itself to be useful in this research as it almost solely explains an entire strategy, namely that of the Influenced Content Aggregator. At the interview phase the researched football clubs saw that the communication mix was something that they inadvertently implemented or aim to implement. There fore I believe that it's a reliable model. The sports integrated communication mix is already integrated on a sports level. This model saw what was more important in a sport organization than in a business. A sport in general is a difficult variable.

The societal influence of football is much greater than that of hockey, swimming or equestrian. Therefore it is not possible to generalize a theory on a sports level. An upset to these theory was that it seemed almost perfectly made for football clubs on Social Media. It uses several variables that football clubs find important on their Social Media.

During the interviews I saw that many football clubs indeed implement these variables, but how they implement them differs. The sports integrated communication mix is a model that can be implemented proactively. Acting proactive on Social Media is what big football clubs want to do. Smaller football clubs find it more and more necessary to go with the flow and start to act proactive. Basically this is what the Influencing Content Aggregator strategy proposes.

I believe that both the models are reliable. They have proven to exist during the interviews and after the interviews they can create implications for football clubs. These implications have to do with bettering they approach to Social Media.

The second point of discussion is: *can this research be generalized?*

Granted, every football club is unique. Every football club has its own strategy, its own supporters, its own results, every football clubs has its own image. Therefore it becomes a problem to generalize any researched made in the football environment. Looking back at the methodology section this research proposed to use a multiple case study, because it might be able to generalize this research. It was not easy getting multiple cases for this researched. Many football clubs replied no to my request. Luckily four clubs accepted to take part in this research. Even better was the size of the responded football club. Size in amount of supporters and scale of the football club. Groningen a clear small club, PSV a growing club, BMG a traditional big club and Feyenoord a big incumbent with a loyal community. These differences made it possible to examine more dimensions of the football environment. I believe that an in-depth analysis of every football club and their dimension is in fact clear enough to generalize them. What this research doesn't do is generalize it to all the football clubs. Since big incumbents like Manchester United FC, Chelsea FC, Real Madrid CF are on a different dimension active. A football club which wants to structure their Social Media approach by using one of the three strategies can look at the club they are best compared to. Therefore I believe that this research does go deep enough to generalize on several dimensions, but the population of football clubs has to realize that they have to look for similarities with the researched football clubs.

The third point of discussion and implication for further research is: *this research shows three strategies to enhance a Football Community, but what now?*

Social Media is traditionally thought as a media which needs no strategy. As Social Media became bigger and bigger more organizations saw that a good strategy is needed to keep the control. The football world agreed. During the interviews nobody stated that they intentionally wanted to use a strategy, but are all looking for one. This researched proposes three distinctive strategies which football can use to strategize their Social Media. Each strategy has their own implications and their own execution. This research doesn't say that one strategy is better than the other, but does state the influence on image. The most important factor to the success of a strategy is community activity. Maybe even better the amount of community activity. Every strategy distinct itself from the other by the amount of community activity. This suggests that community activity is the only variable, of course this isn't true.

More variables like organizational size, fan base amount and money are taken into account, but because this research is about Social Media use, community activity is thought to be the most important variable. What further research can do is mapping other variables and placing their implications in the three strategies. For example football clubs with a low amount of money are drawn to the Influencing Content Aggregator strategy or football clubs with a medium amount of fans and big organizational size might be drawn to the Sole Content Aggregator strategy. The mapping of more variables can help to better categorize the football clubs. Also I would encourage researching the 'next stage'. Were this research is explanatory and descriptive, I would like to see the execution of several strategies. It are fairly easy strategies to execute. It is not like every strategy has over 10 distinctive variables. This might make it more user friendly. While executing the strategies it is important to carefully read their theory. At first hand it might look that you only have to fill in the theoretical models used in a strategy (communication mix and sports integrated communication mix), but nothing could be further from the truth. In the theoretical framework are more variables described that are necessary of taken in to account. Mostly this has to do with how to respond to positive, negative or other behavior that are beyond the models.

6.1 Limitations

As being a social study there are always some huge limitations to every research. This research focuses itself on the design of Football Community Strategies. It strategizes these three approaches and how football clubs can use these approaches to strategize their Football Community Strategy. The limitation that derives from this is that every club is different, therefore it is difficult to generalize the content of this thesis. Where this was a given it was not a problem. The multiple case study showed four football clubs and their current approach and whishes. It is great to see that every clubs approach is as similar as different. Similarities reign the results section, but you don't have to look far to see several differences. Not only the differences that occurred by answering questions, but also the differences in desired strategy are obvious. It is difficult for a club to one hundred percent use one strategy. These strategies are ideal types. Ideal types mean that in their perfect environment these strategies are the best possible approach. Not every environment is the same, so it is difficult to use ideal types. Combining strategies is the way to find your favorite approach. This is mentioned in the research, but this research didn't look further in to this. It is beyond the scope of the research. An other limitation is that of culture. Every country, every club, every person has their own culture. This culture lets them respond different to every approach. It is difficult for this research to talk about culture, since the three strategies are ideal types. In the results section are several differences between clubs based on culture, but these are a given. FC Groningen traditionally being from the north of the Netherlands is more sober and sensible compared to the Feyenoord Rotterdam. These differences are not theorized since they aren't important in creating ideal types, but in the results section they did help to understand why a club uses an approach. Culture is difficult to measure, still the multiple case study did in fact distill some characteristics of each culture.

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Appendix A Uefa Ranking

Uefa ranking (December, 1st, 2011)	Club	Website	# Facebook likers	# Twitter Followers	#YouTube followers	#Google+
1	Manchester United FC	www.manutd.com	20,570,206	101,505	9012	0
2	FC Barcelona	www.fcbarcelona.com	22,984,007	2,167,319	2120	0
3	Chelsea FC	www.chelseafc.com	7,813,507	482,249	917	0
4	FC Bayern München	www.fcbayern.telekom.de	2,519,854	26,736	1495	0
5	Arsenal FC	www.arsenal.com	8,092,717	1,039,155	0	0
6	Real Madrid CF	www.realmadrid.com	21,876,039	2,781,267	8654	0
7	FC Internazionale Milano	www.inter.it	1,117,099	92,805	6603	0
8	FC Porto	www.fcporto.pt	472,154	28,692	512	0
9	Liverpool FC	www.liverpoolfc.tv	7,542,071	564,581	714	0
10	Olympique Lyonnais	www.olweb.fr	364,186	12,462	0	0
11	FC Shaktar Donetsk	www.shakhtar.com	0	0	0	0
12	AC Milan	www.acmilan.com	6,871,982	228,879	8156	0
13	Villareal CF	www.villarrealcf.es	42,717	0	0	0
14	Valencia CF	www.valenciacf.es	34,776	54,62	0	0
15	SL Benfica	www.slbenfica.pt	979,607	208,32	0	0
16	Olympique de Marseille	www.om.net	1,467,660	115,137	0	0
17	Club Atlético de Madrid	www.clubatleticodemadrid.com	199,794	61,168	189	0
18	PFC CSKA Moskva	www.pfc-cska.com	1,152	0	75	0
19	SV Werder Bremen	www.werder.de	20,877	23,569	0	0
20	FC Zenit St Petersburg	www.fc-zenit.ru	4,498	40,707	0	0
21	Hamburger SV	www.hsv.de	2,383	13,072	1754	0
22	As Roma	www.asroma.it	606,687	19,21	734	0
23	Sevilla FC	www.sevillafc.es	101,481	25,788	0	0
24	Sporting Clube de Portugal	www.sporting.pt	232,635	12,072	0	0
25	PSV Eindhoven	www.psv.nl	17,286	4,872	0	0
26	FC Schalke 04	www.schalke04.de	37,268	5,085	1210	0
27	Tottenham Hotspur FC	www.tottenhamhotspur.com	872,766	107,587	0	0
28	SCF Fiorentina	www.acffiorentina.it	45,281	0	0	0
29	FC Dynamo Kyiv	www.fcdynamo.kiev.ua/en	8,396	324	0	0
30	FC Girondins de Bordeaux	www.girondins.com	245,306	3,535	0	0
32	AFC Ajax	www.ajax.nl	251,266	78,017	0	0
38	FC Twente	www.fctwente.nl	65,023	26,85	0	0
57	Feyenoord	www.feyenoord.nl	49,363	20,793	0	0
95	FC Groningen	www.fcgroningen.nl	0	7,025	0	0

Uefa ranking (December, 1st, 2012)	Club	Website	# Facebook likers	# Twitter Followers	#YouTube followers	#Google+
1	Manchester United FC	www.manutd.com	30.099.029	218.338	342.212	68.121
2	FC Barcelona	www.fcbarcelona.com	38.941.754	1.627.433	638.417	3.104.763
3	Chelsea FC	www.chelseafc.com	14.507.609	1.627.433	187.806	2.588.930
4	FC Bayern München	www.fcbayern.telekom.de	5.260.872	111.489	40.397	65.534
5	Arsenal FC	www.arsenal.com	11.905.125	1.847.830	0	19.501
6	Real Madrid CF	www.realmadrid.com	34.626.131	6.123.301	477.750	2.181.223
7	FC Internazionale Milano	www.inter.it	1.619.901	226.711	70.485	1.966
8	FC Porto	www.fcporto.pt	930.542	68.729	13.940	434
9	Liverpool FC	www.liverpoolfc.tv	10.914.162	1.294.172	115.696	1.061.969
10	Olympique Lyonnais	www.olweb.fr	656.492	68.235	0	53.299
11	FC Shaktar Donetsk	www.shakhtar.com	75.473	0	0	134.878
12	AC Milan	www.acmilan.com	12.968.183	795.343	110.743	836.241
13	Villareal CF	www.villarrealcf.es	60.423	62.453	499	0
14	Valencia CF	www.valenciacf.es	82.261	207.865	5.902	48.907
15	SL Benfica	www.slbenfica.pt	1.026.273	66.364	14.703	5.434
16	Olympique de Marseille	www.om.net	1.938.088	488.764	0	200.909
17	Club Atlético de Madrid	www.clubatleticodemadrid.com	771.491	284.936	20.516	158.978
18	PFC CSKA Moskva	www.pfc-cska.com	80.036	91.102	5.053	39.359
19	SV Werder Bremen	www.werder.de	381.000	52.268	0	66.766
20	FC Zenit St Petersburg	www.fc-zenit.ru	466.081	136.522	11.371	124.079
21	Hamburger SV	www.hsv.de	365.574	63.059	7.100	69.377
22	As Roma	www.asroma.it	1.141.579	132.351	36.347	1.879
23	Sevilla FC	www.sevillafc.es	146.322	90.600	3.112	1.325
24	Sporting Clube de Portugal	www.sporting.pt	483.819	32.950	8.063	3.492
25	PSV Eindhoven	www.psv.nl	96.777	73.103	6.937	11.679
26	FC Schalke 04	www.schalke04.de	591.707	59.014	20.986	26.412
27	Tottenham Hotspur FC	www.tottenhamhotspur.com	1.410.938	326.820	0	60.324
28	SCF Fiorentina	www.acffiorentina.it	130.342	26.647	2.938	340
29	FC Dynamo Kyiv	www.fcdynamo.kiev.ua/en	34.142	1.536	2.252	0
30	FC Girondins de Bordeaux	www.girondins.com	281.416	21.024	3.518	340
32	AFC Ajax	www.ajax.nl	605.077	177.106	20.277	19.845
38	FC Twente	www.fctwente.nl	92.194	51.054	2.246	0
136	Feyenoord	www.feyenoord.nl	122.111	59.292	4.460	487
155	FC Groningen	www.fcgroningen.nl	17.843	12.876	1.086	206

Appendix B E-mailing the football clubs

Dear Sir/ Madame,

My name is Jeroen Schoon, student Business Administration at the University Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands. I am in the final stage of my study.

My final thesis is about the influence of sustaining a Social Media Community on the International Image of a professional football club. This research is an independent research at the University Twente. In the early stages of my research I realized that there is little scientific data available about how SMC influence the international image/community of a (major league) football club. Still there is scientific and social relevance.

My question is if (*name of club)* might be interested in providing me the necessary data or be a part of my research? If (*name of club)* is interested in my research, I would like to receive an e-mail and I would provide you with the necessary data. This contains a 5 paged questionnaire. Desired is to engage in an interview at your venue to discuss the answers.

The idea is to get several football clubs to answer my questions on paper. I currently have (#*of already participating clubs*) cooperative football clubs, namely (*names of already participating clubs)*. I'm looking for data from a football club that is active in the biggest Football League in the world.

The results of my thesis will become visible for (*name of club)*, if you are willing to provide me with data.

Kind Regards,

Appendix C PSV Eindhoven

Dear mr. Van der Meulen,

I would like to thank you for your time. I have made a questionnaire with some important questions for my research. I would like to see these questions answered with your utmost discretion. This research uses Online Communities Strategies in respect to creating a sustainable international social reputation.

I see that PSV Eindhoven shows the following numbers on Social Media (15 June 2012):
- 65.214 likes on Facebook
- 51.980 followers on Twitter
- 4.394 subscribers on YouTube

What was the initial reason to become active on Social Media?

It was an inevitable fact. Every club football club became active on Social Media so we couldn't stay behind. We started a pilot in Brazil about 2 years ago. PSV is historically very popular in Brazil. Many great Brazilian players have played for PSV like Ronaldo, Romario, Alex and Gomes. Therefore Brazil was a good country to see if Social Media would be a good idea. We started with a Twitter account and expanded it to Facebook. Facebook was more popular and showed us the potential to reach fans. After the pilot we extended our Social Media to the Netherlands. Starting on Dutch popular Social Media site called Hyves. We saw that also in the Netherlands people were reacting positive to the use of Social Media. From that point on we used it intensely.

Does (Football Club) use a structured approach to Social Media?

No, we just jumped into the Social Media pool. There are some seminars with other football clubs where we show our progress and they show theirs. We can lean a lot from each other, there is definitely no hostility between the clubs. Even more we just try to help one other. Maybe in the future we will try to structure Social Media, but on this point we don't see the need to do so.

Do you suffer from other Social Media pages that carry out the name of your football club? If so, how do you deal with them?

Yes we do. It started with Hyves. As we were one of the first clubs active on Hyves, content became available that normally weren't available for fans. So that enforced copy cats. The first case ever was that of a 14 year old boy that had his own PSV account on Hyves and claimed that he had all the hottest news every day. He twisted a lot of facts and opinions made by PSV. We knew that we had to do something, but to take down a 14 year old fan by using our legal division wouldn't be good for our image. We explained to him that if he would take the site down, he would receive an autographed shirt and season tickets for him and his father. He agreed. After this case there were some more problems with copy cats. After it became possible to get a verified status on Social Media many of these cases became obsolete. But I have to say that as Social Media grows more and more copy cats become active. We try to control the pages, but it become almost impossible to do. Even on Twitter we have around 20 copy cats. Okay we are verified, but not everybody knows what that means.
It stays a very difficult problem of Social Media.

How do you deal with Facebook and Twitter behavior of players of your football club?
Do you judge bad behavior? Do you control them daily?

It is not humane to control every letter they post on Social Media, but we do monitor it. At exceptional cases, when it is expected that the club reacts, we do take actions. We feel that players are free to post what they want, at least if it's within the behavioral norms and values. Players can harm PSV if they decide to post confidential information or controversial messages.

<div align="center">Online Community Strategies</div>

This research describes Online Communities as a group of people who not only have the same interests, but also became friends due to their common interest. Social Media creates an accessible media for community members to interact. I have classified Social Media as a nexus of six factors. Below you can find each factor and the questions proposed per factor.

Content Provision

How many hours per week do you spend on composing and posing messages?

We aim to post 2 messages every dag on every Social Media page except YouTube. At a match day we post more. From a score center to opinions made by supporters. We feel that supporters positively respond to see other supporters on our Social media pages.

How many hours per week do you spend corresponding in private messages with community members?

We try to not respond to any private message composed to our Social Media pages. If you answer one, you have to answer two, three et cetera. We do read them and if there is something of utmost importance we try to fix the problem without consulting the sender. If there are problems with our Social Media pages or other Social Media related subjects we have an e-mail address on our website. It shouldn't be that everybody starts to private message us with every trivial question.

Infrastructure maintenance

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining list address files?

This is not necessary. Only if there are people with extreme bad behavior. They will be tracked and/or blocked from our pages. We don't have good behavior lists or something.

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining, posting, publicizing ancillary files?

Every message is being reactively read. You can't have people misbehaving on your Social Media pages. It is the responsibility of the football club that the Social Media page is clean. We take this very serious. We do take actions. Still do to the growing popularity of Social Media more and more misbehavior occurs on our pages. There are some filters but people can misbehave without swearing. We have to react as soon as possible to these messages.

Social Encouragement

Do you share messages from other Social Media pages? If so, why?

Yes, if they are relevant. If we feel that our community members should see it. Sponsors that post PSV related messages are mostly shared on our Social Media. Also post made by players on their own page.

Do you praise messages from community members? If so, why?

Yes we like messages with our main account. Once in a month we do a caption contest or a complete a sentence contest. The top 10 messages will be posted in the program book for next week. Also contests and contests winners are praised. We feel that community members feel more involved in PSV if they have the option to respond to question posed by PSV.

Do you praise good behavior from community members? If so, why?

No, we feel that good behavior is generally accepted. You don't praise someone for stopping in front of a red light?

Do you encourage community members to promote your Social Media pages? If so, why?

Yes, standard free publicity. First of all we enhance the community feeling if members post our messages, besides that if they post our messages we know that the content is valid. Second we receive a lot of free publicity. Social Media has so many users and like this we can reach out to even more users besides our own community. We ask like/share/retweet et cetera. Maybe one of the most important aspects of Social Media.

Social Control

Do you encourage community members to introduce themselves? If so, why?

No, too much community members. If everybody introduces themselves our page would be overloaded. Maybe if they have a segment in the program book for a match, but this isn't Social Media related.

Do you judge disputes between community members? If so, why?

Yes, we keep disputes under severe control. We have to remove it from our pages as soon as possible. Disputes can encourage discussion. Discussion can heat up within the hour. We don't want huge discussion about heavy subjects on our Social Media pages. If community members feel that they have stuff to discuss, please do so on your own page or on forums.

Do you reduce off-topic messages? If so, why?

Yes, they can be harmful to our football club. Off-topic messages are also unnecessary, our pages are used for keeping in touch with our community members. It shouldn't be used for anything else.

Do you punish inappropriate behavior? If so, why?

Yes, as said before we try to remove every misbehavior. So also community members.

Do you remove members from your community list? If so, why?

Yes, if they cant behave they will be removed. We can control our own Social Media pages and will do so.

External Promotion

Do you post links to related websites? If so, why?

Yes, if these websites are relevant to PSV. Websites of sponsors or relevant people will be shared on our Social Media pages.

Do you link to your own (other) Social Media pages in your community? If so, why?

Yes, user friendly coexistence between our Social Media pages. Not every page has the same content, so linking from one page to another page can be review as pleasant.

Audience Engagement

How many hours per week do you use to read reaction made by community members?

Generally 3 hours a day. We have to control a lot. We only control our own Social Media pages, this takes already very much time.

Sports Integrated Communication Mix

Another model of taking care of your Social Media is the Sports Integrated Communication Mix. I would like to discuss the content of this model and what your views are.

Which of the following variables do you use as marketing tool? If you use a variable can you explain why and how?

- **Relationship building and management.**

This is for PSV the most important aspect of using Social Media. We feel that we can reach out to our supporters and make them feel involved. Besides making them feel involved we can also control risks through Social Media. For example during an away match in Valencia we received intelligence that there were some huge traffic problems in the city. We communicated this to our community members through twitter and resulting in that members didn't miss their flight back. It looks a small initiative, but can be very useful. We try to design our Social Media pages as user friendly as possible. Punishing misbehavior is a tool to create a better relationship with the members.

- **Advertising.**

We want to improve our fan store earnings, so we are going to advertise on Social Media. Posting discounts that are directly related to our fan store is a good way of improving our earnings. We do post messages from our major sponsors, we are in a life long collaboration with Philips Electronics. For all the money they invest in our club we have to give something back to them. It is not like that we post new products made by Philips or discounts on existing products. We do post every PSV related message from Philips. If we went there for a photo shoot or fan day, than these photos along with comments will be posted on our page and on the page of Philips. We want to stay a page for our community members, so it is best not to post so much sponsor related messages, but we have to understand that they expect Social Media attention from us. Smaller sponsors could get the same privileges, but this depends on the relevance.

- **Publicity.**

We don't feel that it is the task of Social Media to keep media relations.

- **Personal contact.**

Yes there are member related activities. We have fan days, photo shoots with fans, contest etc. All these will be posted on Social Media. Besides the fun parts we don't respond to personal messages posed on our Social Media pages. This isn't possible due to the great amount of questions. Fans feel connected if they see other fans winning a contest. It is all about maintaining the community feeling. Photos of fan days are posted on Social Media and in newsletters. It are fun days for supporter and club.

- **Incentives.**

We feel that contests are positively responded to. Besides contest we don't give away incentives.

- **Atmospheric.**

We try to design our Social Media pages as user friendly as possible.

- **Licensing.**

Licensing is very important to us. From the start of Social Media we are having problems with copy cats. The most Social Media pages are licensed. We always state that we are the official page of PSV. We hope that this is enough to enhance our image. In the first year of Social Media we could diminish the copy cats by legal actions. This became more difficult through legislations and the rising amount of copy cats. The only thing we can do is licensing our official pages.

- **Sponsorship.**

Of course we have to keep our sponsors happy. We go to our sponsors with some players and have a nice day at their company. The sponsors would like to identify with PSV and through photo shoots or other tools we can create their PSV identity. We feel that sponsors can also help us to reach our community. There is a great synergy between sponsors and PSV. Not every

sponsor will be treated as good as the other. Only those who are important enough are treated to PSV days.

Appendix D FC Groningen

Dear mr. Scholte,

I would like to thank you for your time. I have made a questionnaire with some important questions for my research. I would like to see these questions answered with your utmost discretion. This research uses Football Communities Strategies in respect to creating a sustainable international social reputation.

I see that FC Groningen shows the following numbers on Social Media (21 June 2012:
- 13.724 likes on Facebook
- 11.170 followers on Twitter
- 765 subscribers on YouTube

What was the initial reason to become active on Social Media?

We saw that more and more club used Social Media, so we couldn't stay behind. If your competition does it, you do it to. Especially something as growing as Social Media. We were looking for a way to get in better contact with our fans. One the one hand we had traditional marketing methods that all football clubs use. Still we found out that just a little percentage of our fans was reached. More involvement from our fans was desired. Social Media could aid us in reaching high involvement.
Basically there was no reason for us not to use Social Media. At this time we have some Social Media activity in Korea, because one of our players is a star there. We want to create international awareness, Social Media can help us as a tool.

Does (Football Club) use a structured approach to Social Media?

We don't use a structured approach. One the one hand Social Media is a tool which you just have to jump in and see what happened. So did we. We started with a pilot of about 6 months. During this pilot we tried many approaches which we discussed throughout the organization. Nowadays we just continue how we feel is best. We actually do want a structured approach, but haven't got around making one.

Do you suffer from other Social Media pages that carry out the name of your football club? If so, how do you deal with them?

Not really. We don't see that many other Social Media pages. We are a relatively small club with not so many fans, so we don't see the need to control other pages.

How do you deal with Facebook and Twitter behavior of players of your football club?
Do you judge bad behavior? Do you control them daily?

We monitor our players, but we don't control them. We feel that players shouldn't feel controlled by the club. We are all people, you shouldn't create a hostile environment. Of course when there is excessive bad behavior, we feel that we have to react to this. This is no other than behavior in the every day life. If someone crashes a company owned car, we also take actions.

One thing that helps us is our code of conduct. In this code of conduct we contractually oblige players to act well. If they choose not to, they know the consequences.

Football Community Strategies

This research describes Football Communities as a group of people who not only have the same interests, but also became friends due to their common interest. Social Media creates an accessible media for community members to interact. I have classified Social Media as a nexus of six factors. Below you can find each factor and the questions proposed per factor.

Content Provision

How many hours per week do you spend on composing and posing messages?

We aim to post 5-6 messages on a Social Media page. More is possible, less not. To keep the community active we have to be read. In vacations it might be difficult to reach 5-6 messages.

How many hours per week do you spend corresponding in private messages with community members?

We spend some hours of responding to community members. They can reach us through e-mail, website or private messages. Since we are a small club we don't receive that much private messages. It is possible for us to quickly respond to private messages, of course they have to be relevant. Not just members who say we want better results of our squad. Also for the community commitment we want to respond.

Infrastructure maintenance

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining list address files?

We do keep list of people that have wronged us in the past. They are confronted and possibly blocked. We make discrepancies in whether to block somebody or not. If somebody is just angry and places a bad word, we kindly ask him to remind him that he harms the club with his bad behavior.

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining, posting, publicizing ancillary files?

Social Media is on throughout the whole day. We proactively respond to community members and ancillary files. Ancillary files are custom on our Social Media, this helps us to achieve greater commitment from our fans.

Social Encouragement

Do you share messages from other Social Media pages? If so, why?

Yes pages like FC Groningen Horeca and other FC Groningen related pages. If relevant or if messages from other Social Media pages get a lot of positive responses, we share them on more Social Media pages.

Do you praise messages from community members? If so, why?

Yes, to let fans feel involved in the club. We like good responses on Facebook, we retweet good tweets on Twitter et cetera. Good messages will be posted in our match program guide. Commitment, commitment, commitment!

Do you praise good behavior from community members? If so, why?

Yes, good member might be included with a segment in our match program guide or get to write a column. Of course we hope that good behavior encourages more good behavior. It's a small price to pay for a desired outcome.

Do you encourage community members to promote your Social Media pages? If so, why?

Yes, free publicity and commitment. The more visibility we generate, the more community member we can acquire. We want to show that every FC Groningen fan can be a part of our Social Media community.

Social Control

Do you encourage community members to introduce themselves? If so, why?

Yes through private messages. How we use these introductions depends on how fun or relevant they are. We use private messages so that our Social Media pages won't get cluttered. Basically if community members are pleasant and positive, we would like to get to know them better. FC Groningen depends on loyal fans, so we would like to keep them close.

Do you judge disputes between community members? If so, why?

Yes, bad behavior isn't tolerated. Direct actions have to be taken, else it will harm the image of FC Groningen. Good behavior encourages other good behavior, but bad behavior severely encourages other bad behavior. Social Media shouldn't be a lawless media where everybody can behave as badly as they please.

Do you reduce off-topic messages? If so, why?

Irrelevant. It isn't possible for community members to place messages on our Social Media pages. If they responds with off-topic messages than we judge them. If they seem to disembark in a totally irrelevant discussion than they have to be removed as quickly as possible. For example if FC Groningen asks they fans do you like our new player David Teixeira from Uruguay, the idea is that people respond to his presence, football qualities or attitude. If there are fans that decide to start dispute on his heritage or color of his skin, we have to remove it as soon as possible. FC Groningen is about football! No politics!

Do you punish inappropriate behavior? If so, why?

Yes, as said above we do not tolerate inappropriate behavior. We are about football!

Do you remove members from your community list? If so, why?

We don't want to. We believe in a dialogue to address people on their behavior. If at a high exception people don't clean up their act and structurally show inappropriate behavior, we have no other choice than to remove them from our Social Media pages. We want to keep the community feeling as good as possible. Everybody can have a voice on Social Media, but there is a limit to what people are allowed to post. When we remove them, we try to do this as quietly as possible. We don't want to start a big discussion about the reason et cetera.

External Promotion

Do you post links to related websites? If so, why?

Yes, if FC Groningen related. Websites of sponsors that have FC Groningen related topics. Also community members that have FC Groningen related topics could be shared on our Social Media pages or linked to.

Do you link to your own (other) Social Media pages in your community? If so, why?

Yes, the fan appreciates the accessibility of our Social Media pages. To create a greater commitment every fan on ever Social Media page should feel connected.

Audience Engagement

How many hours per week do you use to read reaction made by community members?

Mostly every 2 hours. Social Media is constantly on.

Sports Integrated Communication Mix

Another model of taking care of your Social Media is the Sports Integrated Communication Mix. I would like to discuss the content of this model and what your views are.

Which of the following variables do you use as marketing tool? If you use a variable can you explain why and how?

- Relationship building and management.

Feedback from fans is used to manage the relationship between FC Groningen and the fans. Every part of feedback, even the negative ones will be used to create an accessibly Social Media. Also we try to respond to problems as soon as possible. If there are some risks in the area of the stadium or at away matches, we use Social Media as a warning tool. It is easy and you reach a huge crowd at once. We hope that building a sustainable relationship helps us to create more involvement from our fans.

- Advertising.

We place the webstore on our Social Media pages as a feed. This is to ease the use of the webstore. Not everybody visits our website/webstore, so Social Media helps us to promote the webstore. If some fans had a fan day at our stadium or at a sponsor we also post some pictures, but we don't advertise for the sponsor.

- Publicity.

We don't reach out to media, only if it is asked. There are some documents on Social Media which media find useful. If they want they can look at them.

- Personal contact.

For us personal contact is of utmost importance. As said time and time again we want the fans to be involved in FC Groningen, they have to feel connected to us. What is better than personally responding to questions, requests and disputes? Also meet and greets or other fan days helps the community members feel connected to us. It became clear that Social Media can help us reach out to our community, we want to take every possibility as they come along. At this moment we receive some positive feedback. We hope that in the future more and more community members get involved in FC Groningen.

- Incentives.

We praise community members by placing responses in the match program guide. There are some fan days, meet and greets and other contests. It is a nice mean to get fans involved.

- Atmospheric.

We occasionally ask for feedback of the design of our Social Media pages. We use this feedback, if necessary, to make some adjustments.

- Licensing.

We feel that this isn't necessary. There aren't many harmful copy cats.

- Sponsorship.

Sponsors aren't the reason that we are active on Social Media. They don't get that much attention. If something is FC Groningen or fan related than we will post it on Social Media.

Appendix E Borussia Mönchengladbach

I would like to thank you for your time. I have made a questionnaire with some important questions for my research. I would like to see these questions answered with your utmost discretion. This research uses Football Communities Strategies in respect to creating a sustainable international social reputation.

I see that Borussia Mönchengladbach shows the following numbers on Social Media (24 June, 2012):

163.719 likers on Facebook

16.054 followers on Twitter

4575 subscribers on YouTube

What was the initial reason to become active on Social Media?

We use Social Media first for the direct and authentic communication with our fans. With these Social Media platforms we can communicate different content which is not able to communicate through the website or other media. For Borussia Mönchengladbach it is a great way to enhance their growing popularity. The more fans, the easier it is to use Social Media to communicate with these great amounts.

Does Borussia Mönchengladbach use a structured approach to Social Media?

We don't have a structured approach, but we installed a commission which acts as an intermediary among different divisions in the company. We try to ensure the use of Social Media in the most proper way.

Do you suffer from other Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages that carry out the name of your football club? If so, how do you deal with them?

There are some websites that use the name of our players or football club. If these sites are just fan sites than we accept them, of course only if they behave professional. If these sites are harmful to our football club than we contact Facebook, Twitter or the Social Media that is relevant. The harmful websites have to be terminated. Borussia Mönchengladbach states that fan sites are very welcome and encourage the creation of a football community, if you try to ruin harmless sites, your image can take a fall. The Twitter account is fully certified.

How do you deal with Facebook and Twitter behavior of players of your football club?
Do you judge bad behavior? Do you control them daily?

We have an oversight of every official profile of every player and scan the content posted by the player. There are guidelines for employee, player and other people affiliated with Borussia Mönchengladbach. Players are informed about their requested behaviour in the training camp prior to the season 2012/2013.

This research describes Football Communities as a group of people who not only have the same interests, but also became friends due to their common interest. Social Media creates an accessible media for community members to interact. I have classified Social Media as a nexus of six factors. Below you can find each factor and the questions proposed per factor.

Content Provision

How many hours per week do you spend on composing and posing messages?

Circa one hour.

How many messages do you post in a week on average?

We try to post two messages everyday on Facebook and if possible one tweet on Twitter. On YouTube we have one video per week.

How many hours per week do you spend corresponding in private messages with community members?

Due to the great amount of Likers and Followers it is barely possible to personally address the fans. We do receive messages on Facebook about problems and suggestions, we try to answer them as fast as possible. Still it is difficult to read them all, because most of them are not serious or are not needed to be addressed. It takes about one hour every week.

Infrastructure maintenance

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining list address files?

We want to keep lists of wrongdoers or other kind of people, due to the growing amount of our Social Media Community it becomes harder and harder. Still we're staying with the idea of maintaining list address files.

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining, posting, publicizing ancillary files?

See the above. We try to reed all the comments and remove ancillary files. It is difficult to have a permanent control due to the great amount of messages.

Social Encouragement

Do you share messages from other Social Media pages? If so, why?

Our sponsors want us to promote them on Social Media. We review all these requests one for one and decide what to do. We don't want to share every message from the sponsors, because it has to remain a community based site. Posts on the page of our players we do share or retweet. Also not every post made, because some players post 10 messages per day on Twitter. It has to be of value to the community members and to the image of Borussia Mönchengladbach.

Do you praise messages from community members? If so, why?

I don't say that we praise. Sometimes members will get angry about the fact that we don't praise, but we feel this isn't a problem.

Do you praise good behavior of community members? If so, why?

See above.

Do you encourage community members to promote your Social Media pages? If so, why?

No, but we do ask to like and share.

Social Control

Do you encourage community members to introduce themselves? If so, why?

No, there are too many followers.

Do you judge disputes between community members? If so, why?

As said before, we keep our eye on the remarks made on our Social Media page. Because of the difficulty of reading all the messages and noticing all the disputes, we are very pleased with the social control among our community members. We have noticed that disputes are mostly solved by the community members.

Do you reduce off-topic messages? If so, why?

We do remove off-topic messages, they are harmful to the organization.

Do you punish inappropriate behavior? If so, why?

I has not yet happened.

Do you remove members from your community list? If so, why?

Yes it is necessary to remove people if they act inappropriately.

External Promotion

Do you post links to related websites? If so, why?

Yes, we can attract more community members. Links on the website can show that there is a more accessible platform for the fan to discuss and follow our club.

Do you link to your own (other) Social Media pages in your community? If so, why?

See above.

Audience Engagement

How many hours per week do you use to read reaction made by community members?

3-4 hours.

<p align="center">Sports Integrated Communication Mix</p>

Another model of taking care of your Social Media is the Sports Integrated Communication Mix. I would like to discuss the content of this model and what your views are.

Which of the following variables do you use as marketing tool? If you use a variable can you explain why and how?

- Relationship building and management.

Social Media became a perfect media to address our rising amount of supporters. We saw that we could reach every community member with a single message on a Social Media page. This became the ideal way of communicating to the supporters about topics as matches, players, fan days et cetera. Therefore we saw that the relationship between club and supporter grew. They feel more and more committed to Borussia Mönchengladbach, we can only praise this fact. We attempt to be the content provided for our whole community, how they use this content is up to them. The relationship can be positive and negative. A positive relationship has good effect on the image of our club, a negative relationship doesn't have that much of an effect. If one supporter doesn't like us it isn't that much of a problem. If he/she decides to start a harmful Social Media page we will terminate this. Positive pages are welcome and encouraged. By providing trustworthy content we hope that our community members respect our openness and they act professional. We haven't occurred many problems so far.

- Advertising.

We advertise Borussia Mönchengladbach related, like webstore or ticketing. We feel that community members don't always know where to get their information concerning webstore or ticketing.

- Publicity.

Media can also get there information from our Social Media pages. We don't encourage journalists or other media relater persons to go to our Social Media pages and collect data. Still if they choose so, why not? We support every letter we put on our Social Media, so let them take what they want. If they private message us, we will redirect them to our media department.

- Personal contact.

Of course we want to have personal contact, but this isn't possible. Our community is big and still growing, so no there is only personal contact on fan days or other fan related

- Incentives.

We have contests which provide the community members with incentives.

- Atmospheric.

Our design is as we please. Since we accept feedback we feel that we have to do it our way. There aren't many different features on Social Media, so this isn't a problem.

- Licensing.

We are certified, where possible. Community members have to know that we are the only original Social Media of Borussia Mönchengladbach. If they collect information from our site for their own use, we want this information to be correct. They shouldn't collect information from other fan pages. These pages might not have the correct facts and opinions from Borussia Mönchengladbach.

- Sponsorship*.*

A sponsor can make a suggestion and we will take it into account. Our page should be community based, it is not the meaning that many sponsors expect to be posted on our Social Media pages. Sometimes a sponsor does something nice for the club and they could be mentioned. We try to keep is as little as possible. A community member might not want al these sponsor messages. Our page is about football!

Appendix F Feyenoord Rotterdam

Dear mr. Roosenburg,

I would like to thank you for your time. I have made a questionnaire with some important questions for my research. I would like to see these questions answered with your utmost discretion. This research uses Football Communities Strategies in respect to creating a sustainable international social reputation.

I see that (Football Club) shows the following numbers on Social Media (29 June 2012):
- 104.686 likes on Facebook
- 42.422 followers on Twitter
- 0 subscribers on YouTube

What was the initial reason to become active on Social Media?

Fans always look for a new way to obtain information. In 2004 we started with a Hyves account to see if Social Media would be a hit. The Hyves page was managed by a young buy which we contracted to do so. The (online) marketing department liked Social Media and saw the possibilities. Still the top management of Feyenoord wasn't that eager to step into the Social Media world. They, as are most top managers in football, are very conservative. We as the (online) marketing department had to reach our targets and we thought that Social Media could help us reach them. We started several pilots one other Social Media pages. It was just all very positive. For less than half a year we keep our Social Media pages up to date. We feel that it contributes significantly to our marketing targets, so it became a marketing tool.

Does (Football Club) use a structured approach to Social Media?

We don't use a structured approach. We use experience to generate ideas. We feel that our (online) marketing department has enough experience in traditional and new media that they can come up with ideas for our Social Media pages. Besides that it is difficult to make a good strategy in a fast moving world as online media. We are not looking for a strategy at the moment, but we see that our Social Media is growing and growing. Even with the growing international fans, we think we can manage it. Don't forget that Feyenoord is a well know football club around the world, we have many international fans. We don't see this as a problem, more as an opportunity to reach even greater audiences. Maybe in the future when it takes on uncontrollable numbers we will have to strategize our Social Media. Until that moment we can handle it.

Do you suffer from other Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages that carry out the name of your football club? If so, how do you deal with them?

It depends on the nature of the page. Harmful pages have to be removed structurally. They can harm a big club as Feyenoord severely. Not every page is harmful so not every page has to be removed. It can also be useful for us if other website carry out the Feyenoord brand. They can reach other fans that we might not reach. Feyenoord is always a copyrighted brand. One time we had to take legal action against a blogger. He/she was to negative and posted a lot of falsehood. The falsehoods were placed as facts. So the community received implausible information. This

was to harmful to just let happen. We won the case and the blogger had to his blog. We don't like to do this, but he had no idea how harmful his antics were to the Feyenoord brand. Especially if they start to represent the Feyenoord brand internationally, were the fans aren't that well informed by national media.

How do you deal with Facebook and Twitter behavior of players of your football club?
Do you judge bad behavior? Do you control them daily?

Younger players are looser with Twitter and other Social Media pages. These players are briefed by our press secretary about what they are allowed and not allowed to do. This is placed in a code of conduct and signed by every player. It may seem as nitpicking, but if we don't do it the Feyenoord brand might be harmed by unnecessary posts. One example is that of a young player that recently joined the first team of Feyenoord, a great talent. He was in a plane and decided to tweet a picture of the behind of a stewardess to his friends. Of course all his followers saw this picture and the comments made by him and his friend. This became a media hype, so we have to be careful. We know that a young player aged 16 through 19 will have adolescence needs, still they have to know their function in society and that of Feyenoord. We didn't punish the player severely, but asked him to be more careful in the future. The players aren't controlled that severe, but we do monitor them. After this case no other case has taken place, so good news there.

Football Community Strategies

This research describes Football Communities as a group of people who not only have the same interests, but also became friends due to their common interest. Social Media creates an accessible media for community members to interact. I have classified Social Media as a nexus of six factors. Below you can find each factor and the questions proposed per factor.

Content Provision

How many hours per week do you spend on composing and posing messages?

1 - 2 hours a week. This is enough to place everything we want on Social Media. Of course during matches we place more, so 1 - 2 hours a week is an average.

How many hours per week do you spend corresponding in private messages with community members?

Only when there a severe problems. Compliments, meaningless disputes or general remarks are not taken into account. We do read them, but do not respond. We hope by not responding to these remarks fans might feel that it is not necessary to send private messages.

Infrastructure maintenance

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining list address files?

We list every harmful community member. This is hard to express in hours. When it is necessary we do it. We hope that it might be possible to answer 0 here. As Social Media grows bad behavior grows too.

How many hours per week do you spend on maintaining, posting, publicizing ancillary files?

Constant monitoring of messages. Ancillary files of Feyenoord are part of the normal messages on our page. Ancillary files from fans are constantly monitored.

Social Encouragement

Do you share messages from other Social Media pages? If so, why?

Yes, if Feyenoord related. Very useful!

Do you praise messages from community members? If so, why?

Yes, we like good messages and use these messages as feedback within out (online) marketing department. To show that good messages are appreciated we want to like, retweet, share them on our Social Media pages. We hope that good behavior encourages more people to positively respond to our posts.

Do you praise good behavior from community members? If so, why?

No, good behavior is expected.

Do you encourage community members to promote your Social Media pages? If so, why?

We aren't allowed to ask community members to promote our page. We do ask them to share. Free publicity.

Social Control

Do you encourage community members to introduce themselves? If so, why?

No, too many community members. If everybody wanted to promote themselves than our Social Media pages would be overflowing with information and become cluttered. Sometimes people that win a contest might be allowed to introduce themselves, but only if they win something.

Do you judge disputes between community members? If so, why?

If necessary we take urgent steps against disputes. Our Social Media pages aren't a forum for fans to shout at each other. It is used to create a feeling of commitment to Feyenoord. Excessively bad behavior results in a ban from all our Social Media pages. Besides our company actions we feel that our Social Media has a great social control between fans. If a fan says something like Feyenoord is breaking our heart and uses swear words, he/she will most likely be addressed by other fans. Since most fans support Feyenoord through good and bad times, we expect that social control is more important than company control. Only at exceptional cases we take company actions.

Do you reduce off-topic messages? If so, why?

It is not possible to post on our pages, if community members decide to post off-topic massages as a response to post made by Feyenoord, they will be removed. Not every Social Media is as accessible as the other. On Facebook it is easy to reduce off-topic messages, on Twitter it is more difficult. We always try to keep our Social Media pages as close to us as possible. It is not the intention that our fans decide what is being post, we decide.

Do you punish inappropriate behavior? If so, why?

Yes, it results in a direct ban. It is harmful to the club and its image. If a community member decides to act inappropriate than we don't want him as a community member. This might seem hard, but we have to act like this, else it becomes normal to act inappropriate.

Do you remove members from your community list? If so, why?

Yes, if they made us do so. We don't want to, but if we have to, we will!

External Promotion

Do you post links to related websites? If so, why?

Yes, we post links to every Feyenoord related website if it is necessary. Also sponsors want us to mention their website and initiatives on Social Media. We do want the information to stay Feyenoord related. So a sponsor has to have something to do with Feyenoord if they expect to be mentioned on our Social Media pages. The Social Media is about Feyenoord, not the sponsors.

Do you link to your own (other) Social Media pages in your community? If so, why?

Yes, ease of use. Also not every community member is a member of every Social Media page. If we want to reach out to everybody, we might have to post the same message on more Social Media pages. This isn't a bad thing, but mostly we try to be original on every single page.

Audience Engagement

How many hours per week do you use to read reactions made by community members?

Constant control. We don't want to miss any positive and negative aspects of our Social Media pages or our community members.

Sports Integrated Communication Mix

Another model of taking care of your Social Media is the Sports Integrated Communication Mix. I would like to discuss the content of this model and what your views are.

Which of the following variables do you use as marketing tool? If you use a variable can you explain why and how?

- *Relationship building and management.*

Very important to us. We want the community members to feel connected to Feyenoord. Social Media lets us, cheaply, keep in touch with community members. Our community expanded very fast, since fans see that it is very easy to support your club from behind your desk. We feel that Social Media can enhance the positive feeling about Feyenoord, even if you're not somebody that visits games or watches matches. We also try to respond quickly to problems that are not Feyenoord related, like hazardous problems around a match or during transport.

- *Advertising.*
After starting to exploit our webstore we saw an increase in sales. We keep on advertising for our webstore.

- *Publicity.*

We don't use Social Media for publicity reasons.

- Personal contact.

We are at the one hand trying to create more commitment from our fans, on the other hand we have too many community members to keep good personal contact. What we do is only responding to questions we find necessary. For the rest community members just have to be pleased with the information they receive on Social Media. We want to respond more and better to questions, but it is just not possible due to the high volume. Yes we might loose some community members or get some angry members, but we use messages as feedback so we believe that the Social Media pages are accessible enough for community members.

- Incentives.

Meet and greets, photo shoots, tickets et cetera. We like to promote contests, like quizzes, caption contest or columns. We feel that it is a way of promoting community commitment. Winners will be placed on our Social Media pages with a little text.

- Atmospheric.

We do use feedback from community members. They might not feel that we do, but we just don't respond to their request, we do read them.

- Licensing.

Feyenoord is always copyrighted. If we don't do so, the image of Feyenoord could be in danger. As said one time we had to take legal actions against a blogger. It simple we are the only one that can represent the Feyenoord brand sufficiently so we want to do it as we please. Luckily Social Media offers us good licensing methods.

- Sponsorship.

Sponsor messages if relevant to Feyenoord can be placed on our Social Media pages. With related to Feyenoord we mean fan days, company days et cetera. The single content of our Social Media is Feyenoord, so every thing has to be Feyenoord related!