Customer attacks - how to safeguard your reputation?

Authors: Lisa Voss (s1252038) and Gina Gebert (s1231871)
University of Twente
P.O. Box 217, 7500AE Enschede
The Netherlands

l.voss@student.utwente.nl

g.gebert@student.utwente.nl

ABSTRACT:

Customer attacks enabled through Web 2.0 face a serious threat to any company's reputation in modern day society. Many papers have been published on proactive approaches to prevent a so called Shitstorm from happening. Based a conducted literature and case analysis according to prior knowledge accompanied by a collection of data on user behaviour, this paper aims to create a reactive approach. Therefore the initial situation is classified according to nine categories, metaphorically named to create an easy to understand allegory. Each category implies a reactive approach to enable a company to generate the least negatively affecting outcome for one's reputation. To make this theoretical framework best applicable for everyday business life a three-dimensional model, the Cube, was designed, which enables a smooth implementation to every company's online strategy. Additionally the Cube provides further insights to understand that communication is key, so that even if not applying the Cube, companies will get a general understanding of how social media crisis develop.

Supervisors: Dr. E. Constantinides,
R.P.A. Loohuis

Keywords

Social Media Crisis, Shitstorm, Social media, Groundswell, Web 2.0, communication, reputation Management, Customer threats

1.0 INTRODUCTION

From the early days of business, companies tried to gain increasing awareness to improve their sales. Thus companies created marketing strategies to reach the highest possible number of people with the aim to convince consumers to buy their product. With the development of technology, the techniques of the marketers changed accordingly.

In 1836 the first paid advertisement appeared in the newspapers. In 1941 the first television advertisement was showed and in 1994 the first online banner was created. Barely 20 years later it is possible to reach a large number of customers in a short time in the social/mobile marketing orientation era (Neeraja, et al., 2013). "Most marketers learned the classic way of marketing, which includes among other things, the line of thinking that a company must push a message to customers a certain number of times to truly reach them … This worked when the only media available to the customer and marketing were print, TV, and radio-push marketing was the only marketing game in town. The trouble with classical marketing is that although it was effective before the Internet, the game has entirely changed now that much of a company's marketing efforts occur online and in social media circles" (Evans, 2010).

As the model of Bowen and Chaffee (1974) already showed the degree of involvement with products determines responses to communications about the product. This means that advertising is effective only when the consumer is interested. Thus marketing goals can include setting the number of new clients you would like to acquire, the number of people you would like to reach, or the amount of income you would like to generate (Kassel, 1999), but also to get the customers involved with the product. The main focus of the social/mobile marketing orientation is that a conversation arises even if the marketer is not included. This new two-way conversation is changing rapidly and makes it complicated to handle. Customers tell other customers, which is called mouth-to-mouth and is extensively seen in social media (Wright and Hinson, 2008).

n our modern society, social media is gaining relevance. "There currently exists a rich and diverse ecology of social media sites, which vary in terms of their scope and functionality. Some sites are for the general masses, like Friendster, Hi5, and—of course—Facebook, which opened only 4 years after Sixdegrees closed its doors. Other sites, like LinkedIn, are more focused professional networks; in fact, Facebook started out as a niche private network for Harvard University students. Media sharing sites, such as Myspace, YouTube, and Flickr, concentrate on shared videos and photos. And after a slow start in the late 1990s, weblogs (blogs) have become very popular, because they are easy to create and to maintain." (Gaines-Ross, 2010). Their authors range from everyday people to professional writers and celebrities. Today, the resulting 'blogosphere' of more than 100 million blogs and their interconnections has become an important source of public opinion. There are even search engines, like Technorati, that are dedicated to searching blogs. Similarly, with the help of social news and bookmarking sites like Reddit, Digg, and Delicious (formerly known as Del.icio.us), users can rank sites by voting on the value of content. Most recently, the phenomenon of micro-blogging focuses on offering real-time updates. Twitter has been driving this development since it was founded in 2006. Today, more than 145 million users send on average 90 million 'tweets' per day, each consisting of 140 characters or less (Madway, 2010). These are mostly short status updates of what users are doing, where they are, how they are feeling, or links to other sites. In turn, Foursquare ties these real-time updates into location specific information by rewarding users for 'checking in' to real sites at any location worldwide, and for leaving their comments for others to view" (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

"Sometimes companies use social media as an open source for opportunities to develop or gain new ideas by getting the customer closely involved with the brand. Firms are developing online communities that facilitate online communication of their consumers for innovation purposes, such as new product development or virtual product design. This is forming co-innovation, innovation with end users" (Bugshan, 2014). One example for an open source co-creation by using social media is McDonalds, which reated a contest between users to develop new burgers. Thus McDonalds could gain new ideas, get information about the wants and needs of customers as well as generate publicity and awareness among existing or potential customers.

Social media is a huge source to gain information and to form the reputation of a company. With the tool of social media companies have the chance to shape the opinion and identity about their company. "Corporations now operate in a landscape rife with new threats to their reputation. Some companies have already experienced the damage that can be done by a single highly motivated critic lashing out from a personal computer" (Gaines-Ross, 2010). However, as Gaines-Ross also mentioned social media also has its drawbacks. A social media platform like Facebook provides the opportunity to not only post positive, meaning supportive, comments about a company, but also negative ones. It is always in the interest of companies to prevent crises. If crises cannot be prevented it is in their best interest to, as far as possible, control the crises. In this paper, we will summarize what other authors found on how to react to such negative feedback. Sometimes, however, this negative feedback is not only expressed by one person, but shared by many in a very short time and develops into a reputation-threatening crisis. We will attempt to get more insight through a literature review, for example on questions such as "what is a shitstorm", what has already been discovered and also identify the influencing factors which lead to a social media crisis. Identifying these factors is important in order to know what to concentrate on when making recommendations to companies on how to safeguard their reputation when targeted by phenomena such as a "shitstorm". This specific phenomenon will be discussed in detail with its meaning and characteristics. During a shitstorm the company has no power to stop it or work against it. Most preventive steps as well as good social media strategies do not generally help to prevent a Shitstorm from happening. This means that every company, which is active or has a web presence, can be targeted by a sub-area of a social media crisis, which is called "Shitstorm" (Faller, C. and Schmit, K. 2013). This term is mostly used in Germany and describes a specific Internet-mass phenomenon. Moreover, a Shitstorm can hit organization as well as single persons. However, this study is focussing on companies as targets. There is to say that even though Shitstorm participating users might not be the target group, harm can still be created. It will be further evaluated why users have many different motivations to participate in Shitstorms. Therefore the term Groundswell will be introduced and needs to be defined to understand the people behind those

Shitstorms. (Li and Bernoff. 2008.). It can be stated that many ways to deal with a Shitstorm exist and also the outcome may extremely vary. This thesis deals with the phenomenon of Shitstorms and focuses on the introduction, analysis of recent cases, opinion of the users and results in the development of some advices for companies. Our aim is to evaluate different types of Shitstorms based on an analysis of 25 different cases, a look into existing theoretical frameworks as well as to include the users opinion via quantitative data collection in order to be able to come up with advices that help companies to determine the situation they are in and also what best approach they can apply to safe their reputation. Studies have already shown that an increase in social media crises such as Shitstorms is expected and that the level had been raising steadily (Owyang, 2008). This study gives a fundamental insight into the phenomenon of Shitstorms and therefore derives new perspectives. Due to the dramatic increase in Shitstorms and social media crises we are going to conduct an extensive analysis of many a case, in order to enable researchers to classify different types of Shitstorms. Thus we will discuss the sub-question " To what extend has a shitstorm influenced the companies reputation?" There we will conduct a case analysis and hope to get a further insight in the process and aftermath and on how it influences the companies. This survey hopefully opens up new mindsets and questions to solve for researchers as well as it will help to categorize the vague matter. On the other hand it is important to know what social media users think about companies and the shitstorm. Thus we will conduct a survey with the aim to find out "to what extend can a company react in the favour of the customer?". This is important because some social media users are also customers and to keep a good brand image it is important to know what customers think about the company and which image they have.

What the recently conducted study of David, C. R., and Pang, A. (2014) in Singapore shows is that "most respondents cite the lack of resources and expertise in managing social media crises. While they recognized the growing prevalence of social media crises and the importance of preparing for them, preparedness remains piecemeal and episodic, often overshadowed by other operational priorities." Thus we will develop a reactive advice model , which is applicable in everyday business life and will be a guideline to all companies being the centre of a Shitstorm. Marketing departments of all kinds of companies can apply the model to analyse their situation and get an idea of how to react according to their situation. Due to the fact that a Shitstorm is of a very quick nature, it is essential for a company to decide quickly. This research aims to help making quicker decisions. Also a severe lack of scientific studies can be found, partly due to the fact that studies quickly outdate because of the fast changing surrounding of the Internet. Thus we will try to find an answer to our research problem:

To what extend can companies manage the damage when they were targeted by a social media disaster such as a Shitstorm?

1.1 Methodology

A literature review is conducted with the main focus on the question what a Shitstorm in itself actually is, which factors influence a Shitstorm, which methods have already been proposed for managing such situations. At the end, a short summary will be given in a conceptual model.

Then 25 cases will be presented to show the differences in the nature of Shitstorms, helping to classify the Shitstorms within

a three-axes Matrix and identify similarities/differences with theory.

After the case analysis a survey of 142 participants of a quantitative research will be presented based around their opinions on and experiences with Shitstorm. The then following discussion part will demonstrate the linkages between the three parts (theory, cases, , data), and derive a three-axle matrix identifying strategies for managing with a Shitstorm. As a conclusion, a summary will be presented and introduce a model with advices for companies on how to react best to the thread of a Shitstorms.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 Reputation management.
Reputation management is the underlying concept that is to be important for companies. According to an online economy dictionary (Wirtschaftslexikon), Reputation Management "comprises planning, construction, maintenance, management and control of the reputation of an organization against all relevant stakeholders." Others define reputation as "the evaluation of a firm by its stakeholders in terms of their affect, esteem, and knowledge" (Deephouse, 2000, p. 1093), or that reputation is an intangible asset which is part of the firm (Hall, 1993). Reputation is built "not just by words but also, and perhaps more importantly, by deed" (Caudron, 1997). A well-defined measure of the degree of reputation does not yet exist (Heinonen, 2011).

2.1.2 Groundswell
The Groundswell is a term that describes the social media community. Already in 2008 Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff saw the potential of the social media communities and defined 'the groundswell' as a social structure in which technology puts power into the hands of individuals and communities, not institutions.

2.1.3 Shitstorm
The word Shitstorm is mostly used as Anglicism in Germany. The "Süddeutsche Zeitung" addresses the fact that the word "Shitstorm" was "Anglicism of the Year 2011" in Germany. In other countries it's categorized as social media crisis. One person shaped the term Shitstorm in 2010 was also the one who defined this new to the world word "Shitstorm". Sascha Lobo is a German blogger, writer, journalist and Copywriter and he was the first one who spoke about it in his presentation and thus was the creator of the word "Shitstorm". Lobo's work is primarily concerned with the Internet and with the social effects of new technology. Back in 2010 Lobo defined Shitstorms as "a process, when in a short period of time a subjectively large number of criticisms is made, of which at least a part replaces the original topic and instead the aggressive, abusive, threatening or other attack is performed". A year later T. Mavridis has describes the Shitstorm in more detail: The aim of a Shitstorm are people, companies or institutions, which are in the centre of the public contention be subject of a staccato of critic, insults and vulgarity. The critic gets increasingly subjective and emotional and is hard to calm down. A self-dynamic develops if the critics find confirmation by others though the many ways of communication such as a "Facebook-Wall-Hijacking" and continues in classical media. The phenomenon continues to be more and more common, thus, in 2012, C. Henne also tried to define a Shitstorm with some example: A Shitstorm extraneous to the matter is defined as a medial outrage, which

gives small interest groups the cause to flood the social networks with alien themes. A Shitstorm which is directed against a specific Company (such as Schlecker) can also be limited to time. Everything that is about serious allegations like Greenpeace has for KitKat (Palm oil), which harms the reputation of a company she defines as PR-crises which needs crises communication. Newand Publications in this year also define a Shitstorm: A Shitstorm refers here to the Web 2.0 phenomenon of sudden, massive and critical contributions. Often these are emotional, accusatory and negative or sarcastic.

Last but not least Lorenz Steinke also describes the characteristic of a Shitstorm in 2014: Most Shitstorms are characterized by an avalanche-like proliferation and activation of always new participants – normally a Shitstorm reaches its most growth during the first 2 hours. Normally a Shitstorm expires after one week. Some exceptions are last 3-4 weeks due to subsequent event or awkward, escalating occurrences of those affected.

All authors tried define or characterize a Shitstorm and focused on different aspects of the phenomenon. Because it's not yet a common definition we understand a Shitstorm as a suddenly arising phenomenon of the social media world aiming at people, companies and institutions. It's a process with an avalanche-like proliferation and activation of more and more participants where, in a short period of time, a subjectively large number of criticisms are made. This criticism is sudden, massive, accusatory, negative or sarcastic, increasingly subjective, emotional, sometimes extraneous to the matter and is hard to calm down but is limited to time. A self-dynamic develops if the critics find confirmation by others though the many ways of communication such as a "Facebook-Wall-Hijacking" and sometimes continues in classical media.

2.2 Previous work/literature review

As it is commonly known, negative comments spread faster than positive ones. For example, if many users post how good a certain product tastes and one person posts that he had a lot of trouble with a bad ingredient, then the community spreads the warning of the one sample (shares the warning of the bad ingredient). As described in the following Scientists like Bernoff and Lee (2008) or Steinke (2014) and companies have already developed some strategies on how to deal with negative feedback and thus a social media crisis. But first, to understand what has been studied on the topic of social media and the special type of social media crises called Shitstorms, one has to see the need of understanding the history, its structure and the people behind the computer, which are using social media. The origin of Social Media Crises are nearly evenly across five social media platforms: communities, YouTube, blogs, twitter and Facebook (Owyang, 2011) Research of Faller and Smitt (2013) showed that in 2011 more than 5 out of 10 crises had their roods on the microblogging service Twitter. Over half of all cases could be traced back to customers being the trigger. Poor customer feedback was identified as being the number one reason to actual cause the crises. This is followed by violations of ethical guidelines though the organizations themselves (Faller, C. and Schmitt, K. 2013).
Social media is not a technological tool but more a platform for relationships and communication. These relationships are the most important part when it comes to reputation.
Lorenz Steinke considers in his book "Bedienungsanleitung für Shitstorms" the topic of how to use good communication

to break the anger of the masses. He explains that in the earlier days without internet people received letters, phone calls, or faxes which resulted in annoying so called spams which can be seen as the predecessor of a modern Shitstorm.
The word Shitstorm was first seen in 2011 but the phenomenon was known longer. Before social media it was known as Flamewar in discussion boards of mailbox networks such as FidoNet and later on Usenet, which are nowadays inactive. One of their problems was the "Troll"-Postings which aimed to provoke the people and mostly resulted in hundreds of Newsgroup-members expressing their anger or warning others not to respond to these Troll-postings. Since mid of 1990s Spams and Mass-advertisements caused Flamewars to come up. One of the First Flamewars was started by Jeff Javis 2005 against Dell - "The-Dell-Hell" - at buzzmachine.com (see case 1). Dell was the first Company to understand to listen to the customer. The Internet developed from a linear communication to the Web 2.0 where social connections are centre. With the technical development of Smartphones and tablets, the Internet with its Weblogs and Social media are ubiquitous everyday company. Thus the mass increasingly understood its power. Flashmobs developed in 2003: people gathered together online for a real world event. (E.g. Merkel got flash mobbed during her campaign 2009 when Flashmobbers always screamed "Year" with every statement Merkel said.) A parallel which can be seen to a Shitstorm is the equitation of as many people as possible at the same time. Though Facebook parties which were picked up by regular media, the social-media-public understood their strength.

Also, the communication of companies changed with the development of technologies. Due to growing transparency through technical channels corporate communication had to change from Gatekeeping to a filter and sorting function. This opened up ways to trigger of an unnoticed Shitstorm.

Also C. Faller and K. Schmitt mentioned in their Book "Social media Shitstorms" that the phenomenon itself is not new but over the last 10 years the social media crises has raised steadily. They conducted an intensive analysis of the geographical distribution, numbers and channels where Shitstorms arise, triggers of crises, causes of crises as well as trends.

A sub-area of crisis management is the social media crises, also known as "Shitstorm" (Faller, C. and Schmit, K. 2013.)
While corporate crises have been around for many years, social media crises are a relatively new phenomenon since social media emerged over the last decade (King, 2010). Today, social media crises have a direct impact on the way modern businesses communicate (Burson-Marsteller 2011:31).

2.2.3 Gap in literature

A shitstorm is a special form of a crisis and crisis management and communication is needed to deal with such a phenomenon. Until now is no lack of literature on crisis management in general. Classical crisis communications is of PR's most developed areas. It can have many different origins and symptoms. Research conducted in 2005 even shows that it is "the third most frequent studied topic in public relations literature" (Taylor 2010) Latest publications deal with crisis communications in general (Fearn-Banks 2011) as well as its planning and managing (Coombs 2007), mostly though case studies or surveys. Crises have both been regarded from a defensive standpoint – when a company deliberately gets

under attack (Boin, 2008) – or as largely self-generated issues (Hearit, 2006)

However, close to no literature on crisis management caused by customer attacks exists and additional to this no literature exists to safeguard the reputation of a company. Of greater relevance than classical crisis communication, is social media crisis communication and –management as it is taking the crisis concept one step further, applying it to the digital space. With the rise of social networking sites, many authors emerged to publish books on the topic, realizing a fundamental change in today's business communications (Burson-Marsteller 2011). The crises preparedness study by Burson-Marsteller refers to Wright's work on "How Public relations practitioners actually use social media" (2009) as well as the analysis of Palen (2008) and Eyrich (2008), looking at specific tools. However, not only individuals, but agencies alike started publishing white-papers to position themselves as the go-to-destinations for consultancy on digital crises (Briguglio 2011; PR Newswire 2011) to be able to give advices to the companies on how to deal with online crisis. The new trend Shitstorm, which is a special type of social media crisis has not intensively studied yet: there is very limited attention in the literature on social media as platforms of reputation threats.

2.2.4. Communication and the community
Companies have to realize that communication cannot be controlled and is a two-way path on the Internet. Here is to say that anonymity is also an important part of the Shitstorm because people sit behind a Computer and are not talking face-to-face. Apart from this influencing factor of a Shitstorm is the medial staging. This is to dramatize incidents to get the attention of as many people as possible. (Lobo, S. 2010) Additional to this, the metamedial reality pushes a Shitstorm. Metamedia refers to the new relationship between form and content in the development of new technologies and new media (M. McLuhan, 1994). When people start to talk about reports that are made on the actual incident, it's more about who said what and others summarize what has been said from the reports over the reports. This leads to more reports about what potentially had happened instead of what actually has happened. Sascha Lobo states that a Shitstorm is anti critic: the Shitstorm is a medial, mostly content-independent phenomenon, that arises, if a critical part of the public is triggered by the right keyword, has shortened the links or did not understand. The respective subjective feeling of participation arises. It functions anti critical and can distract from good and needed critics. Sometimes a company creates a Shitstorm on purpose because a company wants to hide the actual critic to blend in into the Shitstorm (agent provocateur).

To understand who is actually participating in such Shitstorms one has to understand the social filter, micro public - one thinks it's highly discussed, because many friends of him talk about it, the macro public would as well, but it's not, it's just his social surrounding going crazy about the topic. (Lobo, S. 2010) The social environment influences the social filter of every person. It filters out which information is important. If one friends says something it might not be seen as important as if 150 friends talking about it. But even 150 people talking about it is not much at all in the macro environment. As a characteristic of the online world, Web 2.0 is a real-time network, its forerunners and ancestors (Blogs, Twitter, Social Networks), it happens quickly that the users evaluate the moment over dramatically. Actuality is naturally an extremely great value – yet overestimated in Lobos opinion.

As Sascha Lobo forecasts, Shitstorms will be part of our communication. Thus one has to understand the situation of being the target of a Shitstorm.
There are many reason why people could be chastise companies for their faults. For example: A Zoo slaughtering Giraffes, a Noodle maker seeing gay people as second class or a telecommunications provider seeing angry customers as individual cases. Not every annoyance or infringement has potential for a Shitstorm. (Steinke, L. 2014)

To describe the people behind a Shitstorm, Sasha Lobo named the people behind trolls because they are communicating in a provocative manner and they try to test their borders due do different motives. Trolls are interested on effective communication and not on a constructive communication. Their role during a Shitstorm is to stroke up, to continue to drive, to distort or to construct it. Without tolls or troll-like behavior there would no such thing as a Shitstorm.

Two who intensively researches the field of the crowd behind social technologies are Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff (2008). In their book "Groundswell winning in a world transformed by social technologies" they describe the term Groundswell and display its power of movement. Groundswell is a social trend in which people use technologies to get the things they need from each other, rather than from traditional institutions like corporations. *Underlying factors* are people, technology, and economics. It is about relationships and not technologies like Blogs, social networks, wikis and open source, forums, ratings, ad reviews, tags. Understanding the community behind a certain technology is important to understand its dynamics. As the authors describe, people have many reasons to participate in social media such as friendship, new friends, dating, social pressure, paying in review, altruistic impulse, purating impulse, creative impulse, validation impulse or infinity impulse(Li and Bernoff. 2008). Thus Forrester developed "The Social Technographics Ladder" (Li, C. 2007.) in which the different users are categorized (See attachment). From this, one can see that many motivations of users are present in the social media world. This has also been taken into account when asking people on why they do what they do. This has to be kept in mind when we present the outcome of our survey on what people think and do in social media, especially when it comes to Shitstorms. Social Technographics classifies people according to how they use social technologies. Forrester's research quantifies the number of online consumers within each group using consumer surveys. In this model the first one is the creator. Creators make social content go. They write blogs or upload videos, music, or text. Following are the critics, which respond to content from others. They post reviews, comment on blogs, participate in forums, and edit wiki articles. Next are Collectors. They organize content for themselves or others using RSS feeds, tags and voting sites like Digg.com. The Joiners connect in social networks like Facebook. Spectators, which are next on the ladder, consume social content including blogs, user-generated video, podcast, forums, or reviews. And last inactives neither create nor consume social content of any kind. The question to be asked is why people even participate in the groundswell. The model of Maslow's hierarchy (Maslow, A.H. 1943) can give answer to this. Maslow's hierarchy, which is formed as a pyramid, shows the basic needs at the bottom. When people fulfil basic needs, they are striving for the next higher step. A Basic need is for example the psychological needs as water, food, shelter, sleep, sex. Next important is safety and security. If this is fulfilled love and belongingness comes. Here Social media is at stake.

People can find love and feel belonging when they participate online. The next step on the Hierarchy is self-esteem. Also, the social media technology gives people the chance for self-esteem because they can be someone they want to be and show this to others. The platforms give people the chance to create themselves in the way that they want and they can get feedback by others which pushes the self-esteem. Last and the overall aim in the hierarchy is the self-actualization, validity, creativity, self-sufficiency, authenticity, playfulness and meaningfulness. To put this into the context of social technology, one can clearly say that social media also give a good platform to fulfil these needs. For example bloggers can self-actualize their dream of being a heard person and getting acceptance on what they do even though they are not employed journalists. Also actors, for example, can show their talent online. These platforms give people the chance to be themselves, show what they are capable of and get feedback on what they do. According to Maslow's hierarchy, that is the highest aim people are striving for.

After understanding the psychological part and motives of users, we come back to the groundswell. Li and Bernoff (2010) also describe a certain area of the groundswell, namely group dynamics. Now it is easy to understand that the needs of users and the technologies allow people in the Internet to connect in order to feel powerful. What we mean is most easy to be explained by the example of the Streisand effect. The Streisand effect is known as the "reverse psychology" for scientists (Li and Josh Bernoff 2008). It comes from the event that Barbara Streisand wanted to have the picture of her house deleted from the Internet but the opposite happens and the picture of her house got spread widely across the Internet. This can be explained in the change in behaviour thought the fact that something is forbidden or someone dictates to not do, but the opposite actually happens. The Streisand-effect is essentially triggered by users and gets bigger though the Internet. The main focus is the content that's deleted or censored (Greenberg, A. 2007). The push through the Internet is because of the high amount of users, the underlying psychological effects are the mass where one can hide in or huge groups form due to same interests. Attention is another part. People can say what they want and always find a partner to talk about this. Thus people feel related and a so-called group effect arises (Cartwright, D. E. and Zander, A. E. 1953). This effect in reality is where people feel supported and stronger due to the number of members. Something that is forbidden evokes curiosity in people. To hide something evokes peoples interest and even though they would not have talked about this before, they would more strongly do so now. People who are not happy with a situation want to change it. But if an authority hinders them they even want it more strongly and develop deviance to weaken the opinion of the authority and to support their own one (Li and Josh Bernoff. 2008). In the groundswell the reaction on such events can be seen directly and it is changing rapidly also because of the fast changing technologies and movements. The biggest problem is that such things happen uncoordinated.

As Li and Bernoff descried further, companies should concentrate on the relationship because some power is now given to the customer.

2.2.5. Structure of Shitstorms
At first Sasha Lobos lecture "How to survive a shit storm" on the re:publica 2010 in Berlin gives informative insight into the topic on how Shitstorms emerge. Thus parts will be presented with the focus on the main important thesis he presented. He himself was a victim by several Shitstorms and gives some insights from his experience. At first he defines the word Shitstorm: A Shitstorm is a process, when in a short time a subjective large amount of critical comments are made, by which at least a part of the topic will be replaced by aggressive, offensive, threatening or other attacking are made. It first has to be defined where the difference between a critic and Shitstorm lies. A critic, even an offensive one, is a useful cultural technique, which can function as a social corrective. The border between a Shitstorm and an appropriate critic is hard to define. An unbiased person can best measure it. If non-involved people see it totally disengage rather than harsh critic then one can talk about a Shitstorm.

Lorenz Steinke (2014) summarized the main characteristics to detect a Shitstorm:

Occasion: 1) customer is dissatisfied with the product or service (O2 or Vodafone) 2) Company transgress ethical or moral standards though manipulation (Henkel, Adidas) 3) unprofessional performance of a Company in the public, misleading or easy to satirize (Jako, Michael Wendler)

Initiator: 1) occasionally from private persons 2) institutional Initiators (Greenpeace or Human rights watch)

Course: Most Shitstorms are characterized by an avalanche-like proliferation and activation of more and more participants – normally a Shitstorm reaches its most growth during the first 2 hours. Normally a Shitstorm expires after one week. Some exceptions are last 3-4 weeks due to subsequent event or awkward, escalating occurrences of those affected.

Medial supporters: Not every Shitstorm reaches the classical media. Some keep online or subsided before the classical media get notice. Some Shitstorms are pushed by active bloggers, classical journalists or the press. These Shitstorms are fast taken up by print, online (Spiegel online, Focus online), TV or Radio, which pushes a Shitstorm further and at the same time the company crisis.

Final: Every Shitstorm ends differently. Some dry up, others escalate until a company does immediate action and some are more symbolic (ADAC).

Prevention: 1) Building a credible and comprehensive corporate identity 2) Continuous communication with stakeholders 3) regular and truthful communication with stakeholders 4) Be prepared 5) Viral and diverse company culture is the basis for good Shitstorm-management to have the strength to go new ways.

Shitstorm as marketing-instrument: Specific use of Shitstorms against competitors or business policy (Abercrombie and Fitch). Here body transformed the Shitstorm with a Funny responding video into a Candystorm.

2.3 Advices

All authors presented before have developed advices on how to prevent a Shitstorm. Thus Li and Bernoff (2008) described some very helpful objectives to better set up a social media strategy such as Listening to the users (research), Talking (spread message), enthusiasts, supporting, embracing (help to design products) and do not ignore trends. They also stress the approach of POST. People, Objectives, strategy and technology and revised the approach to Goals and objectives

(SMART), People, Strategy, Tactics and technology. Sasha Lobo describes 5 important factors which have to be kept in mind during a Shitstorm. The main topic is serenity: 1) Understand the Shitstorm as metamedial phenomenon 2) resist the pressure of the moment 3) If existing, analyse the essence of the real critic 4) if a reaction is needed, only respond to the real critic, do not even ignore the rest 5) Most important: every communication must appeal sovereign to innocent bystanders.

The author said that companies are afraid of Shitstorms; this anxiety is also an appeal to their conscience and may hinder a company to do badly. Lorenz Steinke developed an Emergency tool kit: 1)Sharpen your early warning system 24/7 (Google Alerts, Social Mention, Back tweets, ICE Rocket), 2) React fast 3)Communicate with the detractor 4) An excuse is not a sign of weakness but of strength 5)Get help by others if you do not understand the background of the Shitstorm (cultural, social or regional) 6) Do not threaten your detractors with lawsuits 7)Do not censor a Shitstorm 8)if a Shitstorm last long then there are serious problems in you company or its pushed by the media 9) Do not provoke a Shitstorm against others neither hided nor public 10)Learn from a Shitstorm (DB, Opel, Amazon) C. Faller and K. Schmitt had some important Action Points: 1) Get real 2) start doing fire drills 3) Train your employees 4) Identify key influencers 5) Establish great customer support 6) Beware of Messages that could backfire Taking all these things into account to have a successful online strategy is helpful and good preventive measurements to have a good relationship with users and thus their potential customers. Building up these relationships help to set a good reputation for a company.

Nonetheless, a reputation harming social media crises such as a Shitstorm cannot be reversed, but how to react after such a crises has to be carefully thought through. To help in this situation the following text will examine some variables to give a clear advice on how to react and what should be considered when the reputation harming crises has been emerged already.

2.4 Conceptual model

From this literature review it can be seen that different authors looked at different sights to the phenomenon shitstorm and concluded with different advices. For clarification a conceptual model will be presented.
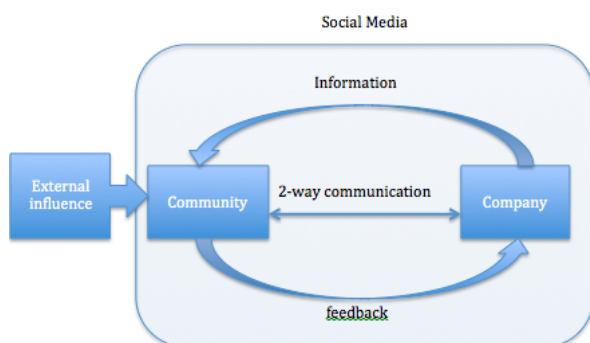

Figure 1. Communication model

This simplified model shows the normal way of communication between the community and the company. It

is a 2-way communication where Companies provide Information and customers give feedback, thus both profit from this communication in a social media surrounding. But there are also external influencers, which can disturb the flow. External factor can simply be dissatisfaction with the product/service or transgression of ethical or moral standards though manipulation etc. Thus the feedback a community gives can fast grow to a shitstorm. How the authors advice to react to a shitstorm is summarized in the following table:

Preventive	During	Afterwards
- Viral and diverse Company culture - Social media strategy - Train your employees - Establish great customer support - Sharpen your early warning system 24/7 (Google Alerts, Social Mention, Back tweets, ICE Rocket) -	- understand the Shitstorm as a metamedial phenomenon - resist the pressure of the moment - If existing, analyse the essence of the real critic - if a reaction is needed, only respond to the real critic, do not even ignore the rest - Most important: every communication must appeal sovereign to innocent bystanders. - React fast - Communicate with the detractor - An excuse is not a sign of weakness but of strength - Get help by others if you do not understand the background of the Shitstorm (cultural, social or regional) - Do not threaten your detractors with lawsuits - Do not censor a Shitstorm - if a Shitstorm last long then there are serious problems in you company or its pushed by the media - Do not provoke a Shitstorm against others neither hided nor public - Get real - start doing fire drills - Identify key influencers - Beware of Messages that could backfire	- learn from a shitstorm

Table 1. Summary of advices

From this Table it can be clearly seen that all authors focused on what to do and not to do during a shitstorm, but intensive studies on what to do afterwards to safeguard the reputation is

missing. Thus in the following recent cases will be analysed to get an insightd on how harmful shitstorms actually can be.

2.5 Cases

In order to get a deeper grasp of how the phenomenon shitstorm occurs in practice, it is best to take a closer look of cases that have already been dealt with in the past. To display some recent and meaningful cases to show the various nature of Shitstorms a summary of 25 cases has been conducted, in order to get a good insight into how Shitstorms develop, how people react to them and what the consequences are, There is to say that, of course, as each company differs from one another, so does the offending occurrence causing the crises. In order to be able to give a detailed insight into each case (Appendix), it became clear that a structure would be required in order to create comparable phases within a shitstorm. Therefore we figured it would be best to give information on six aspects for each case. The Six aspects are: Date, Company, and Initial situation, Reaction, Aftermath and Source. It is to say though that the aspects of Date, Company and Source are of a rather systematically approach. All cases are chronologically ordered.

The aspects of Initial situation, Reaction and Aftermath are oriented towards the actual analysis in order to compare prior proactive and reactive theoretical findings. These three categories have been chosen in order to create a stable basis to cover the broad spectrum of influences and outcomes a shitstorm can have. Initial situation gives an insight of what happened beforehand. This phase gives information on understanding the context of the shitstorm and what was actually done by the company to create the customers outrage. The aspect reaction was chosen to solely focus on how the social media users reacted to the statement or action made and how the company decided to react upon this matter. This phase is highly sensitive and therefore needs special attention on both sides. It gives the deepest insight of the online interaction of social media user and company and thus display if a strategy is effective or not. When looking at the reaction of users towards the initial situation and potential other input provided by the company, one can derive at a conclusion of what actually drives the Shitstorm towards certain directions Therefore the reaction phase is for this report the most valuable. Following this phase is the aspect of Aftermath. This phase gives an insight of to what extent a social media crisis have caused harm to a company. This harm can be done on a reputational level, loss of customers, brand awareness, etc. The Aftermath gives insight on the powerfulness and impact with which a company has to deal in the long-term.

2.5.1 Initial Situation
When comparing the drawn portfolio of cases it becomes obvious, that the majority of companies were not deliberately creating a basis for a social media crisis. For example the reaction by environmentalists such as PETA to the sourcing of palm oil for the production of Nestlé's KitKat was not based on a certain occurrence. The shitstorm was based on practises undertaken by the company for many years. On the other hand certain inputs created by the company such as a launch of a new product or service can be the bone of contention. Looking at the example of ZARA the availability in their online store of a shirt reminding of the Holocaust uniform caused an outraged that had not been expected. Also when Applebee's quit a waitress for sharing personal customer information online, a stir was created that was not intended to occur. Comparing those rather active approaches by companies, also many examples can be found were a social media crisis has

been created be the lack of presence. Thinking of United breaks guitars, O2's we are one and the "Dell-Hell", perfect examples can be found for the lack of customer services. This lack encouraged customers to create an outrage in order to make their voices be jointly heard rather than being ignored. Of course some companies also do try to cash in on current events that are of an inappropriate nature. This can be seen when looking at the case of Epicurious.com, where the company tried to benefit the outrage of the Boston marathon massacre.

Another major starting point for a shitstorm can be seen in the misbehaviour of employees. It is crucial to understand that the behaviour shown by employees when being present at a company's facility or wearing the company's uniform, are directly linked to the company's image. The cases of Domino's Pizza and Taco Bell showed that, especially when it comes to food, employees need to have a professional attitude to prevent a boycott by customers. In the food and service industry disgust or mistreatment seems to play a large role in creating a crises (McDonald's experiences, Taco Bell, Domino's. The outcry of HMV employee's seeking for help while getting fired, created sympathy with the employees and a front against HMV. Additionally there is the rare case of employees misusing the company's social media account to share their personal opinion or behave inappropriate (KitchenAid).

Another initiator for a social media crises can be seen in the event of company's trying to participate in topics, which they are not familiar with. For example the wrong use of hashtags as in the DiGiogno case accidentally compared pizza to confessions of domestic abuse. Or when the company outsourced the social media marketing department to a foreign country, which is not familiar with current events, e.g. Celeboutique aurora massacre.

2.5.2 Reaction:

The reaction is what decides if a certain event has the potential to be turned into a full-blown social media crises. There is to say that with the right reactive approach a negative statement in any kind can be limited to the least threatening impact. In order to understand what is right and what is wrong in a certain situation a close analysis of the drawn cases sheds light on how people and companies interact during this fragile period of time. The interaction therefore determines the dynamic of the shitstorm.

Something obvious that can be stated without any hesitation is that deleting comments and thus making user feels as if they have been deprived of their voice just adds fuel to the fire than calming the situation down. The same goes for bluntly ignoring what people are posting about a certain incident. The main intention being that people lose interest and thus ending their attack, can be stated as not accurate, when looking at the example of Nestlé and Applebee's. Furthermore does the neglect of customer opinion create a slowly but steadily growing threat to a company's reputation. The Dell-Hell serves as an excellent example for the case, in which one unhappy customer creates an appealing effect towards other users, which are not satisfied about how the company treads the initiator. This can be influenced by personal experiences, empathy or through the fact that customers fear to make the same experience when depending on this company. This also goes for United Airlines, in which a comedian and singer wrote a humorous song about his guitar broke due to

inappropriate behaviour of staff. Humour can be seen as an efficient driver for a shitstorm due to the fact that it can create a video going viral. If this is the case many people can be reached within a short amount of time, appealed through the either funny or mischievous character. Another similar situation can be reached if many customers suffer from the same situation, but are being told that a certain incident has never happened before (o2). Therefore if a public statement is made by one affected, many will jump on board creating a high dynamic.

However, it becomes clear that if a misbehaviour has been done not all is lost. For example if a clear and apologizing statement is immediately being made (KitchenAid, Epicurious.com, Celeboutique) many harm can be prevented. If personal contact is made, it is crucial to give people the feeling of being directly addressed and reacted upon their statement (o2). Repeating a one-fits-all statement to each user will additionally add fuel (Applebee's). When a statement is made on company's behave it appears to be best if a person of high rank offers his apologies (KitchenAid, Nestlé, Domino's Pizza). Hereby it is important to point out that the person responsible for the incident will face consequences (Taco Bell, Domino's Pizza) and that the company will use this incident to learn and improve (HMV, ZARA, Nestlé).

2.5.3 Aftermath

The aftermath greatly depends on the way the company reacts upon the crises and the time passed between events. A general rule can be derived from the cases analysed: The sooner and the more personal the response the less aftermath. Like mentioned in the reaction section, if negative feedback by customers gets neglected a great reputational threat can be created, in worst case scenario this means bankruptcy (TelDaFax). When it comes to less dramatic consequences, the aftermath depicts loss in revenues (Abercrombie & Fitch), image loss (Taco Bell, Applebee's) or loss in potential customers (epicurious.com).

On the other hand a social media crises can lead to an improvement in strategy and act as a role model for other companies (KitKat). By adopting the asked for changes, a company can create a basis to communicate with its customers and furthermore give them the feeling of being valuable. This will in the long run create a strong bond between the firm and the customer and thus guarantee a competitive advantage.

Due to this analysis it become obvious that three variables are most prevalent. They determine the effect and outcome a Shitstorm can cause for a company to a large extent. The variables being: effect on objectives, participation in the creation of a Shitstorm and the effect on target group. There is to say that based on the analysis it became clear that both, the effect on objectives and the effect on target group, should not be determined as simply positive or negative. This is due to the reason of individuality of each case and to enable the creation of a model covering most cases. In the following all three variables determined by this case analysis will be used in the creation of a three dimensional matrix.

3 DATA COLLECTION

An online survey was conducted to gather new information on the behaviour of social media users. The part of the data collection aims to present the study that was conducted in 2014 via an online survey. It will contribute later in the paper to support the companies' advices on how to react after a Shitstorm. The current opinion of people is continuously changing and has to be checked frequently to get a common sense on what the consumers at this point in time think about certain topics. Thus this research has been conducted over the most popular channel at the moment in Germany which is Facebook. With around 24 million user (2012) and growing, most people in Germany use Facebook. (Figure 5) Due to the fact that most people that use Facebook are between 18 and 30 most responses are gained by people between 20 and 26. Further distribution and explanation will be evaluated in the following part.

3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was conducted during the period of 25.08.2014 (19.00) till 15.09.2014 (19.00). During this time we spread an online link from "Thesistools.com" on Facebook with the request to fill in the questionnaire we prepared beforehand. This questionnaire included 24 questions about general topics like gender and age but mostly included questions about the topic Shitstorm where those polled were ask to rank their opinion from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot).

3.2 Data evaluation

The outcome of the data aims to represent latest opinion about Shitstorm. In the following the results of the 145 participants are presented and discussed.
The outcome of the questionnaire shows that the distribution of women and men responding are nearly equal (52women, 48 men). No user participating was below 15. About 48% of the participating are between 21-25 and ca. 34% were between 26 and 30. Thus combined 82% are in the aimed target group of customers using social media. (See graphic marketingcharts 2014/ getcommunity 2014). Question 3 shows that over 90% heard already from the Thematic "Shitstorm". This shows it's already a common known phenomenon and could also be gotten popular because of the classical media, which picked up some and presented in the news. Question 4 has to be seen in relation to question 7. More than half of the interviewees are not using social media to express their opinion. Thus is also not surprising that 65% would not join a Shitstorm, which support their opinion. It is also psychologically interesting because participating in a Shitstorm would mean just pressing one button "share" or "like" which is a very low inhibition level to support and show their interests. Nonetheless one has to think about why Facebook user, use their profile. As described before there are many different types of users with different intentions (Li, C. 2007). To go along with this, the result of question 5, that 75% of people would not directly approach a company of its wrongdoing, is not surprising. But it also shows that 10% are likely to stand up for their opinion. Question 10 shows that 50% would talk in real life conversations about the thematic which are discussed in social media. This supports the statements before that users use their profile differently. It's also interesting that the survey supports the assertion that people would say something in social media, which they would not in reality. Nearly 10% would do so. (Question 9) which shows that people can build up their own reality in social media. They want to be seen as someone they created and not as they really are. Most people would also address negative issued their read on social media in the real world (question 12: 98 of 145 would do so). Question 6 can be seen in relation with question 11. Here the distribution is bell-shaped. Only 13% are not at all influenced by a Shitstorm to think differently about a product or boycott (9%) the product. But on the other hand about 5% would thing differently and boycott the product completely. The others are evenly between them. This could also be influenced by a third

variable such as the type and product, which we did not check in this survey. When the product was used satisfied before, the tendency is slightly to be not changing the patters but nearly 15% would be influenced and changes their buying behaviour. If we change the formulation and added a completely boycotting the company than the outcome was stronger. Nearly 40% would not be influenced to completely boycott the company. This shows us that it's not in the interest of the customers to boycott a company with a Shitstorm but because of the negative information they gained out of this Shitstorm. They would maybe change to another product (question 14) but 35% would not try the product to convince themselves if it is actually true what others say (question 15). They rather want to get the information by the company they buy products from (question 17). Here is to say that they do strongly (69%) do not want that any posts are deleted (Streisand effect) question 18). Hey are also do not like it (46%) if the company does not at all react. Thus is better to react (18%) and change nothing, then to do nothing (4%, question 19 and 20). Nonetheless the customers also frighten the after-effects, which shows question 21. Here 30% are in between and 40% tend to but are not completely like if a Shitstorm results in changes, which in return could affect them e.g. by higher prices. But 25% (question 21) would also be happy with the fact du pay more if there is a solution in the sense of all. Less people (11%) would like it if this hade impacts on employees (firing, 9% strongly against it, question 22). Lying is also not good. 45% are strongly against it if a company shows that everything is okay to the outside but does not have changed anything on the inside. Best seen (54%) is the fact that the company offers Information and transparency about the original thematic why the Shitstorm started (question 24).

One thing that the questionnaire shows is that information management and transparency is the most important factor in the social media world. Thus the people are demanding transparency which includes that bad behaviour from Companies is getting less and less tolerated. Due to the fact that all stakeholders have access to the social media and freedom of speech is highly valued in our regions the possibility to earn money on costs of the moral and ethical values is getting lower because everyone can share what happens. Thus it is important to show the employees as well as the customers how the company is working and to build a good reputation.

4 DISCUSSION

The analysis of literature, data and cases have been conducted in order to get an understanding of what needs to be taken care when using Web 2.0 as a company. Therefore the literature analysis shed light on proactive and reactive insights for social media crisis in order to derive at a strategic advice towards companies. These strategic advices should actively and effectively help companies to use this new Web 2.0 tools in their favour. Thus companies should have a contingency plan and get informed and the employees trained beforehand. Additionally the company has to understand that social media is about relationships and that there is much, which cannot be controlled (power to the customer). The company has to see the advantages but also the dangers that can arise by doing wrong. From the literature insights it is crucial for companies to communicate with people before, during and after a Shitstorm. As one can see that the main influencers of pushing or calming down a Shitstorm is the participation of companies in the creation of a Shitstorm. This has also been proven as correct through the conducted case analysis and user insights

gained through the survey. Therefore, how to react remains key. The case analysis hereby showed that reacting too fast, writing comments in an impersonal one-fits-all approach or even getting aggressive towards the user may encourage the creation of a shitstorm. The data analysis enabled to draw the conclusion that making a clear statement towards the initial cause, will be understood and accepted by users. Therefore the assumption derives that according to all three analyses the participation in the creation of a shitstorm is of great influence to the creation, duration and impact of the shitstorm.

Additionally the survey showed that the opinion of people is not always aligned, as every person remains individual to a certain level. For a company it is important to determine who potential customers are. These need to be identified as the target group. Thus companies need to focus on their target groups and also be aware if critics comes from them. As the case analysis has shown a strong resistance by the target group can have tremendous effects on a company's revenues and thus effect the well-being of a company. As the target group and its intention varies as one person does to another, it is important to understand that not one approach can deal with all effects. Therefore a social media strategy needs to be adapted to current situations. As the survey demonstrated how high the influential power of a company's social media strategy and thus its reactions is on customers, a key success factor lies in monitoring your target group. In order to be successful, a company needs to be aware of the power the customers behold.

Due to this power shift, companies are not anymore Gatekeepers but filtering and sorting. As the literature analysis showed, social media strongly influences the real world business. This can be used in a positive manner such as co-creation, but also for negative aspects such as image loss or revenue threats through shitstorms. Via a Shitstorm people can have the power to influence the companies' way of doing, which is also proven by the case analysis conducted. The case analysis also demonstrate that wrong behaviour and unthoughtful actions could in worst case scenario lead to bankruptcy.

In order to make best use of these discussions' finding, we will compress the given insights into three categories. As stated participation in creation of a Shitstorm is important to influence the outcome, so is effect on target group and effect on objectives. These three findings will for further purposes be treated as nominal variables with the possible value being low or high. Each variable has itself been formulated in a rather neutral manner in order to cover a broader spectrum and due to the fact that the outcome is not affected by this alteration.

5. INTRODUCTION OF A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The three variables effect on objectives, participation in creation of a shitstorm and effect on target group have been determined in the discussion, by analysing literature, data and cases. The interaction of these insights will now lay the basis to help categorizing the Shitstorm phenomenon. Thus in the following we will present a theoretical framework.

5. 1 I. Matrix: initial situation

Due to the logical consensus as all variables affect each other at certain times, a three-dimensional matrix approach has been

chosen. The matrix contains three axles stated as "effect on objectives", "participation in creation of Shitstorm" and "effect on target group". To ease the understanding, each variables has been coded as nominal to be either low or high. By doing so the three-axle matrix now contains twelve fields describing the effect resulting from two variables influencing each other. For application a company should rely on the two variables having the greatest impact. The event of all three variables being present or absent at the same time, has been determined as highly unlikely due to the case analysis. For such cases an individual consultation will deliver best results. Nevertheless, the pyramid principle will help to classify the situation and give an insight to how urgent a reaction is being required.

For an easier understanding, animals have been chosen as metaphors for each field within the matrix according to their European anticipated characteristics. There is to say that the anticipation towards certain animals may of course be affected due to cultural influence, which may be taken into account. The values assigned to a chosen animal should represent the dynamics of a Shitstorm.

Effect on objectives	Participation in creation of Shitstorm	Effect on target group	Animal	Reaction
Low	Low	-	Sloth	Relax
High	Low	-	Spider	Don't panic
High	High	-	Leopard	Be agile
Low	High	-	Sheep	Lead
-	Low	Low	Sloth	Relax
-	High	Low	Cow	Lead
-	High	High	Hyena	Be agile
-	Low	High	Bee	Don't panic
Low	-	Low	Sloth	Relax
Low	-	High	Chicken	Lead
High	-	High	Lion	Be agile
High	-	Low	Scorpion	Don't panic

Table 2. Table of Content of Sloth matrix.

Starting in the centre of the matrix determined by the variables "effect on objective", "participation in creation of a Shitstorm" and "effect on target group". The first quadrant having low values for all three possible combinations of the variables is coined a Sloth. The sloth is an animal known for its inactive almost lethargic way of living, also known as slothful behaviour. In nature a sloth has almost zero predators and thus has a rather relaxed and friendly manner. A company facing a "Sloth" is not in great danger by the current situation. Continuing clockwise starting from the top the first quadrant is named a spider. Having a high score on "effect on objectives" and a low score on "participation in creation of Shitstorm" the spider has been chosen to depict the high impact the insect has when attacking, but also because of the rather passive approach a spider follows when waiting for its prey to tangle in its web. Moving one quadrant to the right a

high value for both, "effect on objectives" and "participation in creation of Shitstorm" has been reached, this is why this situation is named Leopard. A leopard is a predator known for its precise targeting of prey and having a high success rate when attacking. Therefore an occurrence of a "Leopard" means for a company to watch out and closely monitor what is happening in order to prevent becoming the prey. When obtaining a low value on "effect on objectives", but a high value of "participation in creation of Shitstorm" we talk about a Sheep. Sheep are known for their idle behaviour, which only slowly and with much effort create an outcome. For a Shitstorm this would mean that even though the company has been much involved the effect this crises has, won't affect the company's objectives. Next to that, with a high score on "participation in creation of Shitstorm" and a low score on "effect on target group" we have a Cow. A cow behaves similar like a sheep, with the difference that cows are of a more uninterested nature and even harder to set in motion, meaning for a company that it may take more effort to guide the flock. When a high effect on both variables, "effect on target group" and "participation in creation of Shitstorm" can be found, we talk about a Hyena. A hyena shares high similarities with a leopard, but differences in behaviour, such as the deviousness, hyenas are known for, tells them apart. In a Shitstorm a "Hyena" would mean a tricky situation, due to the fact that both, the target group and the company, are already highly involved, which could potentially backfire. The next quadrant, called a Bee, describes the case, when the value for "effect on target group" is high and the one for "participation in creation of Shitstorm" is low. Thinking of the Africanised bee, also known as killer bee, it becomes clear that little impact, such as a slight swoosh of the hand may cause an attack. If a company was in a "Bee" situation a calm and thoughtful approach is needed in order to prevent adding fuel to the fire. When a high rating of "effect on target group" but a low rating of "effect on objectives" has been obtained, a "Chicken" situation is created. A chicken can be seen as similar to cow and sheep. Taking in mind the picture of entering a henhouse, an immediate bustle will be created. Even though it does not pose a high threat to the company's objectives, because e.g. the company provides bottleneck items, it still is the target group expressing their dislike. The next quadrant is called a Lion, due to both variables "effect on target group" and "effect on objectives" being high. As the name suggest, the king of the jungle needs a high level of attention. If not, the target group could switch suppliers and leave a drastic impact on the company's objectives. The "Lion" occurrence shares high similarities with the hyena and leopard, when it comes to causing a danger. The last quadrant of the matrix obtains a low "effect on target group" and a high "effect on objectives" and is coined Scorpion. A scorpion does not kill many preys, but if it decides to sting, it causes much harm. For a company this means that even though the target group is not centre of the Shitstorm a danger to the company's objectives is still created.
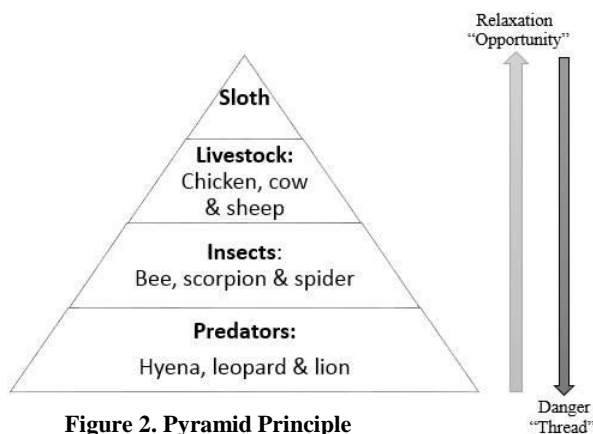
5.2 Pyramid principle

As mentioned above, many quadrants share similarities with each other. The three central quadrants coined as Sloth are identical and thus require a similar approach. However, the 9 remaining quadrants share similarities, but are not identical. Therefore groups can be build according to the threat caused by a certain situation and the company's urgency to react. For a better understanding, animals have been chosen (metaphor-matrix) which also form certain groups in nature. Four categories were derived from our findings, namely Predators,

Insects, Livestock and Sloth. Since the Sloth represents three identical situations with different constellations of variables, it is the only animal being in the "Sloth" group. Another category called Livestock was developed to house the sheep, chicken and cow. All three animals share high similarities when it comes to group dynamics and operate as one entity. However, the cow is known for its inertia, while the chickens represent a volatile group dynamic. The sheep represents a mixture of both, but therefore demanding much guidance.

The next category is named Insects, due to its assigned animals being the bee, scorpion and spider. All three are venomous insects, known to sting or bite its prey as a defence mechanism. The scorpion and spider both operate on their own, while the bee acts as an entity with all other bees in its beehive. The spider behold a passive approach, waiting for its prey to either tangle in the spider web or being close enough to attack. The scorpion interacts with its surrounding and more actively approaches prey. The bee seeks the support of other bees and actively attacks in a group. All venomous animals pose a threat, which demands attention.

The last category is called Predator as all three animals, hyena, leopard and lion, are known for their predatory behaviour and require constantly being monitored. If one does not have an eye on such an animal, the outcome might likely be fatal. The differences here rely on the predatory behaviour. The hyena is well-known for its deviousness, while the leopard represents high agility. The lion represents a greatest threat as it is the top of the food-chain.

These four categories are merged into a pyramid, representing a hierarchy of danger (Appendix). The basis is thus based on the Predators, then comes the Insects, followed by Livestock and the Sloth being on top. From the bottom up the level of danger increases and vice-versa. Thus, the more threat a situation poses, the more attention needs to be paid.

Figure 2. Pyramid Principle

5. 3 II. Matrix: reactive approach

Since all four categories summarize a certain nature of situation a reactive approach can be developed for each category. As already mentioned the animal metaphors do vary within a category to demonstrate that they are not identical, but however share a high level of similarity. In order to make the matrix applicable to everyday business, having four different reactive approaches guarantee an easy understanding and thus a smooth implementation. The reactive approaches are based on the insights gained through the case analysis and the framework the theories provided. The four categories are: "Relax!", "Don't Panic!", "Lead!" and "Be agile!" Before

each categories is being described in detail, always keep in mind the golden rule: „Never do nothing!"

The first category "Relax!" describes the approach recommended for the Sloth. The situation faced by the company has a low level of threat and could ideally be seen an opportunity. Therefore one has to understand, that for a social media crisis this is the easiest situation to handle, due to the fact that neither objectives nor target group is being affected. If handled correctly, the Shitstorm could be used in the company's advantage for example as marketing publicity (Case: PaperHeart). For the successful management of a Sloth, one needs to resist the urge to delete negative comments, but rather positively embrace them by making a company statement. There after it is advisable to remain calm, so that the storm can pass by. As for the Livestock the mantra is "Lead!" more involvement is being required. A flock needs a leader otherwise the herd remains either in its place or panics. Provide information in order to pursue the flock towards your favoured direction. Do not apply drastic steps, as this might trigger an unwanted outcome (ZARA Sheriff Shirt). When it comes to the category of Insects the threat posed towards the company increases, thus the motto is "Don't panic!" Even though the situation might on the first glance look threatening, it is a dealable situation. It is crucial to remain calm and level-headed. During this type of Shitstorm it is best to implement an early warning system that informs about changes in undesired directions. To deal best with an Insect it is advisable to analyse the cause of the critic and adopt an adapted strategy (KitKat Orang-utan). The last category called Predators contains, as the name implies, the highest level of threat. The mantra therefore is: "Be agile!" As a predator is a skilled hunter, he poses a high risk to cause much damages. If one faces a Predator it is crucial to be highly aware of what situation one is in, namely the most threating form of Shitstorms. A company needs to be as agile as possible and hold a high level of awareness in order to be able to adapt to quickly occurring dynamical changes. One needs to keep in mind that everything can potentially back fire, thus try to keep as much control in this situation as possible. A balanced ratio of participation and onlooker needs to be achieved (McDonald's Cheeseburger).

5.4 Introduction of cube

In the following we will present a conceptual model. Our finding above lead us to the model in which we summarized our findings as well as combine new relationships between cause and effects to analyses initial situations in combination with a reactive approach. This correlations are displayed in a Cube. First two matrixes have been designed equally in order to receive matching quadrants for later correlation assumptions. Thus by overlaying both matrixes a cube can be created, with one side containing the initial situation and the other stating the reactive approach. Due to this, an easy application of the model can be received for everyday business life.
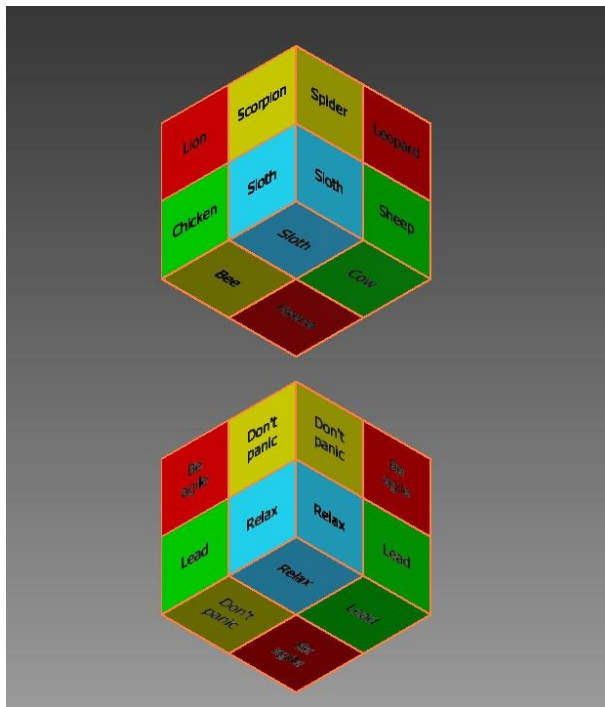
Figure 3. The Cube.

6. DISCUSSION OF SIMILARITIES/ DIFFRENCES WITH THEORY

As we could read the literaturethe literature is focusing mainly on what to do for preventive measures or on what to do during a shitstorm to be concentrated on the moment. Our Cube on the other hand also implies at the moment reactions but with the look to the future on safeguarding the reputation of a company. This farsightedness is a clear difference to develop a contingency plan.

Lorenz Steinke (2014) tried to generalize the process of a shitstorm. But our analysis showed that a shitstorm cannot be generalized. Due to the case analysis we know that the process and outcome of a shitstorm varies widely and many third variables are influencing the relationship.

Due to this fact we did not give generalized answers on how to react but on how to react to the 9 different situations that we found out can arise of a shitstorm.

Our model makes clear that there is no one overall solution on crisis. The social media world changes fast. This is why we advise to always check the situation of the firm first and then to adapt to this situation and react in the appropriate way.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Conclusion of outcome

It can be summarized that the answer to our research problem "To what extend can companies manage the damage when they were targeted by a social media disaster such as a Shitstorm?" is discussed in our paper.

7.2 Recommendation to the Companies

Our analysis leads to clear advices that we can give to a company for practical usage: First of all it is very important to analyses the situation. Our developed Cube can help to categorize in which situation the company is. Being proactive and adapting social media strategies with a contingency plan is important, but one has to understand that all these activities do not save a company from Shitstorms. Shitstorms are rapidly arising phenomenon's that need to be analyzed during and afterwards to react in the best way possible. The best approach varies and needs to be figured out individually. For better understanding and to be able to set action plans one can take the Cube. For additional more in depth insights or in case if an incident is not covered by the Cube, one can always contact experts in order to create a more personalized approach.

Finally and the most important point relies on communication. Communication is the essential thing in today's business world. A good communication also via Web 2.0 and especially social media influences extremely the relationships as well as the continuity of a company.

In general there is to say that, even if not adapting the Cube into everyday business life, still recommendations can be drawn. The analysis showed that good communication, prevention of lies and transparency is crucial for surviving a shitstorm with the least negative outcome. As a golden rule one can state that never do nothing has been proven as a key success factor.

8..0 LIMITATIONS

There is to say that this study is limited by several factors. As this paper has been published as a bachelor thesis, only limited time was provided to conduct research. Due to this, the paper should be displayed as a snap shot of what is known to the date of publication. The survey thus also represents the opinion of individuals at a certain point, and not how their opinion may have altered over certain time span. Additionally, only 145 German individuals participated in our study. Thus, due to cultural effects, this snap shot is only representative for western cultures. It needs to be taken into account that different countries use different platforms of social media communication.

Furthermore is this paper is designed as an advice for companies. It does not cover social media crisis aiming at individuals or organization. Additionally the Cube provides approaches that are suited best according to prior knowledge, therefore drastic changes in any way affecting Web 2.0 may limit the reliability of the Cube. It is also advisable to contact agencies specialized on reputation management to generate an in-depth analysis and a more customized approach.

REFERENCES:

Bernoff, J., and Li, C. (2008). Harnessing the power of the oh-so-social web. *MIT Sloan management review*, *49*(3), 36.

Boger, J.. (2010, Mar. 11). In *Streisand effect*. Retrieved Oct. 10, 2014, from http://www.informatik.uni-oldenburg.de/~iug09/zen/sub/gesellschaft.html#c65

Boin, A. (2008). Crisis Management. Volume II. Sage Publications, London.

Bowen, Laurence and Chaffer, Steven H. (1974), "Product Involvement and Pertinent Advertising Appeals", Journalism Quarterly, 51, 613-615.

Briguglio, P. (2011). Crisis Management: a White Paper. Retrieved: 10.10.2014 from http://www.mmipublicrelations.com/white/paper/crisis-management-a-white-paper/

Brown, Jo, and Amanda. Broderick, and Nick. Lee. (2007). Word of mouth communication within online communities: Conceptualizing the online social network. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *21* (3), PP 2-20.

Brückner, M... (2014, Mar. 21). In *Von Shitstorms, Cybermobbing und Verbraucher-Verdummung*. Retrieved Oct. 3, 2014, from http://books.google.de/books?id=caQrAwAAQBAJ&pg=PT12&lpg=PT12&dq=als+einen+Prozess,++wenn+in+kurzem+Zeitraum+ei ne+subjektiv+gro%25C3%259Fe+Anzahl+von+kritischen+%25C3%2584u%25C3%259Ferungen+get%25C3%25A4tigt+wird,+von+ denen+sich+zumindest+ein+Teil+vom+urspr%25C3%25BCnglichen+Thema+abl%25C3%25B6st+und+stattdessen+aggressiv,+beleid igend,+bedrohend+oder+anders+attackierend+ge&source=bl&ots=pHArP2DXPH&sig=jmiyg04uyxNH0tmg9zBpzdc7x1E&hl=en&sa =X&ei=GUzbU7L9DdT74QSho4DABQ&ved=0CEwQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q&f=false

Burgshan, H, (2014). Co-innovation: the role of online communities. *Journal of Strategic marketing.*

Burson-Marsteller (2011). 2011 Crisis Preparedness Study. http://www.burson-marsteller.com/what-we-do/our-thinking/2011-crisis-preparedness-study/ retrieved: 10.10.2014

Cartwright, D. E., & Zander, A. E. (1953). Group dynamics research and theory.

Caudron, S. (1997). The Search for Meaning at ork. Training and Development,51(9), 24-27

Coombs, T.W. (2007) Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing and responding. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

David, C. R., and Pang, A. (2014). Social Media Crisis Preparedness of Organizations in Singapore. *Christina M. Genest*, 47.

Deephouse, D. L. (2000). Media reputation as a strategic resource: An integration of mass communication and resource-based theories. Journal of management, 26(6), 1091-1112.

Evans, L. (2010). *Social media marketing: strategies for engaging in Facebook, Twitter and other social media*. Pearson Education. Neeraja, B. Chandani, A. Mehta, m. (2013) Marketing: Past, Present and Future theoretical framework. *International journal of advanced research in computer science and management studies.* 1(6).

Eyrich, N., Padman, M-L-, Sweetser, K.D. (2008). PR practitioners' use of social media tools and communication technology. Public Relations Review, 34, 412-414.

Faller, C., and Schmit, K. (2013). *Social Media Shitstorms: Origins, Case Studies and Facts about Social Media Crises and Their Consequences for Crisis Management*. BoD–Books on Demand.

Fearn-Banks, K. (2011). Crisis communications: A casebook approach, 4th Ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gaines-Ross, Leslie. "Reputation Warfare." Harvard Business Review 88, no.
12 (Dec. 2010): 70?76.

Hall, R. (1993). A framework linking intangible resources and capabilities to sustainable competitive advantage. *Strategic management journal*, *14*(8), 607-618.

Hanna, R., Rohm, A., and Crittenden, V. L. (2011, Juni 30). We're all
connected: The power of social media ecosystem. Business Horizons, 54(3),
265-273.

Hearit, K.M. (2006): Crisis management by apology. Corporate Responses to Allegations of Wrongdoing. Routledge.

Heinonen, K. (2011). Consumer activity in social media: Managerial approaches to consumers' social media behavior. Journal of Consumer Behaviour,10(6), 356-364

Henne, C. 2012. Social Media Strategie und online-pr: Social Media Shitstorms und die PR-Kriesen: Warum vieles Kriesengerede ist und eine Hotline nicht hilft, blog.henne-digital.com/ahitstorm-pr-social-media-krise, S. 1-10, 07.10.2012.

Kaplan, A. M., and Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, *53*(1), 59-68.

Kaplan, A. M., and Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, *53*(1), 59-68.

Kassel, A. (1999). How to write a marketing plan. *Marketing Library Services*, *13*(5), 4-6. http://www.marketingcharts.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Pew-Demos-SocNet-Platforms-Jan2014.png

Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., and Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business horizons*, *54*(3), 241-251.

Köster, A... (2012, Month. Day). In *Monitoring als Frühwarnsystem*. Retrieved Oct. 7, 2014, from http://www.big-social-media.de/news_publikationen/meldungen/2012_06_04_Monitoring_als_FWS.php

Li, C. (2007). Social Technographics. *Mapping Participation In Activities Forms The Foundation Of A Social Strategy*.

Li, C., and Bernoff, J. (2011). *Groundswell: Winning in a world transformed by social technologies*. Harvard Business Press.

Lobo, S... (2010, Apr. 22). In *How to survive a shitstorm*. Retrieved Sep. 25, 2014, from http://saschalobo.com/2010/04/22/how-to-survive-a-shitstorm/

Mavridis, T. (2011). Social Media Relations. Die neue Dimension der Nachhaltigkeitskommunikation. *uwf UmweltWirtschaftsForum*, *19*(3-4), 245-248.

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review*, *50*(4), 370.
Greenberg, A. (2007). The Streisand effect. *Forbes. http://www. forbes. com/home/technolo gy/2007/0*, *5*(10).

McLuhan, M. (1994). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. MIT press.

Owyang, j. (2008) a chronology of brands that got punk'd by social media retrieved from: http://www.web-strategist.com/blog/2008/05/02/a-chonology-of-brands-that-got-punkd-by-social-media/

Owyang, J. (2011). Social business readiness: how advanced companies prepare internally. *San Mateo*.

Palen, L. (2008). Online social media in crisis events. *Educause Quarterly*, *31*(3), 12.

Pires, G. D., Stanton, J., and Rita, P. (2006). The internet, consumer empowerment and marketing strategies.?European Journal of Marketing,40 (9/10), 936-949.

PR Newswire (2011). White Paper: Mastering Public Relations in Social media. Retrieved: 10.10.2014 from http://www.prnewswire.com/knowledge-center/White-Paper-Mastering-Public-relations-in-Social-Media.html

Singel, R... (2010, Oct. 27). In *Oct. 27, 1994: Web Gives Birth to Banner Ads*. Retrieved Oct. 7, 2014, from http://www.wired.com/2010/10/1027hotwired-banner-ads/

Steinke, L. (2014). Der Shitstorm als Marketing-Instrument. In *Bedienungsanleitung für den Shitstorm* (pp. 31-34). Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.

Süddeutsche Zeitung Magazin (Hrsg.),: Nr. 1 der Anglizismen: Der Shitstorm; http://sz-magazin.sueddeutsche.de/blogs/nummereins/1827/, 07.10.2014

Taylor, M. (2010). Organizational use of new communication technology in product recall crisis. In Timothy Coombs & Sherry Holladay (Eds.). The handbook of crisis communication (pp. 410-421). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Wright, D. K., and Hinson, M. D. (2008). How blogs and social media are changing public relations and the way it is practiced. *Public Relations Journal*, *2*(2), 1-21.

APPENDIX
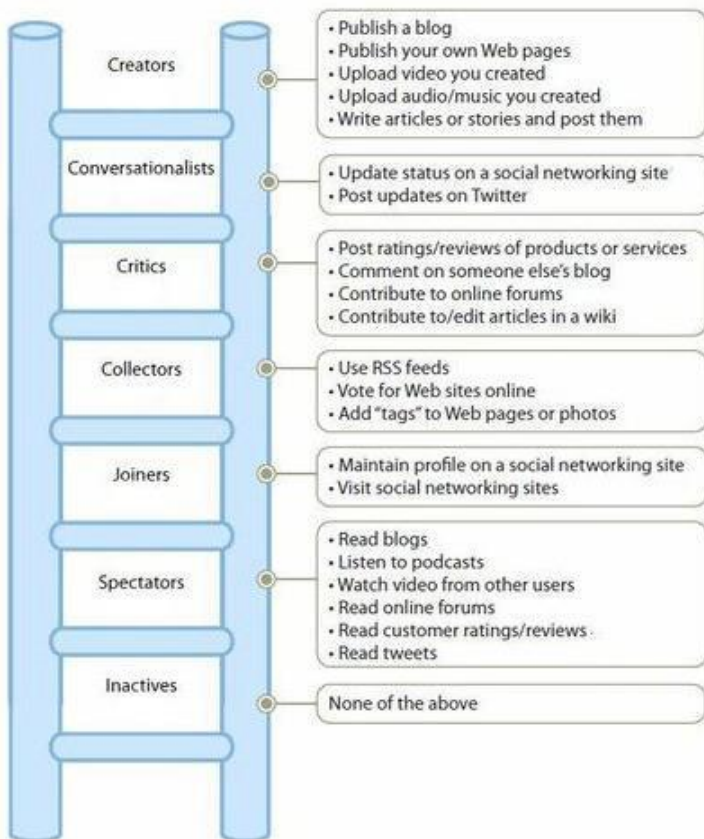
Figure 4. The Ladder

Ort:	Deutschland 🇩🇪		
Nutzer:	23.686.860	Entwicklung: +1.086.200 (+4,81 %)	Zurück zum Ranking

ENTWICKLUNG DER AKTIVEN FACEBOOK NUTZER IN DEUTSCHLAND

Figure 5. Activity graph of Facebook user.

Demographics of Major Social Networking Platforms
% of adult internet users
January 2014

	% of internet users who...	The service is especially appealing to...	
Use Facebook	71%	18-29-year-olds (84%) Women (76%)	Blacks (76%) HHI < $50,000 (76%)
Use LinkedIn	22%	30-49-year-olds (27%) Men (24%)	College+ education (38%) HHI > $75,000 (38%)
Use Pinterest	21%	18-29-year-olds (27%) Women (33%)	College+ education (25%) HHI > $75,000 (27%)
Use Twitter	18%	18-29-year-olds (31%) No significant differences by gender, household income, education	Blacks (29%)
Use Instagram	17%	18-29-year-olds (37%) Women (20%)	Blacks (34%) and Hispanics (23%) Urban (22%) residents

MC MARKETINGCHARTS.COM

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project

Figure 6. Demographics of Major Social Networking Platforms.
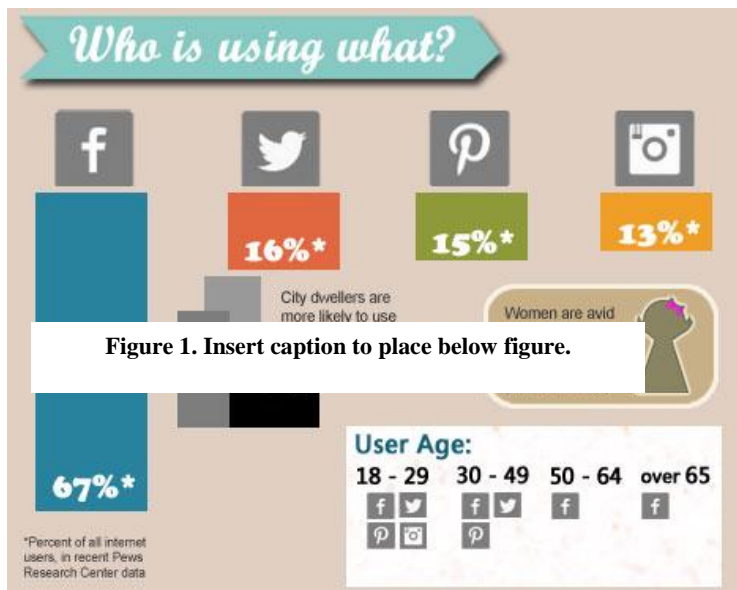
Figure 1. Insert caption to place below figure.

Figure 7. Average age group of social media.

Relaxation
"Opportunity"

Sloth

Livestock:
Chicken, cow
& sheep

Insects:
Bee, scorpion & spider

Predators:
Hyena, leopard & lion

Danger
"Thread"
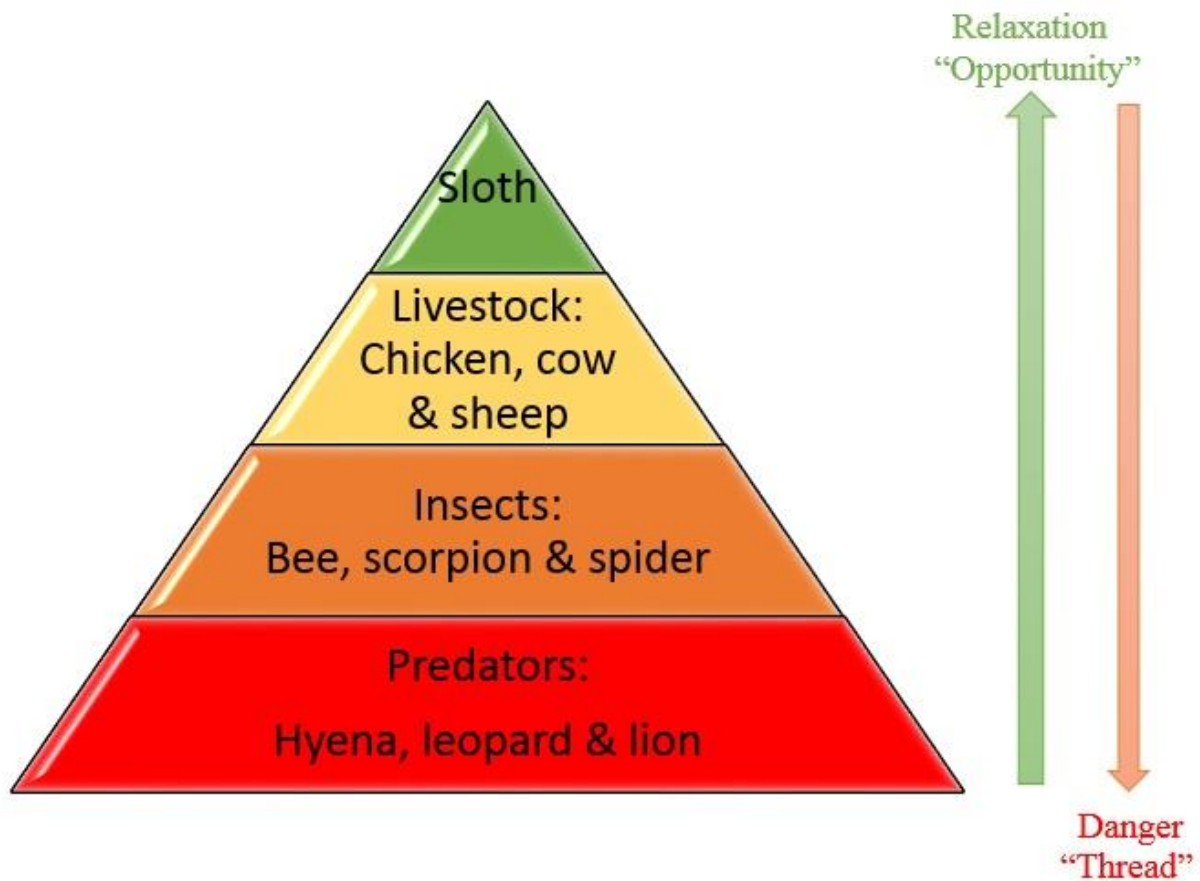
Figure 2. Pyramid Principle

Effect on objectives	Participation in creation of Shitstorm	Effect on target group	Animal	Reaction
Low	Low	-	Sloth	Relax
High	Low	-	Spider	Don't panic
High	High	-	Leopard	Be agile
Low	High	-	Sheep	Lead
-	Low	Low	Sloth	Relax
-	High	Low	Cow	Lead
-	High	High	Hyena	Be agile
-	Low	High	Bee	Don't panic
Low	-	Low	Sloth	Relax
Low	-	High	Chicken	Lead
High	-	High	Lion	Be agile
High	-	Low	Scorpion	Don't panic

Table 2. Table of Content of Sloth matrix.

Figure 3. The Cube.

Survey outcome

Bitte nenne uns dein Geschlecht:

weiblich   männlich

Bitte nenne uns deine Altersgruppe:
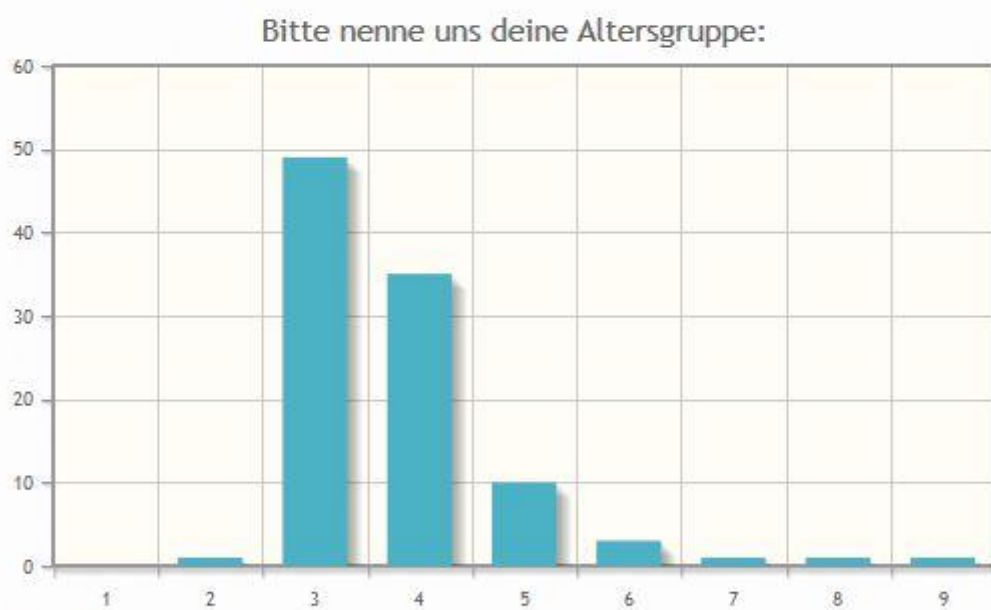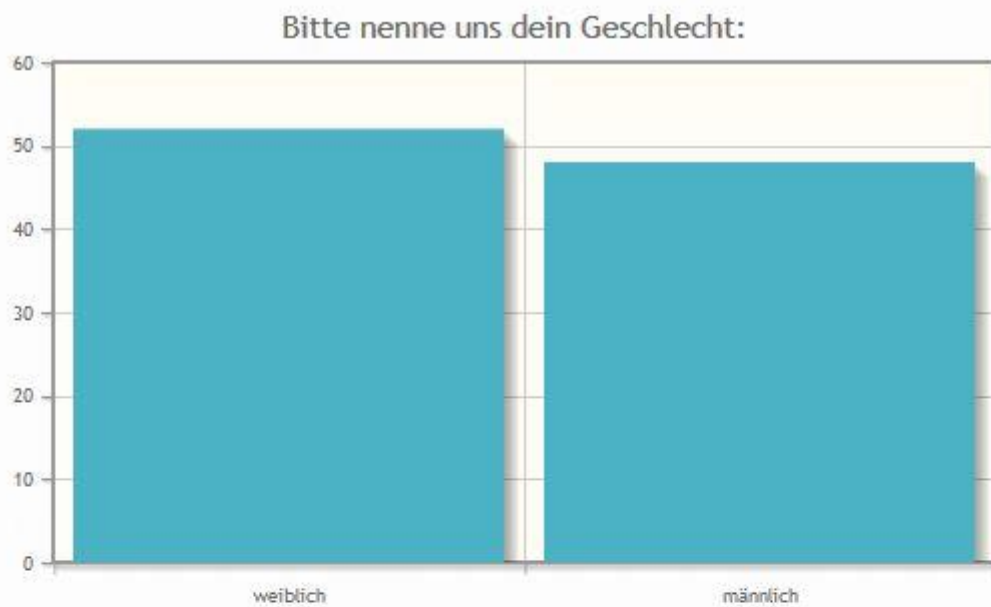
Figure 3. The Cube.

3 = 21-25
4 = 26-30
5 = 31-35
6 = 36-40
7 = 41-45
8 = 46-50
9 = >51

Hast du bereits vorab von dem Thema "Shitstorm" gehört?
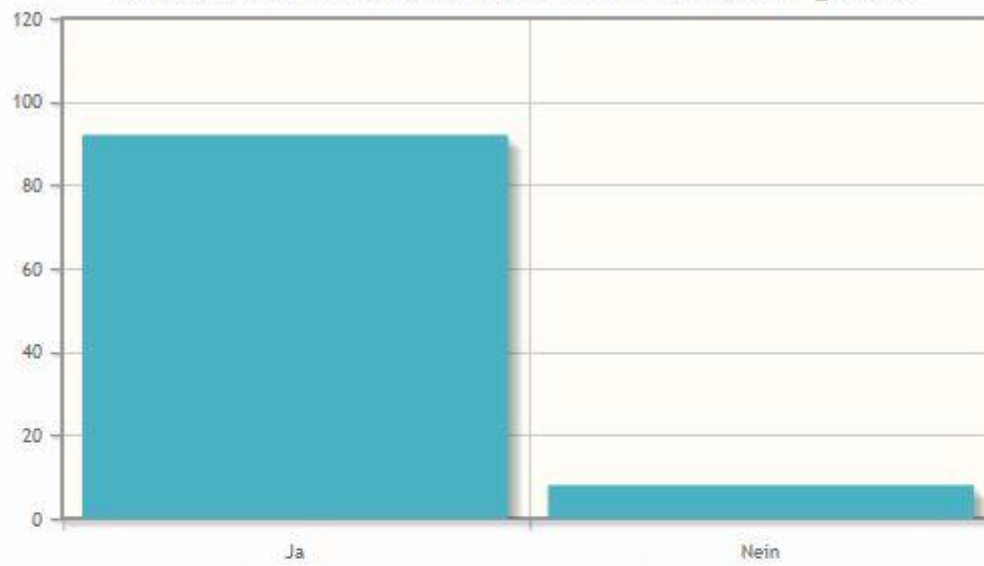
...du deine Meinung via Social Media, z.B. Facebook, mitteilst?
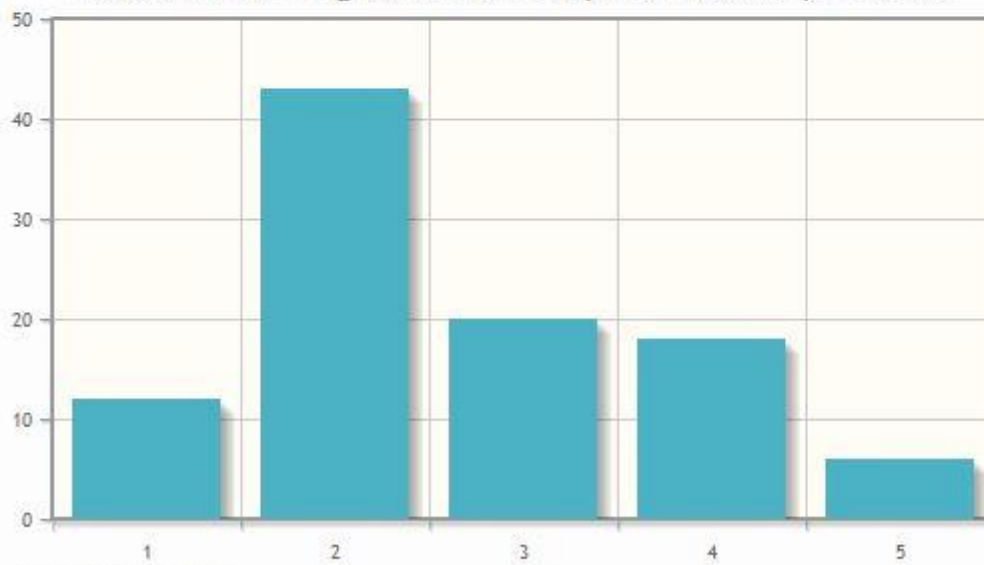
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

... du eine berühmte Person/einen Konzern direkt auf ihr Fehlverhalten öffentlich via Social Media ansprichst?
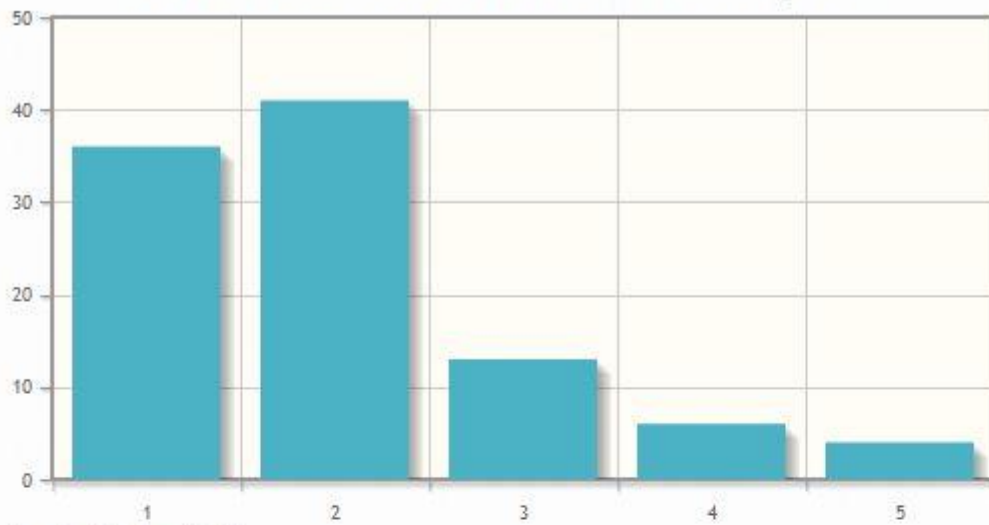
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

... ein Shitstorm deine Meinung über eine berühmte Person/ein Produkt/einen Konzern beeinflusst?

1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

22
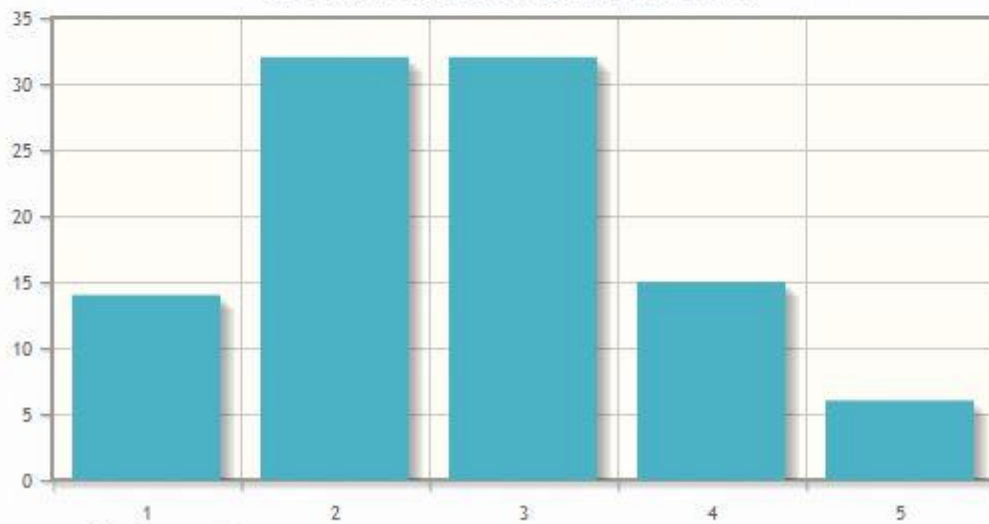
... du dich einem bereits laufendem Shitstorm anschließen würdest, sofern dieser deiner Meinung entspricht?
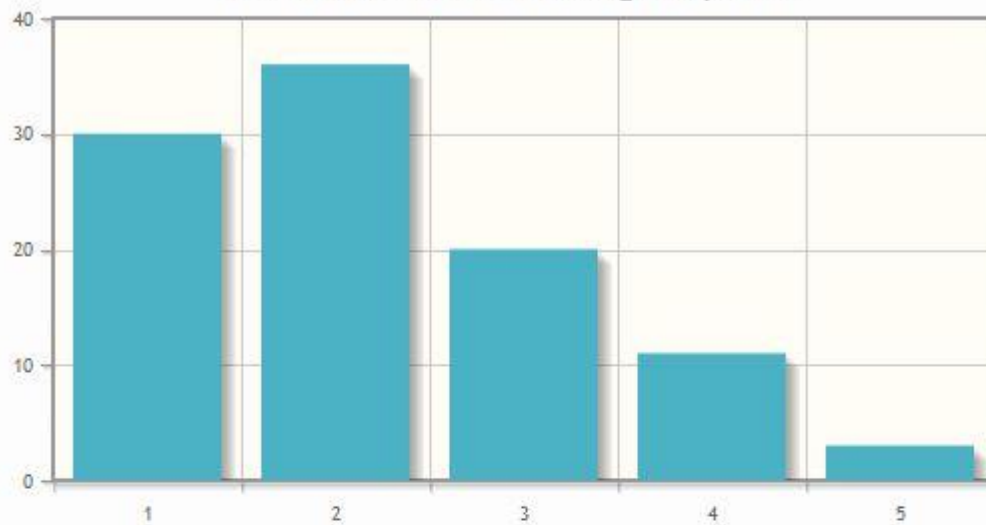
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

...du einen Shitstorm beginnst oder beitrittst, weil es dir Aufmerksamkeit und ein Dazugehörigkeitsgefühl verspricht?
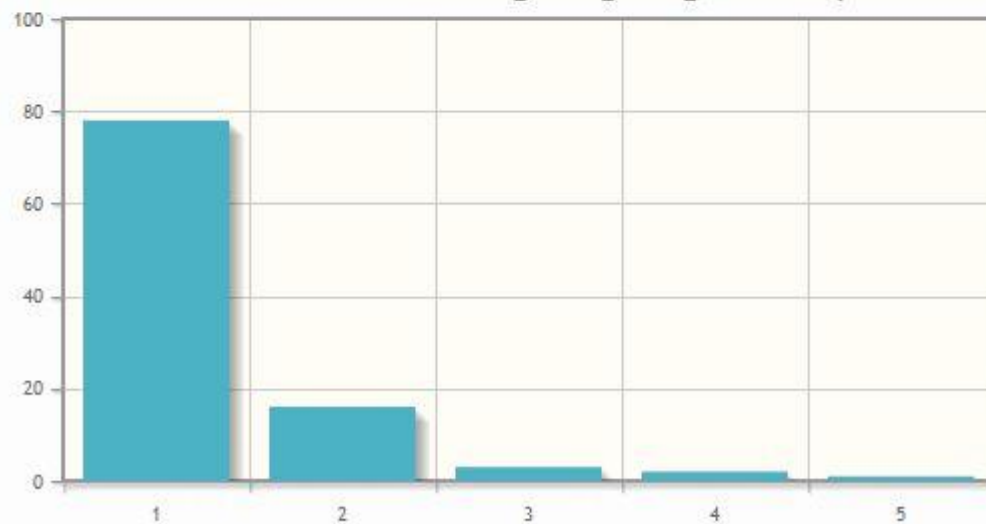
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

...du während eines Shitstorm Äußerungen triffst, welche du dich nicht trauen würdest, als einzelne Person in einem direkten Gespräch zu machen?
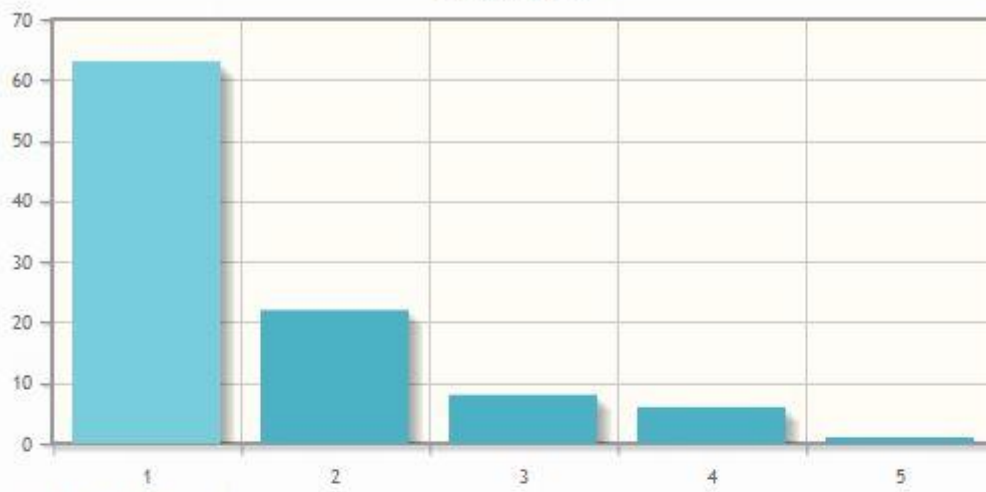
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

...du Themen aus Social Media Netzwerken wie Facebook in realen Konversationen aufgreifst?
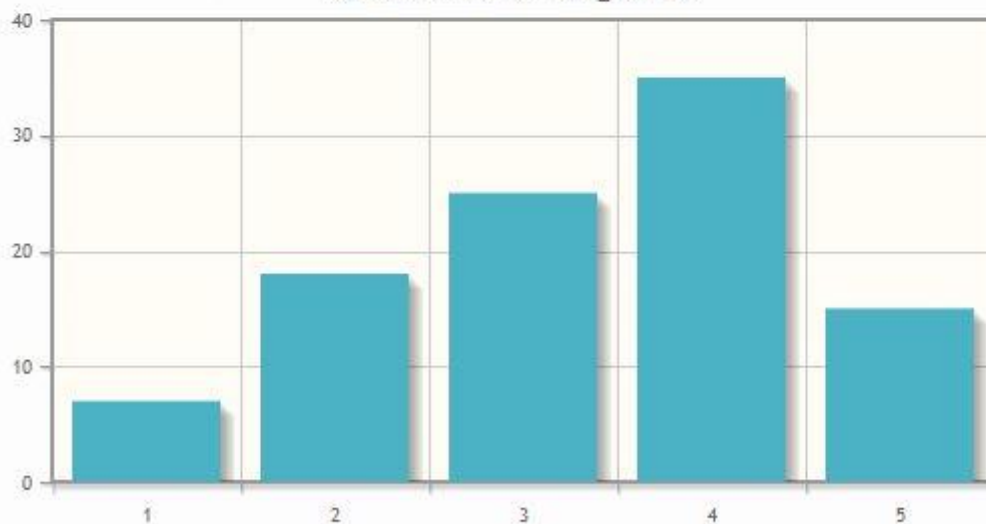
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

...du ein Produkt/ einen Konzern boykottierst aufgrund der negativen Dinge, welche du durch einen Shitstorm erfahren hast?
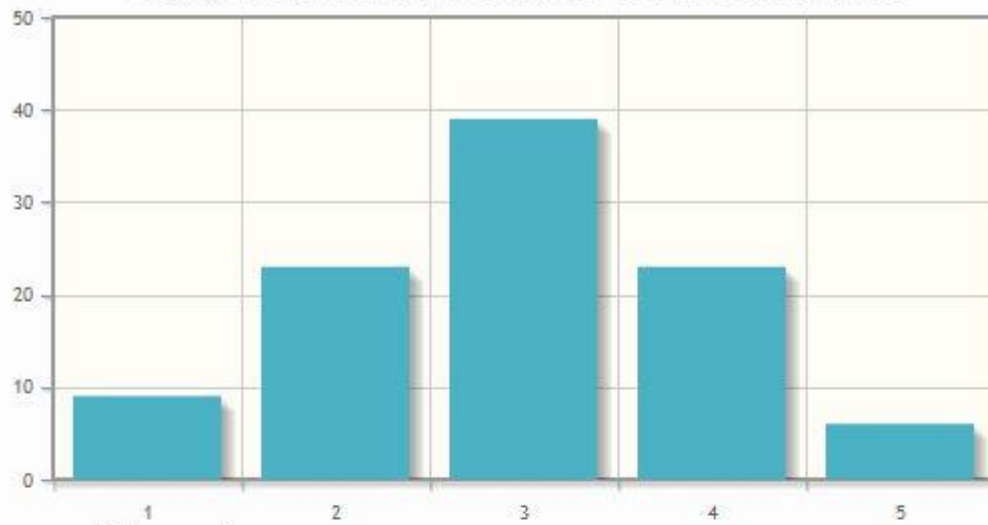
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

...du Freunde und Bekannte gezielt auf diese negativen Informationen auch außerhalb des Internets aufmerksam machst?
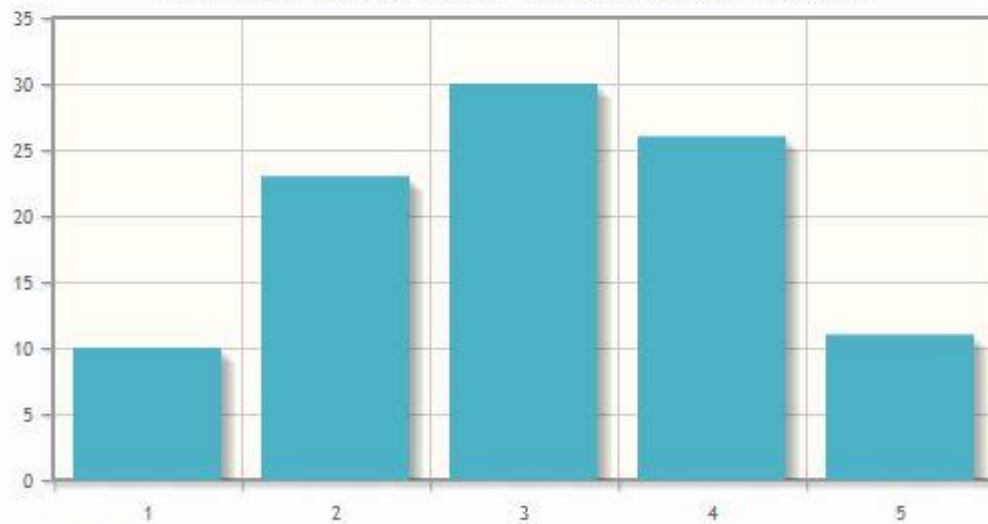
1 = Auf keinen Fall!
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Ziemlich!

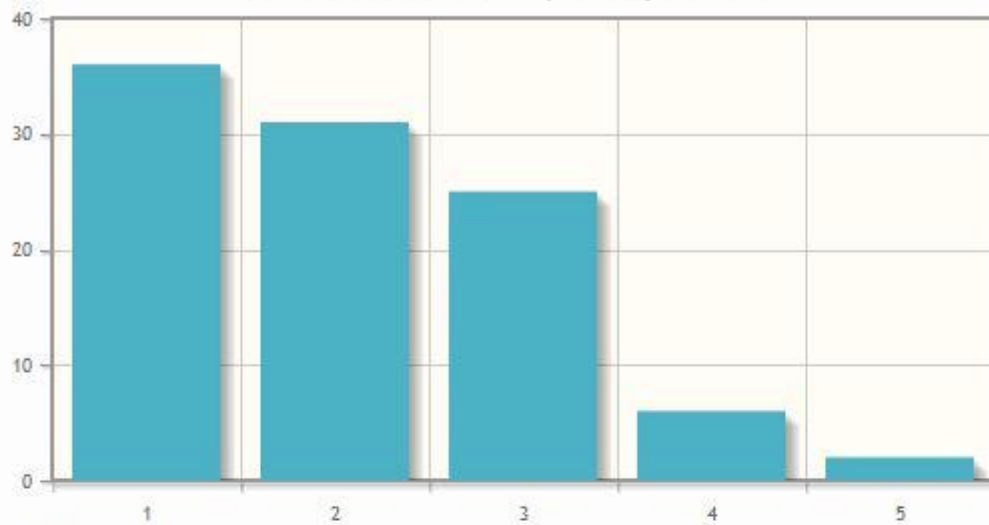## ...den Kauf eines Produkts, welches du zuvor längere Zeit zufrieden benutzt hast?
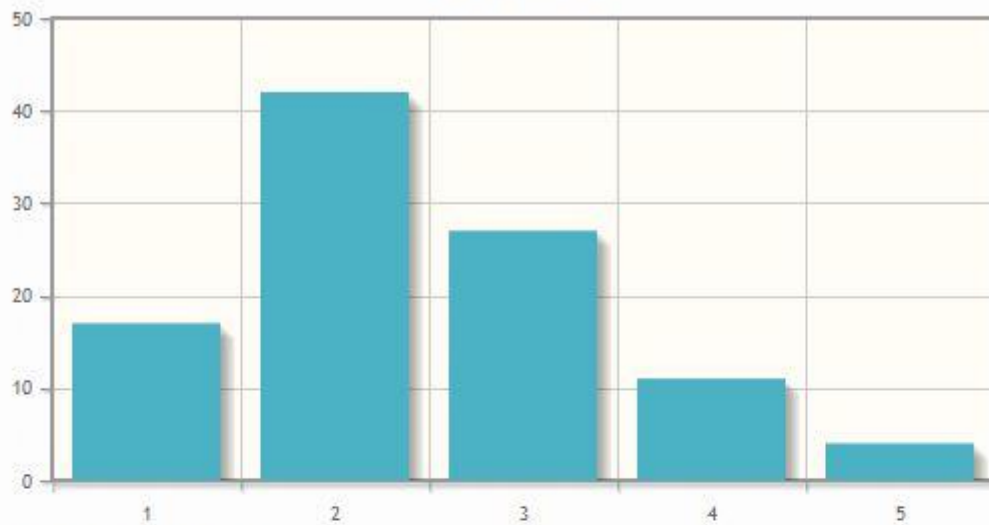
1 = Nicht vorhanden
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Sehr stark

...die Wahrscheinlichkeit ein alternatives Produkt zu dem bisher, nun verrufenen Produkt zu finden?
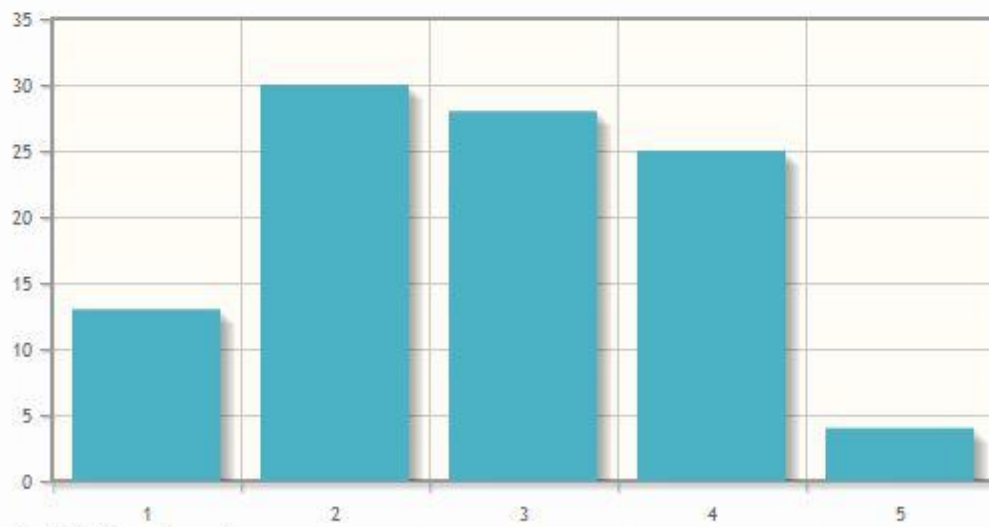
1 = Nicht vorhanden
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Sehr stark

...deinen Wunsch ein dir unbekanntes Produkt, welches im Zentrum eines Shitstorms steht, auszuprobieren?
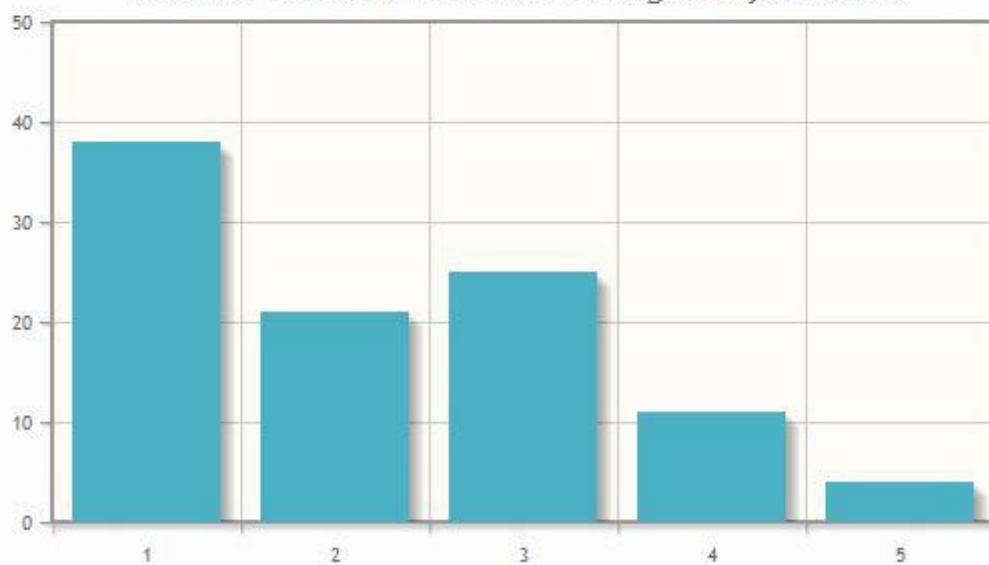

1 = Nicht vorhanden
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Sehr stark

...deinen Wunsch einen Konzern völlig zu boykottieren?
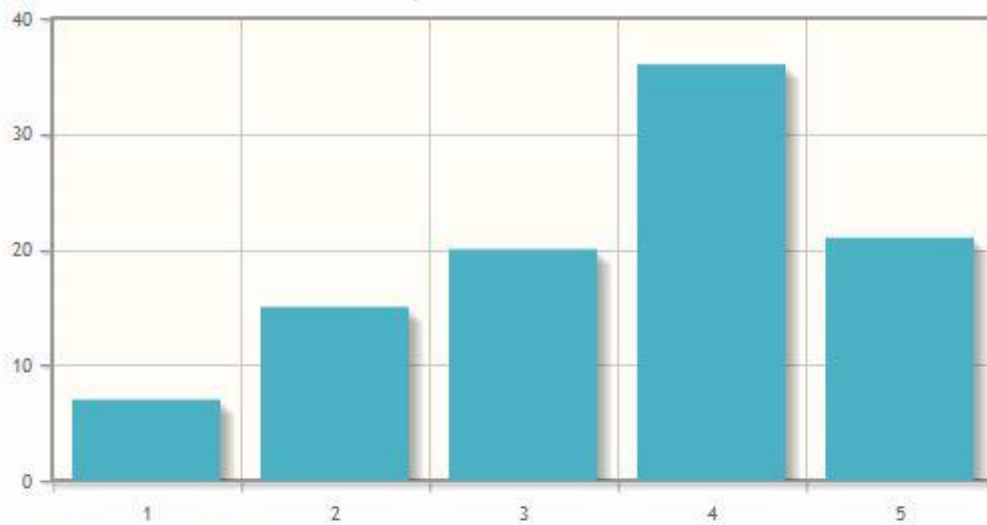

1 = Nicht vorhanden
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Sehr stark

...deinen Wunsch mehr über die Hintergründe zu Produkten oder Konzernen zu erfahren, welche oder bei welchen du kaufst?
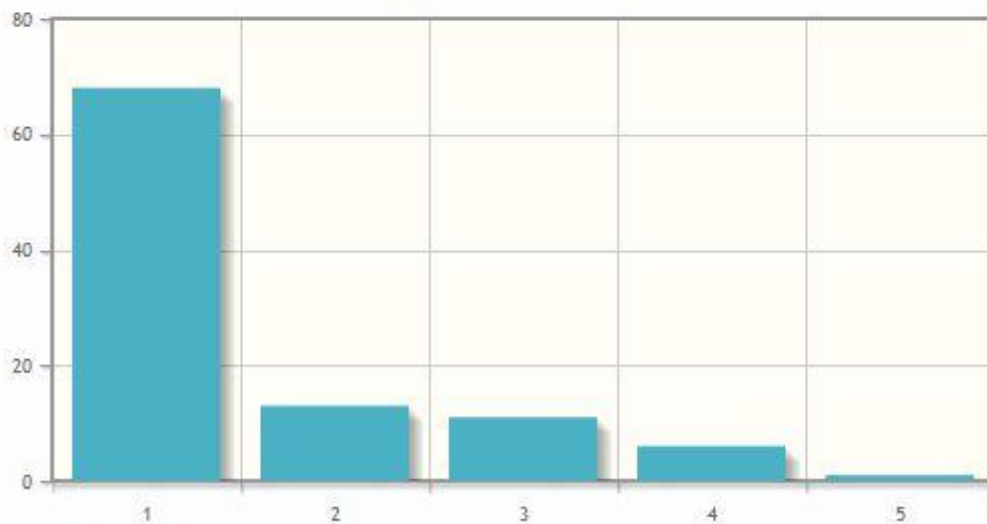

1 = Nicht vorhanden
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Sehr stark

...das Geschehene ignoriert,alle Beiträge der User löscht und alles beim Alten bleibt?
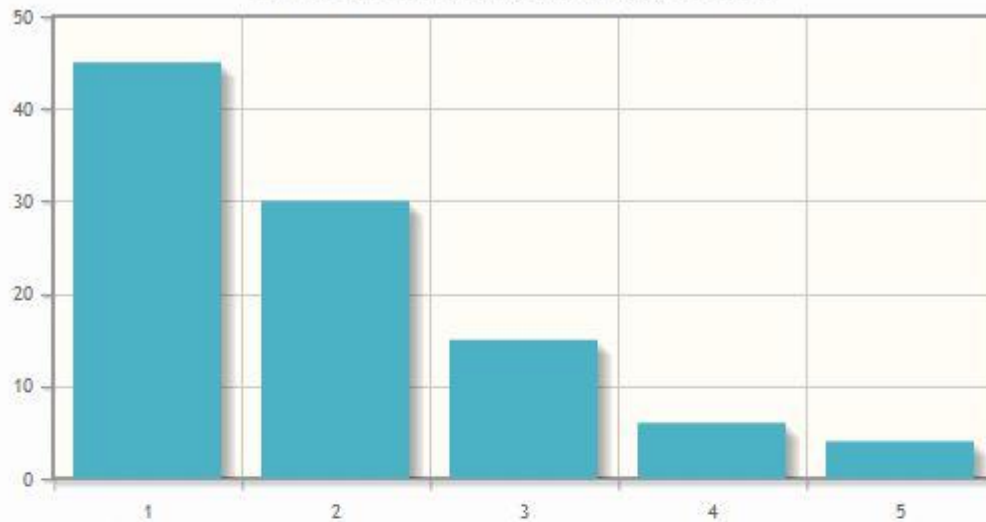

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

28

...in Deckung geht und ausharrt bis das Gröbste überstanden ist, ohne etwas an den Grundsätzen zu ändern?
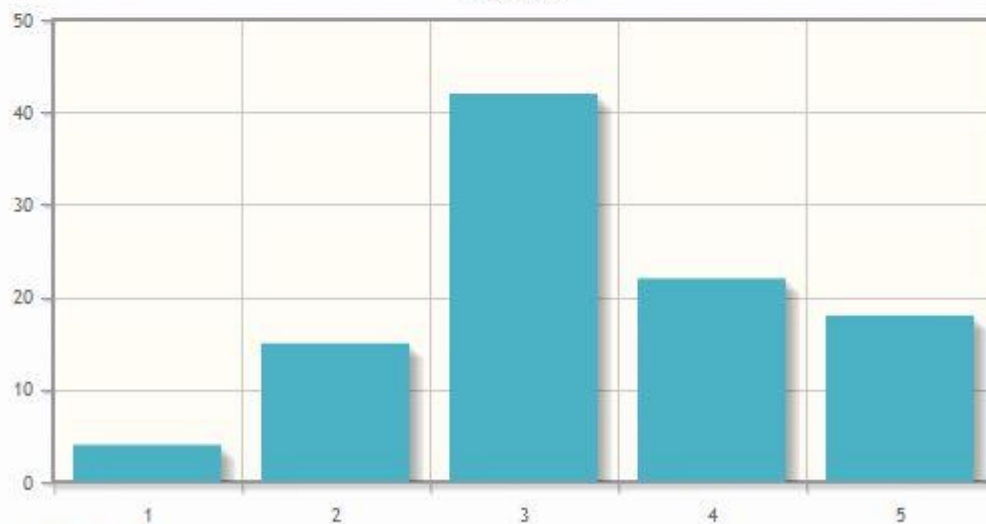

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

...Stellung bezieht, aber auf seiner bisherigen Position bestehen bleibt?
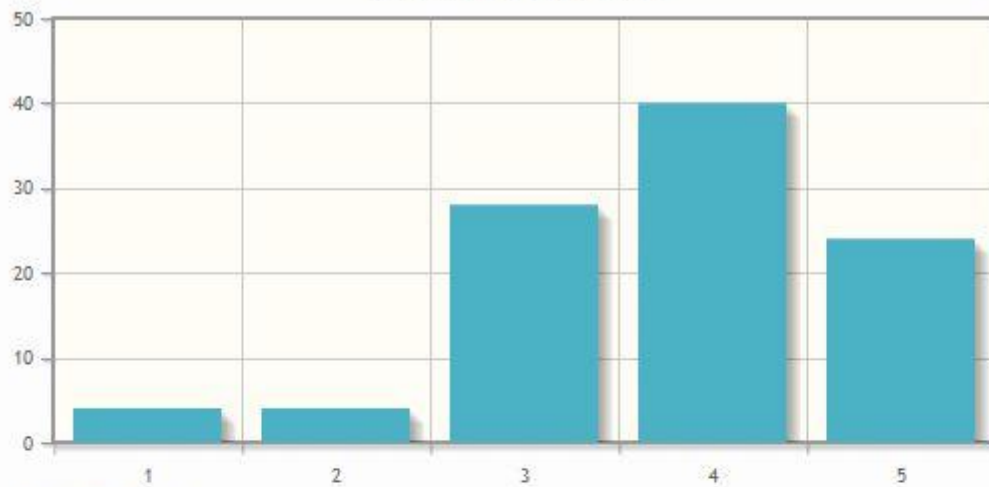

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

...eine Entschuldigung ausspricht und eine Lösung im Sinne aller Beteiligten verspricht, dafür aber eventuell Mehrkosten für die Verbraucher anfallen?
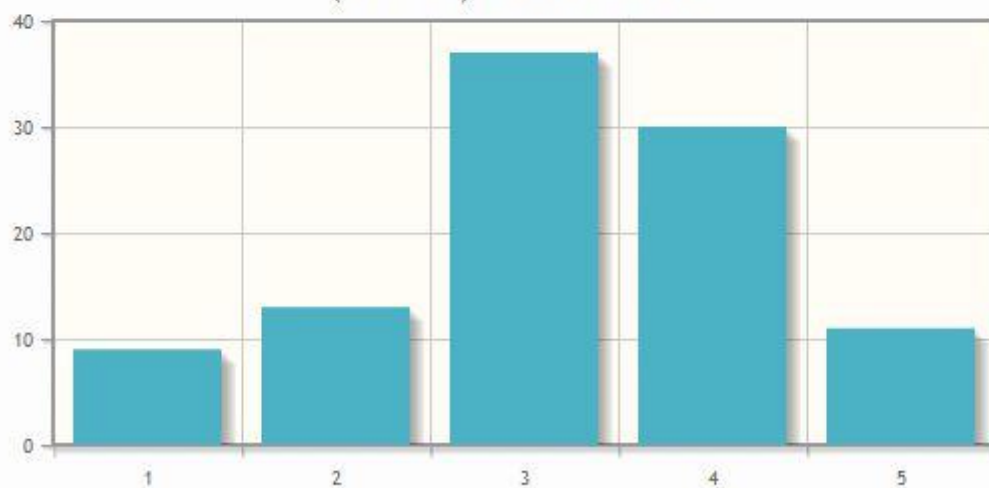

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

...reumütig zu den gemachten Fehlern steht und einen Kurswechsel ankündigt, welcher wiederum finanzielle Einschneidungen in der Firma (Personal) bedeuten kann?
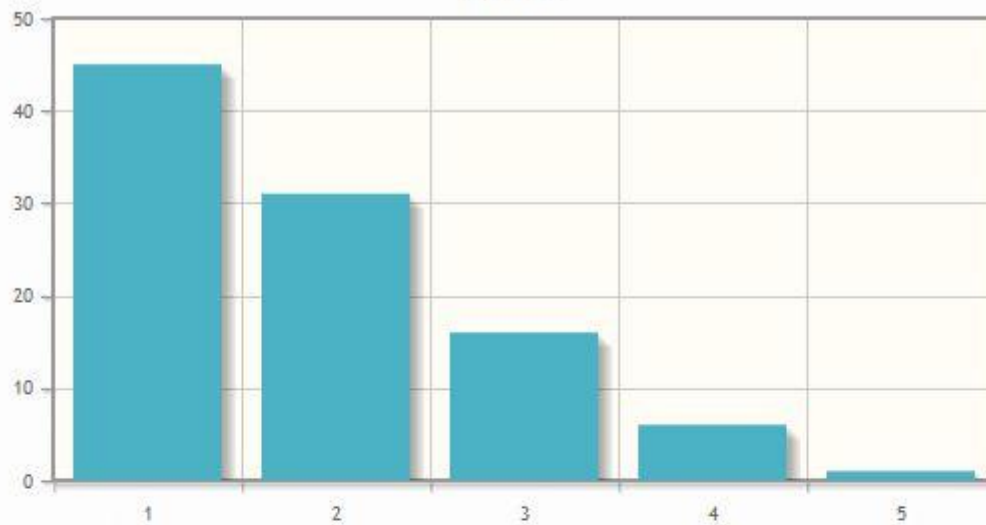

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

...Fehler nach außenhin behebt, jedoch intern alles weiterläuft wie bisher?
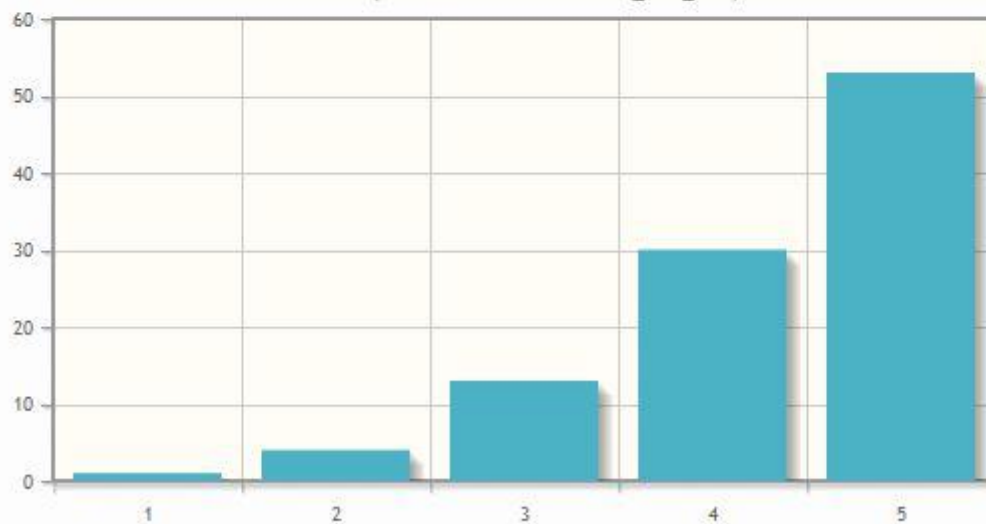

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

... als Reaktion mehr Transparenz und Informationen über das Thema des Anstoßes (z.B. Arbeitsbedingungen) liefert?

1 = Unpassend
2 = 2
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = Überaus gerechtfertigt

Date: 21.06.2005

Company: Dell

Initial situation: In June 2005 Jeff Jarvis wrote an open letter in his blog, in which he complained about the laptop itself and also the paid-for in-house service. The letter published on buzzmachine.com stated: "Dell lies. Dell sucks: I just got a new Dell laptop and paid a fortune for the four-year, in-home service. The machine is a lemon and the service is a lie. I'm having all kinds of trouble with the hardware: overheats, network doesn't work, maxes out on CPU usage. It's a lemon. But what really irks me is that they say if they sent someone to my home — which I paid for — he wouldn't have the parts, so I might as well just send the machine in and lose it for 7-10 days — plus the time going through this crap. So I have this new machine and paid for them to FUCKING FIX IT IN MY HOUSE and they don't and I lose it for two weeks. DELL SUCKS. DELL LIES. Put that in your Google and smoke it, Dell." Jarvis claimed that his intention was to warn other potential customers about the disadvantages of Dell. Many other unsatisfied customers joined in and also wrote open letters about their experiences in Jarvis' comment section. The open-letter was linked to many a blog, with the blog culture growing more and more. Mr Jarvis also updated his first post, whenever he experienced something new in his so called "Dell Hell".

Reaction: Jarvis stated that all his emails and entreaties went unnoticed. So he decided to check on, if Dell actually reads blogs. He even contacted the marketing department of Dell, telling about his own blog. No reaction. He send also went on to contact the chief marketing officer and vice president. While on his way to get himself an Apple laptop, Jarvis finally received a call from a lady working for Dell. She offered him a new machine, he declined and asked for a refund, which was then agreed upon. Before sending his Dell back he wrote a guideline for the chief marketing officer at Dell consisting of:"**1** Read blogs. At Technorati.com or Icerocket.com, search for what people say about your brand. Don't think of bloggers as strange beasts blathering, but as people, just customers. Beats any focus group. **2** Talk with your consumers. A Dell PR executive told blogger and Houston Chronicle columnist Dwight Silverman that the company's blog policy was, in Silverman's words, "look, don't touch". How insulting: You ignore you customers. How much better it would be to ask their advice. Beats any consultant. **3** Blog. If execs at Microsoft, Sun, and even GM can, you can. Show that you are open and unafraid to engage your public. Beats PR."

Aftermath: Even during the highly blooming year 2005, Dell's customer satisfaction rating, market share, and share price in the US all decreased. Jennifer Davis, spokeswoman of Dell said:" [the company is] looking at the best way to respond [to Jarvis open letter] … We'll also be glad to talk with him about the broader issues - we have not outreached as of yet, but we're looking at the best way to do so."

Source: http://buzzmachine.com/2005/06/21/dell-lies-dell-sucks/ http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2005/aug/29/mondaymediasection.blogging

Date: 15.04.2009

Company: Domino's Pizza

Initial situation: Two employees of Domino's Pizza in Conover, N.C, uploaded a video to YouTube in which they showed themselves, how they disgustingly handled food ordered by costumers. The male and female shown took turns in putting cheese up their nose before placing it on a customer's sandwich or spiting mucus onto pizza. The male employee can also be seen putting a sponge, normally used to clean the dishes, between the buttocks. The video immediately went viral.

Reaction: In 2009 Domino's did not have a Facebook fan page, but were well aware of the video being shared among enraged customers. The company decided to not give out a statement within the first 48 hours, in order to not provoke any further outrage. Overnight the video had reached 250,000 clicks, mainly being shared through blogs. Thus the company decided to publish a video, in which the company's president Patrick Doyle apologizes and separates the wrongdoers from the company. The president also thanked the community for shedding light on this matter, so that the employees can be prosecuted and punished. The company didn't issue a formal press release to mainstream press, but created a Twitter account for customer inquiries.

Aftermath: The vice president stated that, "The majority of people do recognize what this was…That this was a rogue act of two individuals who thought they were being funny. That they do not represent this brand. That they do not represent the 100,000 people who work every day at Domino's Pizza all over the world." However, HCD Research conducted a survey in which 65% of people that would or had previously visited Domino's would now prefer not visiting after watching the video.

Sources: http://blogs.wsj.com/independentstreet/2009/04/20/dominos-response-offers-lessons-in-crisis-management/

http://www.businessweek.com/stories/2009-04-21/dominos-discovers-social-mediabusinessweek-business-news-stock-market-and-financial-advice

Date: 06.07.2009

Company: United Airlines

Initial situation: In 2008 Canadian singer Dave Carroll travelled by using United Airlines, which mishandled the passengers luggage to such an extent that his 3,500 $ guitar broke. Neither the ground personnel nor the company itself felt responsible, even though many witnesses were present. After month of letters of complaint, calls and being ignored, Carroll created a song incl. video that should tell his story. His main aim was to reach 1 million users within one year by launching three songs.

Reaction: The low-budget video was well-received among the audience and reached in its first week 150,000 Users. It encouraged many people to tell their story about being mistreated by this or other airline companies. After 4 days 1.000.000 clicks were reached and United Airline sales dropped by 10% resulting in a financial loss of 180.000.000 $. By mid-august 5.000.000 views were generated, leading to a broad media coverage and Carroll being invited to television interviews. Among users it was received as witty, funny, sarcastic and appealing, resulting in 14.237,177 clicks (29.09.2014).

Aftermath: United Airlines publically called Carroll's video brilliant and asked for it to be used as training purpose. The company also called him personally to apologize. In the meantime, the producer of the guitar heard about the incident and offered him two new guitars to use in his next videos. United Airlines finally offered to compensate for his loss, but Carroll didn't want the money anymore and asked for it to be donated. Carroll published a book on this matter, is a sought-after costumer speaker and his music career also received an all-time high. United Airlines still has not fully recovered from its damaged image.

Source: United Breaks Guitars: The Power of One Voice in the Age of Social Media, by Dave Carroll

Date: 17.03.2010

Company: Nestlé

Initial situation: The Nestlé group holds a largely diversified portfolio, one of its many famous products being KitKat. On March 17th Greenpeace launched a campaign against Nestlé making use of social media. Greenpeace used the slogan "Have a break? Have a KitKat!" and turned it into "Have a break? Give the orang-utan a break!" to launch a video in which a bored office employee bites into a KitKat, which turns out to be an orang-utan finger. The video includes the call for people to boycott Nestlé due to that fact that they source palm oil from companies known for destroying the rainforest, home of the orang-utan. (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VaJjPRwExO8)

Reaction: Soon after the clip was launched by Greenpeace, Nestlé deleted the clip from YouTube due to copyright infringement. Nestlé herewith released detailed statistics, which implies that from 2015 onwards the company, will only use sustainable palm oil. What at the beginning was just shared among a few, quickly turned into a large shitstorm encouraged by the clumsy censorship (Streisand-effect). Greenpeace now uploaded the Clip to Vimeo and encouraged all users to share and spread the word. The clip had 78,500 views within hours. Furthermore Greenpeace enabled users to directly download the clip from their site. Being motivated by Nestlé's initial try to simply prevent the video from being available, users took it personally and for example changed the KitKat logo into the word killer and spreading it all over social media, with the plead to boycott KitKat (pre-Easter season). Nestlé thus contacted such eager users and tried to threaten them in the hope to prevent a further spread of the Killer logos as of reasons for brand infringement. Due to this users started to use their voice by informing friends, posting comments onto the Nestlé/KitKat Facebook fan pages and quickly also turned to traditional methods like news channels. Through social media Nestlé was still eager to stand its ground and tried to threaten a few users in order to prevent them from positing negative comments to their fan pages. Furthermore did Nestlé start to delete user comments. Due to all this, Facebook users created an anti-fan page named "Your Nestle comments won't get deleted here", in which Nestlé had, of course, no saying. Due to the fact, that the Nestlé pages were still flooded with negative comments, the company decided to simply delete the biggest KitKat fan page, which of course mean losing contact to over 758 712 costumers. From that point on Nestlé was no longer available for any request, or comments made and simply went into hiding. This all happened within one single week.

Aftermath: As a consequence Nestlé decided to entirely change their strategy when it comes to social media. In the first step it was necessary to deal with short-term damage. Therefore Nestlé cut their ties with the negatively reputed Sinar Mas company. Additional regular meetings were held with Greenpeace in which Nestlé shed a light on their sourcing. In the next step Nestlé aimed to create a long-term relationship with a sustainable palm oil company. Therefore taking support of Forrest trust, a none-profit organization which helps Nestlé to audit its suppliers. Later on in May Nestle even joined a party of other brands, in order to eliminate unsustainable palm oil sourcing.

Source: http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/campaigns/climate-change/kitkat/

http://www.thomashutter.com/index.php/2010/03/facebook-wenn-fanpages-kriegsschauplatz-werden/

http://www.absatzwirtschaft.de/content/communication/news/ein-weltkonzern-scheitert-an-social-media;70121;0

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/90dbff8a-3aea-11e2-b3f0-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3Ej4Y0bmj

Date: 17.02.2011

Company: TelDaFax

Initial situation: TelDaFax was a former German telephone company, which turned low-cost energy supplier. The incident happened when a customer posted is dislike of the company's service, when it comes to handling problems. Also at this time via google news articles were easily accessible, which stated the financial problems and potential bankruptcy of TelDaFax. After the customer's comment was posted, the company explained in a nonchalant manner that Facebook was not the right place to deal with such a topic.

Reaction: Due to this many unhappy customers felt encouraged to share their personal experience with TelDaFax and their struggle to actually contact the company and to receive a reply. The company did reply, but not to give a statement to people's experiences, but to again tell people that the Facebook page was not the right place. What caused an additional outrage, was the plea of TelDaFax to respect the company's aim to talk about fun topics on their fan page. Also people were asked to leave the fan page, if they would not share this intention.

Aftermath: Due to this incident many customers decided to change companies. This was not only because of the feeling of not being cared of, but also because their fears of a potential bankruptcy was not dealt with. Customers were left alone with the threat to be left without an operating energy supplier. TelDaFax is now bankrupt.

Source: http://t3n.de/news/social-media-fails-heute-teldafax-298784/

Date: 01.11.2011

Company: O2

Initial situation: When Matthias Bauer realized that his network coverage and data transfer by O2 has been limited in bigger cities, he contacted the company of O2 but has been assured that this might be caused by temporary disruption and that this was an isolated occurrence. When Bauer heard of other people facing the same struggles he created the website wir-sind-einzelfall.de (meaning: we are isolated occurrences).

Reaction: From the 12th November till the 23rd of November over 8.000 people joined the website created by Bauer and stating that they are facing the same struggles. Due to the sheer amount of unsatisfied customers expressing their dislike, O2 released an official statement on Bauer's website stating that they are currently working on an extension of their network in order to provide broad coverage.

Aftermath: Telekom, a very well-known telecommunication brand in Germany made use of the unhappy O2 customers and tried to acquire them by making special offers. Thus financial loss and a still remaining bad reputation for O2 has been created.

Source: http://t3n.de/news/einzelfall-kunden-wehren-gegen-o2-netzprobleme-343555/

http://t3n.de/news/einzelfall-o2-ubt-kundennahe-telekom-hame-347716/

Date: 18.02.2012

Company: McDonalds

Initial situation: Under the hashtag #McDStories McDonald's wanted to encourage its customers to tweet about their customer experiences at their restaurants. McDonald's itself used the hashtag only twice, e.g.: "Meet some of the hard-working people dedicated to providing Mcds with quality food every day." McDonalds also paid Twitter to have the hashtag promoted on Twitter's front page. However, within one hour the company had to realize that almost all responses were negative. Responses included the most gruesome incidents possible, e.g. 12 rats in the drive-through, plastic fingernail in a burger patty, and a diaper in a Big Mac.

Reaction: No more Tweets using the hashtag #McDStories were send by McDonald's in order to end the campaign earlier than planned. This did not work out, because the hashtag went already viral and was used by many customers to express their personal dislike of certain tastes, negative experiences made, opinion why vegetarians are better and competing firms superior. It appeared as if many haters of McDonald's simply took the chance to tell a negative story about McDonald's due to the fact that the hashtag did not include limitations, but created a negative wave in which users wanted to tell crazier stories than the previous

Aftermath: Since 2012 McDonald's has been a steadily strong company, which did not lack sales due to this event. This might also be due to the fact, that people told such exaggerated stories comparable to urban legends.

Source:http://t3n.de/news/social-media-desaster-mcdonalds-361711/

http://www.forbes.com/sites/kashmirhill/2012/01/24/mcdstories-when-a-hashtag-becomes-a-bashtag/

http://news.distractify.com/fun/fails/30-of-the-most-epic-social-media-fails-ever/

Date: 20.07.2012

Company: Celeb Boutique

Initial situation: On the 20th of July 2012 a shooting in Aurora took place. Aurora is a town in Colorado in the United States of America. During mid-screening of the preview of Batman's the Dark Knight rises, a male shooter, dressed like the villain in previous batman movies, killed 12 people and injured 70 others. The people visiting the theatre first thought of it as a special performance, this is why many did not initially fled, making the number of victims especially high. Colorado has also been well-known and affected through the columbine massacre in 1999. During this day the online shopping platform of Celeb Boutique became aware of the high usage of the hashtag #aurora, which led them to make the following statement:"#Aurora is trending, clearly about our Kim K inspired #Aurora dress ;) Shop: celebboutique.com/aurora_white…" (Twitter @celebboutique).

Reaction: When people started complaining about the Tweet via Facebook and Twitter, it still took one hour for the company to delete the Tweet. Celeb Boutique stated an apology, explaining that the responsible PR agency is not located in the USA. This added fuel to the fire as user expressed their feeling that neither time zone nor location should limit the duty of care.

Aftermath: While trying to conduct crisis management the company unveiled the actual source for outrage. Outsourcing the communication with the customer makes customers feel least appreciated. Due to this a negative effect exposed a way more negative incident, leading to users being outraged and turning their back on this company.

Source: http://t3n.de/news/social-media-marketing-fails-learnings-568908/

Date: 09.08.2012

Company: McDonalds

Initial situation: For the German market McDonalds tried to increase the price of the bestselling cheeseburger from 1 Euro to 1.39 Euro. As no rise in labour costs, ingredient production or any other plausible reason except for greed was available. Costumers took to the McDonalds Facebook fan page to express their dislike.

Reaction: One user posted a comment about his dislike by commenting:" Mark-up? 1,39 for a cheeseburger? What's the point of that? It is the greatest cockiness ever, to charge so much money for such a 'product'...". This comment got 140.000 Likes within a few days.

Aftermath: The sheer outrage stated by costumers prompted McDonalds to post a statement saying that this may only occur to some branches, as McDonalds is a franchise and the company itself can only give price recommendations. However, the price of the cheeseburger has never been increased to 1,39 Euro. Making the social media users win over the global giant McDonalds.

Sources: http://www.shortnews.de/id/976898/mcdonald-s-macht-cheeseburger-teurer-gast-poebelt-bei-facebook?offset=26

http://dieweltpresse.de/mcdonalds-unverschamte-preiserhohung/

Date: 03.10.2012

Company: KitchenAid

Initial situation: During the presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, an employee of the KitchenAid company, who had access to the companies twitter accounted, tweeted: "Obamas gma even knew it was going 2b bad! 'She died 3 days b4 he became president.' ". Apparently referring to Madelyn Dunham the maternal grandmother of Barack Obama, who died on November 2nd 2008, two days before he became the elected president of the United States. His white grandmother raised him from age ten onwards, and had greatly affected his views towards equality.

Reaction: The actual tweet was only accessible for a few minutes before it got deleted. Within 15 minutes the head of KitchenAid, Cynthia Soledad, released an apology on the company's behalf. The tweet published in three parts read:" Hello, everyone. My name is Cynthia Soledad, and I am the head of the KitchenAid brand. I would like to personally apologize to President @Barack Obama, his family and everyone on twitter for the offensive tweet send earlier. It was carelessly send in error by a member of our Twitter team who, needless to say, won't be tweeting for us no more." (Twitter @KitchenAidUSA)

Aftermath: Due to the short amount of time of the tweet being online, only little effect had been done. Also due to the quick and respectful reply made on company purpose, users reacted in an understanding manner. No known harm was done to the brand image.

Source: http://oursocialtimes.com/6-examples-of-social-media-crises-what-can-we-learn/

http://oursocialtimes.com/kitchenaidusa-handling-a-twitter-crisis/

Date: 31.01.2013

Company: HMV

Initial situation: HMV had their Twitter account set up and maintained in-house. When on the 31st of January 2013 the British retailer HMV decided to fire many of his long-term employees, they did not think of those also being responsible for the Twitter account. Thus the entire firing procedure and outcry for help was put online over a period of 20 minutes. The Tweets @hmvtweets read:

- We're tweeting live from HR, where we're all being fired! Exciting!!#hmvXFactorFiring.
- There are over 60 of us being fired at once! Mass execution, of loyal employees who love the brand. #hmvXFactorFiring
- Sorry, we've been quiet for so long – Under contract, we've been unable to say a word, or – more importantly – tell the truth #hmvXFactorFiring
- Just overheard our Marketing Director (he's staying, folks) ask "How do I shut down Twitter?" #hmvXFactorFiring
- Under usual circumstances, we'd never dare do such a thing as this. However, when the company you dearly love is being ruined…
- …and those hard working individuals, who wanted to make hmv great again, have mostly been fired, there seemed no other choice.
- Especially since these accounts were set up by an intern (unpaid, technically illegal) two years ago.

After this, HMV gained control of their Twitter account and deleted all the Tweets, however users had already taken pictures and shared among other social media platforms.

Reaction: As for any mistreatment, the online community was outraged and expressed their dislike by posting. As for deleting the official posts the prior responsible people working at HMV released additional information via their private accounts. Expressing that they were solely responsible for the entire social

media marketing and that HMV never cared about the communication with its customers. Furthermore declared that they handed over the accounts on their own will.

Aftermath: HMV was officially degraded as a Social Media Noob that does not seek contact to its customers online. HMV later released addressed the incident without making someone responsible. This helped to calm down the situation.

Source: http://t3n.de/news/social-media-marketing-fails-learnings-568908/

http://beta.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/4772514/HMV-employee-reveals-mass-sacking-on-twitter.html

Date: 02.02.2013

Company: Applebee's

Initial situation: At Applebee's a costumer is obliged to pay an 18% tip when dining in a group of over 8 people. A St. Louis Pastor named Alois Bell paid this 18% tip, but writing a note on top of the receipt saying:" I give God 10%, why do you get 18%". Based on the fact that the average waitress in St. Louis earns around 3$ an hour plus tip one waitress took a picture of this receipt and posted it online. She got fired by Applebee's stating that her behaviour would harm customer's privacy. There is to say that name of the customer and the location was clearly readable.

Reaction: Customers reading about this incident quickly turned to Applebee's Facebook fan page to make sure the waitress named Chelsea Welsh would get her job back. "Boycott Applebee's" and "Rehire Chelsea Welsh" Facebook groups appeared quickly and numerously. Due to a widget on their website, all recent Twitter tweets were directly stated on the company's website. As a first reaction Applebee's released a statement on their Facebook fan page saying that they wished such a situation had not happened, but… Many users commented on this post negatively. Further on Facebook users pointed out with a picture as proof, that Applebee's itself had beforehand posted a picture of positive note of a customer on a receipt, which wold proof their point in firing Chelsea as redundant. After 17,000 replies to the statement, Applebee's started to reply at 2.53AM, but apparently due to lack of knowledge, just posted further comments rather than a status update. The comment by Applebee's just went more into detail why they are obliged to respond in this way. People now forced Applebee's to post a new status update, because otherwise people are not able to see it. In the meantime Applebee's started to delete posts of users and block users from its site. This of course encouraged people to react more aggressively. Applebee's then changed tactics in tagging people into new its comments, but therefore using the same text over and over again. When users recognized this fact, they again started to negatively comment on the fan page. At this point Applebee's decided to directly start arguing with the users and tagging them in it. At 4.20AM Applebee's finally updated their status, the old status having 19,027 comments and the new one 5,111 comments by 5AM. The next day users realized that the original post with then over 20,000 comments had been deleted, a new outrage broke lose. At this point Applebee's simply said that this was not true. After many users again showed screenshots, and Applebee's simply continued to argue with the users in its comment section.

Aftermath: Many users still use this incident as an example for "How not to do online marketing". Through many posts it also became clear that many users enjoyed the inability of the company. The internet is laughing, and Applebee's is losing. Even though no data is available, many among American users still claim to boycott Applebee's because of this incident.

Sources: http://www.thefranchiseking.com/applebees-restaurant-social-media-fail?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+TheFranchiseKing+%28The+Franchise+King+Blog%29

http://rlstollar.wordpress.com/2013/02/02/applebees-overnight-social-media-meltdown-a-photo-essay/

http://www.nbcnews.com/business/applebees-social-media-faux-pas-learning-experience-1B8251556

http://oursocialtimes.com/6-examples-of-social-media-crises-what-can-we-learn/

http://rlstollar.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/picture-12_2.jpg?w=300&h=59

Date: 15.04.2013

Company: Epicurious.com

Initial situation: On April 15ᵗʰ, 2013 the traditional Boston marathon was interrupted by two pressure cooker bombs exploding. Three people were killed and 264 people injured. A shootout with the terrorist killed two more people and insured 16. The search for both terrorist and potential other hidden bombs, left Boston shocked.

The morning of the bombing Epicurious.com posted the tweet: "Boston, our hearts are with you. Here's a bowl of breakfast energy we could all use to start today." Half an hour later, after the bombing took place, a second post was released, reading:" In honour of Boston and New England, may we suggest: whole-grain cranberry scones!"

Reaction: This incident went largely under the radar due to the seriousness of the terror attack. However, a few users wrote their disgust to the company, so that the company simply deleted its posts, followed by a rather superficial apology, which also got deleted. In the end the company tweeted: "Our food tweets this morning were, frankly, insensitive. Our deepest, sincere apologies"

Aftermath: Beneficial for the company was the severe shock and media coverage of the bombings, due to which their failure went largely unrecognized. However, many users tweeted their disgust and criticised the lack of empathy, which is likely to affect the company's image.

Source: http://news.softpedia.com/news/Epicurious-Is-Really-Sorry-About-Boston-Tweets-Suggesting-Post-Explosions-Recipe-346435.shtml

http://www.mediabistro.com/prnewser/pr-fail-food-website-exploits-boston-tragedy_b63010

Date: 26.04.2013

Company: Abercrombie & Fitch

Initial situation: In 2006 Abercrombie and Fitch CEO Mike Jeffries was interviewed by SALON and stated that he does not want any uncool or fat people wearing his brands clothes. "His brand is "absolutely" "exclusionary" and only "want[s] to market to cool, good-looking people." It wasn't until an interview with Robin Lewis, author of "The New Rules of Retail", which brought media coverage to the statements made by Mike Jeffries and also the fact that the sizing scale of Abercrombie & Fitch does not include XL & XXL sizes.

Reaction: A massive shitstorm broke loose, in which people heavily criticized Abercrombie & Fitch, the CEO Mike Jeffries and Mike Jeffries on a personal level. One user went so far to donate all his clothes by Abercrombie & Fitch to the homeless people and encouraged others to do so, by using the hashtag #FitchTheHomeless. He stated his intention as to give a purposefully "cool" brand to people on the edge of society to teach the CEO a lesson. A video he released on YouTube reached millions of clicks within the first week (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O95DBxnXiSo). This initiative later on created a shitstorm itself by unintentionally degrading the homeless. Within a few days the formerly stable sales of Abercrombie & Fitch dropped to an all-time low.

Aftermath: When sales hit bottom-rock and a general negative attitude toward the brand was large seen among social networks. Mike Jeffries released the following statement: "I want to address some of my comments that have been circulating from a 2006 interview. While I believe this 7 year old, resurrected quote has been taken out of context, I sincerely regret that my choice of words was interpreted in a manner that has caused offense. A&F is an aspirational brand that, like most specialty apparel brands, targets its marketing at a particular segment of customers. However, we care about the broader communities in which we operate and are strongly committed to diversity and inclusion. We hire good people who share these values. We are completely opposed to any discrimination, bullying, derogatory characterizations or other anti-social behaviour based on race, gender, body type or other individual characteristics." (Twitter @JeffriesBoy69)

However, this statement was not well received among the followers.

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/16/abercrombie-fitch-ceo-controversy_n_3286502.html?utm_hp_ref=business

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/16/abercrombie-reputation-ceo-comments_n_3288836.html

http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1142107/original.jpg

http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1142033/original.jpg

Date: 03.06.2013

Company: Taco Bell

Initial situation: A Taco Bell employee had uploaded a picture to his personal Facebook account showing him, licking a staple of fresh tacos. From there on the picture went quickly fast viral.

Reaction: Taco Bell communicated with and responded to its upset customers. Many users expressed their disgust with the picture and questioned the general hygiene. Within 24 hours Taco Bell released an official statement on their website reading:" *What is the Issue? On June 2nd, we learned of a photo circulating online illustrating a Taco Bell restaurant team member violating our food handling procedures with a stack of taco shells.*

Our food handling procedures are strict and we have zero tolerance for any violations. In the spirit of full transparency, we want to inform you of what we know in order to respond to customers' questions on our social media channels. How Did this Happen? The taco shells were used for training in March before we launched a new product, and were in process of being thrown out. Two employees, however, used them to take a photo for an internal contest in which company and franchise employees could submit for approval photos of themselves enjoying their first bite of the product. The contest had clear guidelines about what was acceptable and unacceptable. This image was clearly unacceptable – it violated the rules and spirit of the contest, and the employees never submitted it. But an employee posted it on a personal social media page in violation of the franchisee's policies, and it emerged online in social media. What we did We immediately investigated the situation and learned these facts from our franchisee. We are continuing our investigation and our franchisee is cooperating fully. Our first question was, were the taco shells served to customers? In short, absolutely not. The taco shells were sent to restaurants for training purposes before the new product launch, so team members could use them to practice making the new product before it became available to the public. These shells were a part of that training, were never intended to be served to customers, and were discarded. This is standard operating procedure, and our franchisee confirmed this protocol. What We're Doing We do not believe these employees harmed, or intended to harm, anyone. But we deplore the impressions this has caused to our customers, fans, franchisees, and team members. The behaviour is unacceptable for people working in a restaurant. Our franchisee is responsible for the employment and conduct of his restaurant's employees and he has informed us that he immediately suspended the employee shown in the photo and is in the process of terminating his employment. The employee who took the photo no longer works there. As we complete our investigation we will work with our franchisee to implement any additional action we find appropriate to address this situation and ensure it never happens again." Even though it was a quick and well-written

response, it went under the radar due to the fact, that taco bell posted in on their private, rarely visited homepage, instead of rather posting it directly to Facebook. Taco Bell again directly replied to some users, but of course these comments being quickly vanished into the large number of people commenting. So Taco Bell at some point decided to enable the commenting function on their Facebook fan page.

Aftermath: The two employees involved were fired regarding this incident. Many people stated their general suspicion towards the company, also claiming that this incident would give clear insights of how Taco Bell generally handles food.

Sources: http://www.tacobell.com/Company/newsreleases/Statement_Regarding_Prank_Photo

http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/taco-bell-firing-worker-licked-shells-article-1.1363678

http://agnesday.com/taco-bells-social-media-crisis-communications-fail/

Date: 06.11.2013

Company: JP Morgan Bank

Initial situation: There is to say that the US bank JP Morgan had to face some severe legal readjustments. The company had been accused of bribery in Asia, close connections to the Ponzi scheme, multiple mortgage-related scandals and two employees tried to cover up a record-breaking trade loss. However, on November 6ᵗʰ JP Morgan send out a tweet that the company would host its first Q&A on twitter on November 14ᵗʰ, in which everyone was welcomed to ask questions on leadership and career advice using the hashtag #AskJPM.

Reaction: Within 24 hours 18,669 tweets (using the hashtag) replied to the original post, but not in a manner hoped for by JP Morgan. Instead Twitter users mainly criticised JP Morgan for its ethics.

- *Does the sleaze wash off with a regular shower, or do you have to use something special like babies tears? #AskJPM*

- *I have Mortgage Fraud, Market Manipulation, Credit Card Abuse, Libor Rigging and Predatory Lending. Am I diversified? #AskJPM*

- *Did you have a specific number of people's lives you needed to ruin before you considered your business model a success? #AskJPM*

- *When Jamie Dimon eats babies are they served rare? I understand anything above medium-rare is considered gauche. #AskJPM*

- *Do you have a secret jail in your offices so your executives get at least one chance to see the inside of one? #AskJPM*

- *What's the best way to get blood stains out of a clown suit? #AskJPM*

- *What's it like working with Mexican drug cartels? Do they tip? #AskJPM*

- *Do your clothes fit better since you don't have the added weight of a soul? #AskJPM*

- *Can I have my house back? #AskJPM*

Aftermath: JP Morgan expressed a cancellation of the Q&A via Twitter, stating:" Tomorrow's Q&A is cancelled. Bad Idea. Back to the drawing board."

Source: http://thefinancialbrand.com/35532/8-lessons-from-jpmorgan-twitter-disaster/ http://www.zeit.de/wirtschaft/unternehmen/2013-11/jpmorgan-twitter?utm_source=twitter_all

Date: 09.11.2013

Company: Kellogg's UK

Initial situation: in order to generate a large number of retweets, Kellogg's posted the following statement via the companies twitter count:"1RT = 1 breakfast for a vulnerable child"

Reaction: followers of Kellogg's UK reacted angrily and alleged the company to cash-in on the misfortune of others, instead of helping those directly. Also, users felt offended by the implication that not retweeting would mean that children would suffer due to user's behaviour.

http://www.basicthinking.de/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/kelloggs_reaktionen.jpg

Aftermath: Kellogg's UK apologized via a twitter statement, in which they stated their general supporting for disadvantaged children. Saying that: "We want to apologise for the recent tweet, wrong use of words. It's deleted. We give funding to school breakfast clubs in vulnerable areas."

Source: http://www.basicthinking.de/blog/2013/11/11/kelloggs-im-shitstorm-wieso-social-media-marketing-ein-schmaler-grat-ist-und-worauf-es-wirklich-ankommt-ein-leitfaden/

Date: 10.12.2013

Company: Jung von Matt

Initial Situation: The social media marketing agency Jung von Matt made a post on their Facebook page about the upcoming Christmas party including a rather inappropriate picture. The picture showed a blurred snap shot onto a woman's cleavage, with the heading: styling inspiration for the ladies. What was meant as a creative approach aiming at much drinking and potential flirting at company parties backfired.

Reaction: The users accused the social media agency of using inappropriate pictures for a joke and thus being sexist. One Twitter user said: As creative as a pot-bellied sex tourist on his way to Thailand. The company reacted quickly by deleting the picture and releasing an apology. It was stated that the responsible social media editorial entirely consisted of female employees and they found the outfit rather strange than sexist.

Aftermath: As a general rule one can learn that gender does not limit the effects on sexism. For the company itself, the apology was well-received and quickly the shitstorm ended.

Source: http://t3n.de/news/social-media-marketing-fails-learnings-568908/

Date: 14.02.2014

Company: Vapiano

Initial situation: A video of a customer of a Vapiano restaurant was uploaded to YouTube, showing a living caterpillar in his salad. A customer of Vapiano then posted this video onto their Facebook page.

Reaction: Vapiano posted the video on their Facebook fan page with the appeal to find out who the customer was and at which branch this took place. Additionally they made the joke that they know that their food is known for their freshness, but that this is a bit too fresh and that they will do anything necessary to prevent such an incident from ever happening again. Vapiano also offered a personal apology to the customer affected. At some point the users started to criticise the behaviour of the customer by turning the entire event into a hashtag, namely #procaterpillar.

Aftermath: No harm has been done to the reputation, furthermore it created a hype concerning the company.

Source: **http://meedia.de/2014/02/26/raupen-alarm-wie-vapiano-einen-shitstorm-verhinderte/**

http://www.business-on.de/koeln-bonn/facebook-shitstorms-_id37501.html

Date: 11.04.2014

Company: Veet

Initial situation: The company Veet is well-known for its waxing and depilation systems. Thus they made a television spot, showing to men lying in bed, while the beardy man in a pink dress claiming that he had shaved himself just yesterday. He makes this expression in a very shameful manner. Accompanied by the slogan advertising their new waxing strips:" To feel feminine all around the clock".

Reaction: Women all around the world said that they feel insulted by this advertising due to its sexist nature. They claimed that it would degrade females o just having to look perfect and function to a man's opinion.

Aftermath: Veet decided to post an apology on their social media fan page and explained that they will no longer screen the TV spot if women feel insulted by it.

Source: **http://www.wuv.de/digital/sexismus_shitstorm_veet_zieht_kampagne_zurueck**

http://www.business-on.de/koeln-bonn/facebook-shitstorms-_id37501.html

Date: 01.07.2014

Company: L'Oreal

Initial situation: During the World Cup 2014 a Belgium Fan girl named Axelle Despiegelaere caught the attention of people viewing the World Cup worldwide. She was dressed in Belgium colours and had small devil horns and a mischievous smile on her lips. She instantly became a symbol for the World Cup. Thus L'Oreal approached the Belgium student and asked her to be new face of the company by giving her a model contract. After signing the contract and making a video spot, Despiegelaere became an online sensation. However, when she posted a picture of her killing an Oryx while being on safari and being proud of being a passionate hunter, a shitstorm broke loose.

Reaction: On social media platforms many people and animal activists asked to boycott everything what Despiegelaere stands for. She became the representative for the ever continuing fight between hunter and animal activists.

Aftermath: L'Oreal dropped all contracts with Despiegelaere and thus made clear that they do not want to be affiliated with. Despiegelaere from this point on tried to stay away from the spotlight.

Date: 27.08.14

Company: ZARA

Initial situation: In three countries ZARA launched through it online store a children's shirt, which was described as a sheriff's shirt. However it had striking resemblance to the uniform worn by Jews in the concentration camp during WWII.

Reaction: The online introduction of this children's shirt created an outrage among Jews and none-Jews. Manly simply finding it disrespectful by the company. For example, Haaretz, an Israeli and Jewish newspaper questioned among many others ZARA's motivation for the shirt. "What were they thinking? @**ZARA** markets tops evoking concentration camp uniforms"(Twitter @Haaretzcom)

Aftermath: ZARA offered an apology via Twitter and immediately stopped the online sale of the kids' shirt. Furthermore, it was made clear that all remaining shirts will be destroyed and Inditex, the mother company of ZARA, stated the following on their website: "Inditex would like to reiterate its utmost respect for all cultures and religions. The Group is a Company where people from 180 nationalities work together representing all the cultures, races and religions of the modern world. Inditex is proud of its cultural diversity. In addition, respect and dignity feature among the principles which guide and define its corporate values. The Group condemns and rejects any form of discrimination." (Twitter @indietexgroup). However, it wasn't the first time that ZARA launched politically incorrect fashion items, e.g. a swastika on handbags, which were, due to this incident, brought out into the users' minds.

Source: http://www.zeit.de/wirtschaft/unternehmen/2014-08/zara-modekette-tshirt-judenstern#

http://www.handelszeitung.ch/unternehmen/sheriff-oder-kz-gefangener-zara-im-shitstorm-658873

http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/27/living/zara-pulls-sheriff-star-shirt/index.html?hpt=hp_c4

Date: 08.09.2014

Company: DiGiorno Pizza

Initial situation: During September 2014 the twitter community used the two hashtags #whyistayed and #whyileft to talk about domestic violence. The pizza company used the hashtag #whyistayed to promote their pizza saying:"#WhyIStayed You had Pizza." This playful tweet was received as very insensitive among other Twitter users, creating a quickly increasing disapproval.

Reaction: DiGiorno's was quickly to react to create a general apology in the name of the general management and also personally reacting upon tweets, e.g. writing:" A million apologies. Did not read what the hashtag was about before posting." (Twitter @DiGiornoPizza)

Aftermath: Due to the quick apology by the company and also explaining about why they made the mistake, was positively and well-received among users. For example: "@**DiGiornoPizza** thanks. I figured you knew better than that. Definitely forgiven." (Twitter @flipflops) or "Well, you have to give it to DiGiorno pizza guy, he's apologizing like nobody's business after his gaffe." (Twitter @ **hbecerraLATimes**) Furthermore, the person tweeting via the Twitter account of DiGiorno took effort into personally addressing many Twitter users, who felt offended and offered them a personalised apology, which again was well-received.

Source: **http://t3n.de/news/social-media-marketing-fails-learnings-568908/**

http://time.com/3308861/digiorno-social-media-pizza/

Date: 21.10.2014

Company: SkyGo

Initial situation: SkyGo is one of the world's most known Pay-tv provider. On average customers pay 25Euro per month to be enabled to watch special football matches or new cinema movies. During the champions League game of FC Bayern München against Rome the broadcast of the game first wen blurry and finally collapsed, showing a black screen for minutes.

Reaction: Many fans of FC Bayern München took to Twitter and complained about how their money is being wasted. Also famous actors like Elias M'Barek, one of Germany's most sought-after new comers, expressed his dislike of the company. SkyGo released a statement claiming that they suffered from technical issues. This however did not calm the shitstorm and people still continued to pot their disappointment and anger about SkyGo

Aftermath: An incident like this has happened before, therefore many people tried to sue SkyGo to get their money back or to end their contract. SkyGo did not react upon these expressions made by its customers.

Source: http://www.tagesspiegel.de/medien/schwarzer-bildschirm-bei-champions-league-shitstorm-ueber-sky-go/10872040.html

http://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/inhalt.champions-league-uebertragung-shitstorm-auf-twitter-sky-go-faellt-erneut-aus.3f9b22bd-9e70-4867-83f0-8e49fe0a87d5.html

http://www.business-on.de/koeln-bonn/facebook-shitstorms-_id37501.html