Kowalski Sławomir,
Ph.D., assistant professor of Departament of Marketing
at Technical University of Częstochowa (Częstochowa, Poland)

THE COMMUNICATIONS MODEL OF USING SOCIAL NETWORK BY SPORTS CLUBS

This article presents a model of marketing communications using social network by sports clubs. It presents the links between the sports club and its environment and uses of the Internet to promote it. The model of communication is composed of the elements responsible for the success of marketing in the web. Article also includes recommendations for using the model in practice.
Keywords: marketing communications, Internet, Internet marketing, social networking, marketing in sport.

Formulation of the problem generally about communication process. The word "communication" comes from the latin words: *communicato* and *communicare*, it means the transfer of information. As a rule, it means two-way flow of information [10, p. 17]. The definition that captures the essence of the word communication best is that communication is a process by which individuals, groups or institutions communicate with each other. Its purpose is to exchange thoughts, ideas, but also to share knowledge, information and ideas. Communication process takes place at different levels, using a variety of measures, and has certain effects [3, p. 13]. Other definitions used in literature, define communication as:

− transmission of certain information in a very wide sense of the term (understood as the transmission of communication information);

− the process by which we understand other people and we also try to communicate in an unambiguous way (communicating perceived as understanding);

− mutual influence through various media (as communication interaction);

− the process of combining discrete parts of the environment (communication as a merger, forming a community);

− social interaction with certain symbols (communication as the interaction);

− exchange of views between people, which depends on the degree of shared perceptions, desires and attitudes (communication as an exchange);

− act by which group norms are expressed, is achieved coordination of efforts, the expectations are disclosed, social control is exercised, shall be assigned to roles, and is transmitted to a social process (communication as a component of a social process) [4, p. 12].

Although the above definitions are different from each other, it suggests that communication is a very important part of life. Everyone communicates: individuals, organizations, institutions, enterprises. This process can communicate important messages, share insights, ideas, transfer of ideas and views.

Communication can take the form of one-sided communication (unidirectional) or bilateral (bidirectional). In the case of unilateral communication information flows only from the sender to the recipient. The sender does not know whether he sent the message was received, and we do not consider the interpretation of the message by the sender. As to the two-way communication, information flow from both sides, i.e. from sender to recipient and from recipient to sender. Sender of the message interests that the message reached the recipient, and

was properly interpreted by him. The recipient also does not remain passive, but the sender sends a feedback on the message [2, p. 105]. This phenomenon is called negative feedback, which is the last act of communication. These are the reactions of customers that go to the source media or to the sender. They can be used to modify certain aspects of the possible communication [1, p. 67]. Let's note that the feedback makes the process of communication effective. The company knows the audience reaction to a message sent and reacts in a proper way.

Communication is often defined as a set of information (signals), which the company produces from a variety of sources, not only towards its customers, but also other entities marketing environment (suppliers, intermediaries, competitors, opinion leaders, etc.), and a set of information that company collects from the market (mega trends, needs and preferences of customers, economic development trends, etc.) [11, p. 273].

In practice, this means the dialogue between the company and the market. According to another definition, marketing communication is a process of information, which is implemented in the company and the company in its market environment [12, p. 11]. Another author shows marketing communication as public relations, designed to meet the needs through the market offer a wide sense, the product offering that is available to the company [6, p. 15]. This definition shows the fact that the company communicates with the environment mainly in order to inform about what has to offer, or what products fall within the scope of sales, for their current and potential customers and for the whole marketing environment. Also expected to respond to this message, and therefore the information or by the public offer was accepted or rejected.

In the literature there are many other concepts defining what promotion is. Stressing the essence of two-way nature of the activities of marketing communication companies, T. Kramer says that "the promotion [...] is to ensure the flow of information from the company – dealers – consumers and consumers – brokers – the company" [7, p. 153]. The company communicates not only with customers but the whole marketing environment.

According to some authors, the promotion can be defined also as a marketing communication policy or policies of the enterprise communication market. It forms an integral part of the marketing mix and cover the whole set of measures and activities by which a company communicates information about a product market and the company, formed for the buyers, activates and directs its demand and price elasticity decreases. It can be said that the company communicates with the market in order to induce the intended response (behavior and attitudes) from potential customers. Buyers and communicate with the company by accepting or denying (or rejection) of its marketing policy, which is the range of products along with the level of prices, availability in certain areas of sales and promotional campaign supported [5, p. 17-49].

A similar approach to promotion (promotion of the dialogue) E. Michalski presents, according to which promotion is to communicate with the buyers of the company with mutually given information to facilitate the exchange of the product. The company through promotion inform buyers where and at what price can their products may be bought. Price has to be seen by potential buyers as one that corresponds to the actual value of the product. It is obvious that if the manufacturer offers a good product, then the whole process of communication with clients is becoming more efficient. In addition, the promotion is to educate customers not only what products can be purchased on the market, but also who is offering them, or who the sender of the promotional media. Promotion should also promote and justify the existence of the company and create a positive image in the environment

[8, p. 299], that really should contribute to achieving the main objectives of the company. If the business objectives are clearly defined it is much easier to check if the promotion is effective in achieving them.

The purpose of this article is to develop the model of communication process which works through a social networking sites and is adopted for using in practice by sports clubs for their success in marketing in the web.

Analysis of recent researches and publications concern social networks. A man is a social being. He is looking above all contact with other people and groups and communities with whom to identify. Thanks to the development of new Internet technologies he realizes the above mentioned needs and desires is much easier and less complicated than before. Making new friends and creating a modern networks is increasingly moving to the virtual world. The desire to continuously communicate and meet new people through virtual reality, led the online discussion forums were founded, which later evolved into a modern social networking sites that are currently the most popular form of integration between people. In today's world the rush caused a rapid way of life caused that people communicate using the messaging tools that were listed above.

Currently, social networks are a primary part of the entertainment media, which provides Internet communication. Today it is difficult to identify even one surfer, who has not participated in the online community yet. But opinions as to adjust to the particular type existing in the Internet community is heavily divided. Some declare totally negative attitude to this kind of community. However, very often happens that they, not being aware of it, often take part in the phenomenon of creating online communities.

Recently, a multitude of social networking has become a huge asset for Internet communication, because this type of "messaging" that can be easily found makes the user to specify their expectations. Social networking sites also fulfill another important function. First of all, they create the freedom of the Internet and are available in virtually any form, which makes their popularity continues to grow and become a dynamic development. It should pay particular attention to the very origins of social networks, because it's not hard to see that very often the first online communities were created by accident.

Some time has had to pass since people paid attention to the enormous opportunities offered to influence the psychology of the individual groups on the Internet. After many years of evolution social networking sites have become the drivers of online advertising that is now a huge part of the whole advertisement, with which we have today to deal with. Ideas for communicating with other users on the network have been taken at its beginning.

One of the first services were e-mail. Other way was the Usenet, BBS or EIES. However, these were the only substitutes because they are mostly confined to a specific group of customers or students and scientists, the technical solutions, was also low. Everything changed, however, with the rise of Web sites. The first portals, which can be regarded as a community were Theglobe.com, Geocities, which arose in 1994 and Tripod.com of 1995.

The first of these made division in chat channels. The second created a virtual city where users could post their own Web sites, and the last allowed help from others when creating websites. In 1999, there were two completely new kinds of online communities. They were Epinions.com, where you could create a group with only the friends and created by Jonathan community in 1999-2001, which gave the possibility of keeping in contact with friends. Innovations included the possibility of determining who with whom maintains contacts and enhanced user interactivity in terms of content and attaching friends. Further innovations have begun to focus mainly on adding new services and opportunities to connect them with

different services. Examples of such services were able to add applications created outside the portal, or a function to create graphical maps of your contacts. The focus was mainly on this, allowing users to integrate them with the same sending a virtual gift, for which we had to still pay real money, or play together in simple applications such as farmers.

Networks of this type were built in different countries. Polish tycoon are above all: nasza-klasa.pl, facebook and twitter [15].

The appearance of the first social networking dates back to 1995. Then the first Internet services were created. They allowed contact with colleagues and her friends from school. Similar model which is popular in Poland is nasza-klasa.pl. It has become the driving force that largely contributed for creating online communities.

This service enabled the user to create their own profile, send messages to people from their "friends list" and search among the remaining members of people with similar interests and views. The success of this social networking site, started to create portals that were directed to almost every social group, starting with former prisoners, and ending with the artists who can showcase their skills in front of a creative artistic community. Classmates.com service exists today, and ranks third in terms of number of users in the U.S. and Canada [13].

Portal nasza-klasa.pl was created on 11 November 2006. The creator of the portal is a computer science student Maciej Popowicz. The basic and yet our main portal destination is to stay in contact with friends from school years and the renewal of friendship which had been forgotten. The portal www.nasza-klasa.pl database is available to all schools in Poland, and thus each school has its own sub, which allows reactivation of a virtual class to which the user belongs. That service in a very short time, gained enormous popularity among polish Internet users.

By providing a function which allows to check which of our contact lists, instant messaging such as MSN Messenger or Skype is already registered nasza-klasa.pl portal users can learn about "friends of friends" and thus widen their ring of colleagues and friends. Number of users of the portal garments grew at a rapid pace. Portal in less than two months had the largest social network in Poland.

Facebook as a social networking site is a leader in the field of social networks. The author is Mark Zuckerberg, who founded it as a student in 2004. He was only 20 years old. Currently registered on this site has more than half a million users. It is estimated that Facebook is worth $ 25 billion. 23-year-old founder of the portal in March 2008 became the youngest billionaire in the world. Facebook was started February 4, 2004 at Cambridge, Massachusetts. At first site was intended primarily for secondary school and university students. The word "facebook" is a brochure, in which university students show pictures of the year. Social network Facebook has many standard features that are present in other sites such as: photo albums, blog, address book, list of friends, groups, block users or the internal mail. This service is currently the most popular social networking site. Facebook has its own platform for web applications, so users can write your own program and share it with others. This platform also allows external programs to communicate with Facebook. Many websites offer the possibility of "connecting" with your account name and password Facebook. Facebook Portal also lived to see on the big screen. In October 2010, a movie was created. It was called "The Social Network", which presents the history of Facebook and its founder [15].

Twitter is another social networking site founded March 2006. This is a free community service that provides a so-called microblogging service. This service allows users to send and the reading of the so-called tweets. Tweet is a short, not exceeding 140 characters text message that is displayed on your site and delivered to other users who are watching the

profile. In this way, users of this site can add a short message to your profile from the main service, for example, sending SMS or by using with external applications. Initially, the portal was to bear the name and make Twttr so popular in the U.S. to Flickr, which is used to upload photos.

However, it was changed into Twitter. Sending a message is possible not only by the interface at Twitter, but also by a specially designed program called Twitterrific, and via instant messaging, and even by SMS text messages. Users have the option of having their "circles of friends" that they can share their entries. They also allow the use of their entries to any other interested user. Entries can be sent to your friends similar channels, which is adding so-called notes, which among others is through SMS. In other words, it is a way of informing the world what the user is currently doing.

Basic materials about selection of outstanding issues in communication using social networks. Marketing communications using social networking can take place at several levels. Sports club, as a company with a commercial targets, should proceed in a manner consistent with their assumptions. On one hand, a social network can be treated as a form of passive advertising, on the other – as the active form of engaging current and potential buyers of sport products.

Both of these forms require synergy with other tools to promote the club and events organized by it and to be an efficient system of marketing communication. In the process of communication between the club and its stakeholders the following entities can be distinguished:

1. Sports club, as a company and the entity organizing the event.
2. Present fans, who are interested in the club and follow it on a regular basis.
3. Potential supporters who may be participants in the events organized by the club.
4. Present sponsors, who are already promoting by the sport.
5. Potential sponsors, as entities interested in promoting the sport in the future.
6. The local community which is not interested in news, but issuing an opinion on its local activities.
7. Local authorities which in the interest of the community and because of the duties should be actively involved in the communication process.
8. Institutions, offices, public services are crucial sports event organization and functioning of the club, such as: Inland Revenue, Police, Social Security, Fire Service, the commercial banks etc.
9. Local media and those with a broader scope.

All of these entities should be interested in information from sports club. All of these affect the overall image of the club, its revenues, financial stability, security events, positive atmosphere that affects the behavior of supporting and sponsoring club. With the current importance of networks in the communication process there is a very important role of the using this tool by a club. Club is regarded as a quasi-commercial business. Although its function is not only to generate profits, but its sound financial condition affects the performance of the functions of social security. In an emergency, the club has financial difficulties in their implementation. It is also largely dependent on the decisions of local authorities and other entities.

Unlike other commercial companies is the perception of a sports club in the local community. In this case, in assessing the club counts its social functions, local patriotism, devotion to color, and thus a higher propensity to volunteer. Social networking site should be for any company (including also the sports club), a form of communication with the

environment based on social ties. Club plays in the role of the maker of sports events and any actions related to itself or to the event. It presented a communication process with the social network can be as follows. Communication model of sports club through a social networking page should contain the following elements (figure 1):

1. Sports club as the sender of information.
2. Social network page as a medium of information.
3. Interference in communication.
4. Information.
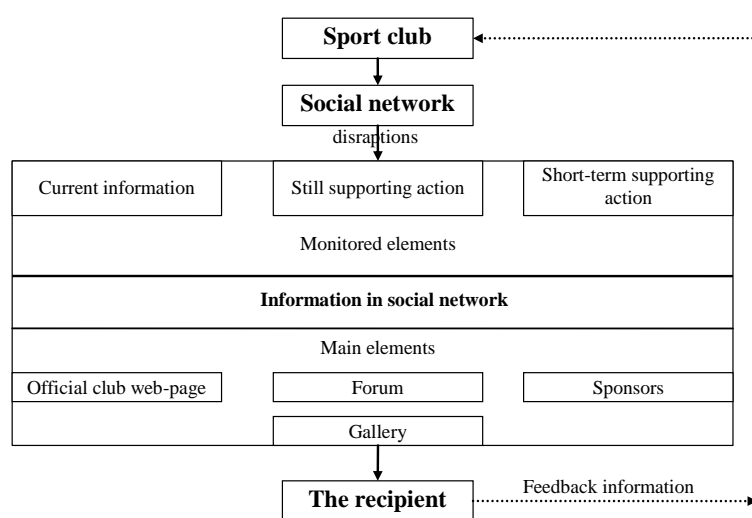5. The recipient of information or stakeholder.
6. Feedback.

Figure 1 – **Model of communication process through a social networking site**

Sports club as the sender of information should make every effort to ensure that the portal site was continuously monitored and updated. Depending on what possibilities lie in a particular social networking site, the club as an entity has to decide which options to use. This depends entirely on whether the options offered by the portal meet the communication objectives.

Social network as a medium of information (in a wider perspective) is not interested to create a product ideally suited for firm needs. As a commercial venture gives only the benefit of certain options. It's depends on what will be its useful, to what extent and in what form.

The communication process is undesirable element of distortion. They result from many reasons. In this case, these causes are dependent and independent of the sports club.

For the reasons attributable to include: accumulation of information, poorly chosen page graphics, lack of monitoring page and associated problems (such as extremely negative comments, not updated the page), lack of a link to your site with the site (plugins).

For reasons beyond the control of the club are: too much information on the web, personal factors (boredom portal), little activity on the site, site constraints, declining popularity, no fan account on the portal.

Information content on the portal of your account depends on the sender and the possibility of the portal. Items that should be found can be divided into two groups: the components are constant monitoring, and basic elements of a permanent nature. Social networking page allows contact with stakeholders. An important feature of this contact is to use viral marketing principles by which individual people communicate about events organized by the club. It is a form free of charge, but requires a commitment from the club in creating media attractive to customers.

This message must remain in the consciousness and force them to react. The elements of a constant monitoring include current information, stocks and shares of permanent supportive short-term support.

Current information in relation to the sports club on athletic performance and planned events, sports meetings, meetings with supporters, meeting with the press, open meetings with sponsors, charitable events, actions carried out by the club, public information related to the players, coaches, activists. Their placement on the social network is a form of information about what is happening in the club and its immediate surroundings.

In this case the community portal is to replicate the official website of the club. The assumption of such actions is that not every person visits the site of the club, and information on social networking sites are added automatically on a public website. Features like "I like it" spread the additional information to others. In this way the information is reproduced and transmitted.

Still supporting actions have to stop the customer (fan) for longer. They are most commonly associated with the promotion of complementary and image activities. These include for example: stocks, photo, vote for the best athlete in a specific area, actions for young fans, family shares.

Short-term supporting actions have short duration. Their goal is to fast, one-time sale or short-term branding effect. These include: charities, one-time actions to help those in need, local activities, supporting local patriotism and loyalty to the club.

Both forms of assistive shares as much as possible should take advantage of opportunities given to the specified portal. Most shares are made available for the official party, which sends the public.

An equally important aspect is the constant monitoring and updating information related to this bloc actions.

Depending on the social network there should also be the basic information on the page. They are constant and rarely changed or they needs to be updated, but without the need for monitoring. These fixed elements are links to the club's official website, a link to the club forum, links or the gallery of sponsors signs. For items of variables included in their own gallery.

All information should go to customers or other institutions. Sports club for their part should ensure that this information was attractive and provided the basis for viral marketing.

Communication is a two-way process. The sender shall transmit the information, the recipient responds to it. The difference between this process in other media and social networks is the lack of coding information and replace it on the system summary for the perceptual requirements of the recipient. Clubs should also determine how it will examine the effects of communication, quality of feedback and impact on sales.

In the marketing of sport using of the Internet is common. Almost every club has its own web site, forum, and sometimes official and unofficial fan clubs. Social networking sites are also part of the club to communicate with the environment, but often their role is limited to

passive transmission of information. This is often dictated by the possibilities of the site, but also due to a lack of information about the benefits of more active use of the portal.

Meanwhile, simple applications in portals may favorably affect both the sales and the image of the club.

Conclusions and directions about practical implications of the communication process through a social networking site. The purpose of the use of social networking site for the club is making interest in the surrounding. That's why the club should transfer the information on the Internet. On the www.facebook.com/RakowCzestochowa a typical layout of the portal using facebook.com. is presented. Among the elements of the communication system can be seen current information, comments, links to clubs and contact information. In addition the information imposed by the portal here depends largely on the club.

There is lack of current and short-term actions, sponsors visibility, expanded galleries on the page. The website is overloaded with meaningless information. The page does not encourage a person to stay on it and share information with others. A person who is here for the first time does not really know what is the Rakow Czestochowa, does not see the players does not know the people talking about links. Two-column, uniform layout makes the internet user not able to focus attention on specific information. There is no clear chronology preserved which also causes confusion. The result is that the party does not fulfill its function of communication, and ultimately promotion. For this reason, we can not examine the effects of actions.

Among the elements that should be corrected is a clearer separation of information from the club information. Sent by Internet users.

Other recommended changes include:
− development of galleries and divide it into a permanent gallery (the team) and variable (news, match photos, charities);
− introducing a two-column layout a clear distinction between club and personal information (including information portal);
− the introduction of the chronology of events, and delete information prior to the month and older which do not belong to the action of solid support;
− the introduction of color on the page (images, background);
− care for the quality of the photos, videos;
− introducing thematic categories on the basis of portal galleries;
− introducing a clearer logo;
− the introduction of sub-events.

All possible changes should be corrected.

Generally, in such a process of communication the important is to create a transparent and understandable page for to a potential client. It should be encouraging to sport service. Communication is effective when the recipients themselves are involved in this process. It is important to be distinctive among information within Internet.

1. Aaker D. Koordynacja działalności przedsiębiorstw / D. Aaker. – Warszawa : Wolters Kluwer Polska, 2010. – P. 67.
2. Baylon Ch. Komunikacja / Ch. Baylon, X. Mignot. – Kraków : Wydawnictwo Flair, 2000. – P. 105.
3. Dobek-Ostrowska B. Podstawy komunikowania społecznego / B. Dobek-Ostrowska. – Wrocław : Astrum, 2002 . – P. 13.
4. Drzazga M. Systemy promocji przedsiębiorstw / M. Drzazga. – Warszawa : PWE, 2006. – P. 12.

5. Filarski K. Komunikacja w organizacji / K. Filarski. – Warszawa : WSZP, 2004. – P. 47-49.

6. Komunikacja marketingowa. Instrumenty i metody, praca zbiorowa / Pod red. B. Szymoniuk. – Warszawa : PWE, 2006. – P.15.

7. Kramer T. Podstawy marketingu / T. Kramer. – Warszawa : PWE, 2000. – P. 153.

8. Michalski E. Marketing Podręcznik Akademicki / E. Michalski. – Warszawa : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2007. – P. 299.

9. Pilarczyk B. Reklama jako narzędzie komunikacji masowej / B. Pilarczyk // Komunikowanie się w marketingu, praca zbiorowa pod red. H. Mruka. – Warszawa : PWE, 2004. – P. 17.

10. Solomon M. Zachowania i zwyczaje konsumentów / M. Solomon. – Gliwice. – Wydawnictwo Helion, 2006. – P. 273.

11. Wiktor J.W. Promocja. System komunikacji przedsiębiorstwa z rynkiem / J.W. Wiktor. – Warszawa : Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, 2006. – P. 11.

12. Początki portali i serwisów społecznościowych [Electronic resource]. – Access mode: www.efnetica.pl/artykuly/serwisy_spolecznosciowe/82/artykul/92.

13. Raków Częstochowa [Electronic resource]. – Access mode: www.facebook.com/ RakowCzestochowa.

14. Wszystko o Internecie [Electronic resource]. – Access mode: www.internetum.blox.pl/2010/11/ Historia-Internetu-cz32.html.

С. Ковальські

Комунікаційна модель використання соціальних мереж спортивними клубами

У статті представлена модель маркетингових комунікаці з використанням соціальних мереж спортивними клубами. Вона показує зв'язок між спортивним клубом і його оточенням, а також напрямки використання Інтернету з метою просування спортивного клубу. Модель комунікації складається з елементів, що відповідають за успішність маркетингу в Інтернеті. У статты також містяться рекомендації щодо використання моделі на практиці.

Ключові слова: маркетингові комунікації, Інтернет, Інтернет-маркетинг, соціальні мережі, маркетинг в спорті.

С. Ковальски

Коммуникационная модель использования социальных сетей спортивными клубами

В статье представлена модель маркетинговых коммуникаций с использованием социальных сетей спортивными клубами. Она показывает связь между спортивным клубом и его окружением, а также направления использования Интернета для продвижения спортивного клуба. Модель коммуникации состоит из элементов, отвечающих за успешность маркетинга в Интернете. В статье также содержатся рекомендации по использованию модели на практике.

Ключевые слова: маркетинговые коммуникации, Интернет, Интернет-маркетинг, социальные сети, маркетинг в спорте.