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Promotion of taxi services in Paphos via social media. The case study of the þÿcompany ChristosTaxi Faceb

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SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, BUSINESS, AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Promotion of taxi services in Paphos via social media. The case study of the company "ChristosTaxi" Facebook Page.

Daria Wojcicka

January 2022

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Dissertation which was submitted for obtaining a distance postgraduate degree in Digital Marketing at Neapolis University

Daria Wojcicka

January 2022

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DECLARATION

I, Daria Wojcicka, being fully aware of the consequences of plagiarism, declare responsibly that this paper entitled “Promotion of taxi services in Paphos via social media. The case study of the company “ChristosTaxi” Facebook Page.”, is strictly a product of my own personal work and all sources used have been duly stated in the bibliographic citations and references. Where I have used ideas, text and/or sources of other authors, they are clearly mentioned in the text with the appropriate citation and the relevant reference is included in the bibliographic references section with a full description.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines practices of promoting taxi services in Paphos via social media, with particular emphasis on Facebook. The type of research that the author conducted is qualitative research. Gathered data has been analyzed utilizing thematic analysis. The answer to the main research question “How to promote taxi services in Paphos via social media (Facebook) is significant as in Cyprus promoting taxi services via social media is not very

popular.

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ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
- increase brand awareness	- intense competition
- reach larger audience	- necessity to follow the latest trends & techniques
- possibility to evaluate performance	- necessity to promote creatively and consistently
- learn about competitors	-possibility of receiving negative feedback
- brand building	- potential for embarrassment in case of misunderstanding hashtags
-direct connection with audience	- time consuming (campaigns, posts)
- access to paid advertising services	- wasted time and money if not successful
- ability to target particular groups	

Table 2 *Codes* p.37

INTERVIEW EXTRACT	**CODES**
I don't care, I don't check it unless I see something that is interesting to me. It doesn't matter to me how the advert is done, or presented, if I'm interested in the	-unconcerned -change of attitude - attention - does not matter how the advert

advertised product or service then, I click on the advert to see it.	looks if interested in a product/ service

Table 3 *Themes* p. 37

CODES	THEMES
-unconcerned -lack of interest -neutral -unbothered - does not care	-neutrality
-change of attitude -change of mind - reconsider - second thoughts	-change of mind
-attention -interesting -eye catching -curious - bored, thus checks out of boredom	- curiosity
- does not matter how the advert looks if interested in a product/ service - looking for a product/ service - want a product/ service anyway	- interested because was looking for a product/ service earlier
-annoyed by all adverts -annoyed by adverts if does not look for anything - irritated by pushy adverts - annoyed, cuz ends up buying something that is not needed	- annoyed overall but also annoyed can if advert is not in area of interest

Table 4 *Demographic details of respondents* p. 39

GENDER	
Male	9 persons
Female	3 persons
AGE	
18-30	4 persons
31-45	8 persons
NATIONALITY	
Polish	2 persons
Cypriots	3 persons
English	3 persons
Scottish	2 persons
Russians	1 person
Swedish	1 person
OCCUPATION	
Entrepreneur	3 persons
account manager	2 persons
Accountant	2 persons
Driver	1 person
physical worker	3 persons
Pediatrician	1 person
EDUCATION	

secondary education (high school)	1 person
higher education	11 persons
STATUS	
single	7 persons
married	5 persons
PLACE OF LIVING	
Cyprus (Paphos)	3 persons
UK (Bristol, London, Manchester, Leeds, Coventry, and Cambridge)	6 persons
Poland (Zabrze, Katowice)	3 persons

1. Introduction

"ChristosTaxi" is a company that has offered taxi services in Paphos in Cyprus for 20 years. They know Cyprus topography very well, especially Paphos. The firm wants to promote their services online using Facebook, as nowadays social media play a huge role if a company wishes to promote their products or services. Undeniably Facebook becomes one of the easiest ways to reach potential customers.

What is important to mention is the fact that in Cyprus taxi jobs are limited throughout the year. Most taxi clients are tourists who come here for holidays usually between May and October. Therefore, during the off- season there are not many jobs for taxi drivers. This is the reason why the company wants to take advantage of social media, and use them for

promotion to get customers during the season but off the season also.

The purpose of this dissertation is to define what could be the best advertising practices on Facebook for the" ChristosTaxi" company, as advertising taxi services in Paphos on Facebook is not very popular. The type of research that has been conducted is qualitative. The aims of the company are:

• get the new taxi ride bookings
• increase brand awareness
• keep current customers loyal to the company.

The main research question is "How to promote taxi services in Paphos via social media (Facebook)?". Hence, objectives of the study were to find out:

• how Facebook users perceive sponsored ads,
• if and how Facebook users use social media to purchase a product, or a service,
• to what degree Facebook users fell engaged when they participate in contests run by a company,
• how important for Facebook users are deals offered by a company on social media (and their impact to engagement).
• how all above can affect brand awareness.

In the "Literature Review" chapter are explained all terms and definitions that can be found in publications. In the chapter "Research Methodology" the author explained the type of the research that was done (qualitative), and also method of analyzing gathered data- thematic analysis. In the chapter "Results" are presented findings from conducted interviews, and in the last chapter "Discussion of Findings and conclusions" the meaning of results is discussed further together with limitations of the study, and also are written recommendations for practical implementation there.

2. Literature Review

This chapter aims to present how the literature describes the topic of promoting a company's products or services through their social media, with particular emphasis on Facebook advertising and customer engagement since the "ChristosTaxi" company despite of new taxi rides bookings, also wants to increase their brand awareness, and for their current customers

to stay loyal and engaged .

2.1 Customer engagement

Every company must be aware of the significance of customer engagement, especially if they want to use social media for promotion. Due to high competition and advances in technology that are significantly reducing entry barriers, companies have adopted strategies to build a deeper level of attachment with their customers, which is known under the term of customer engagement (Venkatesan 2017). The concept of customer engagement actually began in 2006 as a subset of the term “engagement” that sought to analyze the customer's behavior and their emotions in regards to the interactions with brands or services (Vivek *et al*. 2014). According to Bowden (2009) customer engagement is a psychological process, which drives customer loyalty. He states that a company can build the emotional connection and tie the customer closer to a brand, building customer loyalty in parallel. Other authors state that customer engagement recognizes that consumers carry out a number of firm-related behaviors that can have both positive or negative consequences (e.g., positive or negative reviews) for the company (Gummerus *et al*. 2012). Such behaviors can be represented by online discussions, commenting, information search and also opinion polls (van Doorn *et al*. 2010).
Furthermore, according to (Brodie *et al*. 2011) the literature review indicated a prominence of multidimensional (i.e., cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral) viewpoints of engagement. 40% of academic definitions describe engagement as a unidimensional concept focused on either the emotional, or cognitive, or behavioral aspect of engagement. They also state that there are various engagement dimensions, some are defined as unidimensional including emotional, cognitive and behavioral factors (Brodie *et al*. 2011). However, there are also some that are defined as multidimensional including cognitive/ emotional, emotional/ behavioral, cognitive/ behavioral and cognitive/ emotional and behavioral factors.
Patterson, Yu, and de Ruyter (2006) describe four customer engagement components. They are:

• absorption, understood as the level of customer concentration on a focal engagement object, like a brand or organization, reflecting the cognitive dimension of engagement;

• dedication: understood as a customer’s sense of belonging to the firm or brand, which refers to the emotional dimension of engagement;

• vigor: understood as a customer's level of energy and also mental resilience in interacting with a focal engagement object;
• interaction: understood as the two-way communication between a focal engagement subject and object.
The last two dimensions consider the behavioral dimension of engagement. However, Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2010), perceive customer engagement as a form a predominantly behavioral perspective.

For a company, customer engagement is extremely important. If a firm does not have a customer engagement strategy, they are missing opportunities to interact with customers and build a relationship with them (Pansari & Kumar 2017). Kumar, Aksoy, Donkers, Venkatesan, Wiesel, and Tillmanns, (2010) states that customer engagement can bring various benefits to a company, such as:
- improvement in customer relationship
Customer engagement doesn't start and end with the purchase, and consumers often have questions via the purchasing process. Effective engagement strategies can allow a company to connect with customers and also consider their needs from initial awareness to the purchase (Gummerus *et al*. 2012).

- Boosting Loyalty and Customer Retention
An effective engagement strategy helps a company to understand how customers feel about their product or service, what qualities they value, and in what areas a company should make improvements to provide a better experience. When a company shows genuine interest in their customers, more likely they will come back and buy again (Woodard 2006).

- Referrals
If customers are happy with a company's product, or service they'll talk about it. Engaged customers can provide free advertising to make sure that the company is known (Brodie *et al*. 2011).

- Feedback and insight from customers
There is always room for improvement. Feedback and insight from the company's customers can help in future planning. It provides a lot of valuable information such as

customer preferences, or can identify necessary changes (Woodard 2006).

2.2 Social Media revolution

Before moving forward, it's necessary to explain how literature defines social media. According to Tuten and Solomon (2021, p. 39) social media are defined as "the online means of communication, conveyance, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected and interdependent networks of people, communities, and organizations enhanced by technological capabilities and mobility". Another source focuses rather on usage of social media that is described as a way of organizational communication with customers, vendors, and the public at large (Leonardi *et al*. 2013). Dollarhide (2021) describes social media as a computer- based technology that makes it possible to share various ideas, information, and thoughts via virtual communities and also networks, being Internet based and providing users with quick content that contains personal information, videos, photos, and even documents. Users in order to access a social media platform can simply use any device that is connected to the Internet, and has a browser. Jan and Khan (2014) say that social media is an innovative tool which firms utilize in order to create a strong public relation with clients on various social networks. Social media symbolizes an opportunity for marketing and promotion that transcends middlemen and connects firms directly with their customers (Sajid 2015). One more definition states that social media are various technologies that make possible creation/ sharing or also exchange of forms of expression through virtual communities and networks (Kietzman & Hermkens 2011).

When it comes to usage of social media it's important to say that they have changed our world. There are around 4.38 billion Internet users these days, which actually corresponds to 57% of the world population (Kemp 2019). In other words, more than half of the people on Earth have Internet access nowadays. Furthermore, around 45% (3.5 billion people in numbers) of the world population is active on at least one social media platform (We Are Social 2019). Moreover, social networking is so popular nowadays, that according to Anderson Analytics, 71% of social network users actually cannot live without it (Sheehan 2010).

Obar and Wildman (2015) stated that there are few common features that various social

media share, such us:

• being an interactive Internet- based platforms

• having a user- generated content (posts, comments, digital photos, videos, along with data created via all social interactions),

• having a social media organization that designs and maintains service specific profiles for the website/ application created by users,

• helping in the development of various social networks by simply connecting profiles of users with those of other individuals/ groups.

According to Statista (2021) some of the most popular social media websites in January 2021 worldwide were:

1) Facebook (2.85 billion users)
2) YouTube (2.29 billion users)
3) WhatsApp (2 billion users)
4) Instagram (1.38 billion users)
5) Facebook Messenger (1.3 billion users)
6) Weixin/ WeChat (1.24 billion users)
7) TikTok (732 million users)
8) QQ (606 million users)
9) Douyin (600 million users)
10) Sino Weibo (530 million users)

Let's describe further the first five of them, as they are the ones with the largest number of users globally.

Facebook

In the literature it is described as a free social networking website that allows its registered users to create profiles, upload various digital photos and videos, and send messages to keep in touch with other users (TechTarget 2021). Originally created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg at Harvard University. The site also includes public features like:

• Marketplace, that allows members post or respond to classified ads

• Groups, that allow members to find and interact with each other as long as they share

common interests

• Events, that allow users to publicize upcoming happenings, and track who is planning to attend from invited users

• Pages, that allows users to create a public page that can be used to promote a specific product/ services/ person.

• Presence technology, that allows members to observe which contacts are online, so they can interact with each other (TechTarget 2021)

Facebook Messenger- Facebook users can send here messages, and exchange photos, video, stickers, audio, or files

Described as an instant messaging tool built into Facebook which owns it. It was launched in 2011. Program helps Facebook users to connect to each other by sending instant messages, sharing photos, files or videos (Kron & House 2021). The service also supports voice and video calling (Matney 2017).

Youtube- users can share here videos, music and movies

Launched in 2005 an American online video sharing platform owned by Google (Hooker 2016). It focuses on user generated content. It has become the dominant platform for online video worldwide (Burgess 2011). Founded by three PayPal employees Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. According to the company's blog its users watch more than one billion hours of videos every single day (Goodrow 2017).

WhatsApp- users can send here real- time messages to each other without any cost

It's a mobile application that allows its users to send real- time messages at no cost (Church & Oliveira 2013). With all improvements and new functionalities, users are also able to send voice messages, make voice/ video calls, share files, or even their locations (WhatsApp site 2021).

Instagram- users can share here photos

Launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. It is a platform where users can share their photos and tweak them by using various filters (Hu *et al*. 2014). Moreover, users can also share their videos in the service that like photos, can be edited using filters and organized by simply using various hashtags (TechCrunch 2018)

2.3 Promotion of services

For every company, promotion of their services is essential in order to exist in the market (Ghoshal 2019). Promotion is a type of communication between a buyer and a seller (Karunanithy & Sivesan 2013). Main goal of services promotion is persuading a prospect client to use a service that a company provides (Clayton & Heo 2011). However, according to Balaji (2002) general purposes of promotion of services are increasing:

• brand awareness
• interest in company's products or services
• difference between services or products of competitors
• benefits of available services
• customers trust to peruse the to use the service

He also states (2002) that the main goal of any promotional actions is to actually sell the service or product to a customer via informing, persuading or reminding. Obviously, these vary according to the industry where the company is operating.

2.3.1 Outcomes of promotion of services

The most positive outcomes of promoting services are establishment of a company's brand, growth in selected markets, the development of customer loyalty and defense against competition (O'Guinn *et al*. 2015). However, it is important to don't forget about the significant impact of promotion of services to brand awareness. According to Gustafson and Chabot (2007) brand awareness refers to how aware customers and potential customers are of a company's business and its products. Other authors state that Brand awareness is how consumers associate the brand with the product that they want to own (Sasmita and Mohd-Suki 2015). Brand awareness has an impact on decision making where consumers generally use it as a decision heuristic which benefits the management of customer-based brand equity (Huang & Sarigollu 2011; Norazah, 2013). Gustafson and Chabot (2007) states that the more

prospective customers are aware of products and services that a company can offer the more likely they will buy it. Another positive outcome of promotion of services is brand loyalty. According to Kim et al. (2008), brand loyalty can be defined as a deeply held commitment to buy again or re- patronize a product or service consistently in the future, causing repetitive purchasing. Keller (2003), on the other hand, understands brand loyalty as a brand resonance. He says that it refers to the nature of customer-brand relationship and the extent to which customers feel that they are in sync with the brand. A significant outcome of promotion is customer persuasion. According to Gass and Seiter (1998) it is another term of influence. It is an attempt to influence a person's beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivations, or even behaviors. What's more it refers to promoting the marketing mix and also building on the customer's impulsive buying behavior leading to a successful purchase (Turner 2021).

Marketing mix

Promotion is a part of the marketing mix. According to Kotler and Keller (2009) the marketing mix is a combination of market activities for certain goods or services over a given period and in a particular market. Another source states that it is a tool used by companies for effective marketing. It means product, distribution, promotion and pricing strategies in order to produce and also carry out exchanges and achieve the target markets (Išoraitė 2016). As other authors say promotion is part of the marketing mix, and a company can achieve their short-term sales goals via promotion (Wan-Ping & Hsieh-Hong 2010). Moreover, Singh (2016) states that marketing is a complex range of marketing mix solution variables that are used in companies seeking to sell their goods and/ or services.

If a company promotes their services putting some effort into it then as one of the outcomes there is also a customer's incentive to action (Sign 2016).

It is important to mention that as consumers' behavior changes, the marketing mix developed from 4P (product, place, promotion, price) into 7P which additionally include people, process and physical endurance (Harrington et al. 2017). All seven are further explained below:

Product

Means a marketing effort related to everything offered to meet consumer needs (Kotler & Keller 2009). Another author (Singh 2012) states that product refers to a physical product or service for which a consumer is ready to pay. It contains tangible goods, such as furniture;

garments, groceries etc. and also intangible products like services that customers pay for. Singh (2012) also states that actually the product is the key element of the marketing mix. The author also says that the live cycle of a product has 4 stages:

•introduction (a product is introduced in a market)

•growth (a product gains more customers as it grows)

•maturity (a product becomes mature as market stabilizes)

•decline (a product is declined because of the development and introduction of competitors and eventually is withdrawn)

Price

This element of the marketing mix refers to how much money consumers are willing to spend to purchase the product to fulfill their needs and desires (Kotler & Keller 2009). According to Borden, Neil and Marshall (1959). Price is the amount the consumer must exchange to receive the offering. Price of a product depends on various factors and hence it changes constantly, that's why the pricing should be dynamic so it can bear the changes over duration (Singh 2012). The important factor in pricing is deciding the cost of the product, strategy for marketing along with its expenses related to distribution, advertisement, or any kind of price in the market (Singh 2012).

Place

Means market location or area where the merchant wants to sell or distribute his wares. (Kushwaha & Agrawal 2015). Place contains distribution channels, warehousing facilities, mode of transportation and also inventory control management therefore it is a mechanism through which products and services are moved from the service provider/ manufacturer to consumer (Singh 2012).

Promotion

Refers to conveying information or/to communicate between traders and consumers with the goal of disseminating information, influencing, persuading, and also reminding target markets to create demand for products or services that are offered by traders (Marques et al., 2014). Furthermore, promotion relates to the means of communication used to inform the market and also convince prospect customers along with other stakeholders, to choose a company and/or its products or services (Talpau 2014). The same author states that online communication is conducted via a number of channels, and methods of promotion based on

the same principles of communication and marketing, however, with usage of new functionality. Some online promotion methods according to Talpau (2014) are:

• paid advertising- A firm lists ads in the paid section of search engine results or on the display network (like Facebook).

• optimizing the site- a firm optimizes its website for search engines (like Google, Yahoo, etc.). It is very important as search engines are the most used method of searching for information online.

• social marketing- a firm by doing social marketing, distributes various information for its targeted audience, looking to maintain their attention. Together with distributing relevant information, a company should interact with its users requesting feedback from them. Such interactions help the company to grow its online exposure and can attract new customers.

• online partners- a firm can increase its online presence by being presented in the online environment on virtual partner sites: directories, websites related to similar business activity, etc.

• affiliate marketing- a firm compensates third-party publishers to generate traffic or leads to products and/ or services offered by a company. Those third-party publishers are affiliates, and the commission fee incentivizes them to find ways to promote the company (Edelman & Benjamin 2013).

People

It is the role of humans in the delivery of goods or services that can affect consumer perceptions (Kukanja et al. 2016). People variable is considered to be the most important focus management when a firm chooses to carry out a marketing strategy (Dobrescu 2012). This includes everyone who is included in the product or service directly or indirectly (Talpau 2014).

Process

Refers to the methods and process of providing a service and is crucial to have knowledge on whether the services are helpful to the customers (Lin 2011). According to Talpau (2014) if a company wants to provide an efficient and customer-friendly journey it must be done with

the right processes with understanding the steps of the customer journey, from making an enquiry then requesting information and finally making a purchase. Such information helps a company to understand what processes need to be in place to make sure that the customer has a positive experience.

Physical Evidence

According to Khan (2014) it focuses on the physical conditions in the place of business including also the surrounding area. Among others, it includes the supporting environment (furniture, color, layout, noise level), supporting goods, supporting facilities such as toilets, and parking lots (Kukanja et al. 2016). Furthermore, physical evidence provides tangible cues of the quality of experience that a firm is offering. It can be useful when a customer has not bought from the company before and needs some reassurance, or is expected to pay for a service or product before it is delivered to him (Kushwaha & Agrawal 2015).

2.3.2 How companies can promote their services

There are many communication channels for companies in regards to promoting their services. According to Khan (2007) some of them, excluding the Internet are:

- brochures and posters
- local newspaper advertising
- television
- radio

The Internet can offer many more methods of promoting services and products. McCormic (2021) states that those methods are:

1) **Offering an exclusive preview of a service or a product to loyal clients**:

Company's loyal customers expect to buy a product or use services and also use their own social media to promote it. A company for instance can ask a customer to do testing of a product or a service for them and provide later a review.

2) **Usage of special introductory offer**

Instead of announcing a new product or service a company can simply promote it as a part of a special introductory deal.

3) **Utilizing Google My Business**

Frequently adding posts is a great promotion tool for every company, and also helps to improve SEO- Search Engine Optimization is the process of improving the number and also quality of traffic to a website directly from search engines such as Google or Bing via natural listing for targeted keywords (Swati *et al*. 2013) .

4) **Running a contest**

Contests are a great way of connecting with customers and also getting attention of new ones, especially if a company can provide giveaways.

5) **Gain email subscribers**

Email marketing is a magnificent way of promoting new products or services, especially since the cost of such a campaign is relatively low (if the company has subscribers).

6) **Adding blog posts**

Having a blog is a great idea to keep the company's followers up to date. Moreover, frequently adding blog posts helps companies to appear high in search engine results.

7) **Hosting an event**

In such cases a company in parallel can promote their services and products, and even gain potential new customers. A great example of an event is a live session on social media.

8) **Sharing customers review**

Every company gains more credibility by having positive customer reviews. They are invaluable when it comes to promotion of services or products.

9) **Posting on social media**

Social media can help a company to stay in touch with their followers and also to keep them engaged, thus promoting a new service or product will be easier since there is an engaged audience already.

10) **Run paid ads on social media (including cooperation with influencers)**

A company can utilize social networks to run a paid campaign in order to promote its services or products. Definitely a food for thought is also cooperation with influencers which already have their own audience (known rather as followers).

All of the above play a significant role in the process of engaging a customer. For instance, a cooperation with influencers can help a company not only to increase purchases but also to get engaged customers as they simply trust an influencer they follow.

2.4 Promotion via social media

Social media are frequently used in regular operations of many companies, such as start-ups, small, medium, and large firms (Smits & Mogos 2013). Nowadays it is crucial for companies to be present in social media. Many use them to market products or services they offer (Hayes 2021). Promotion through social media can be also defined as a promotion with usage of social systems, weblogs and more (Sajid 2015). It goes without saying that thanks to social media companies can be in direct contact with their target customers. This is simply due to the fact that it's the most effective channel for online promotion.

Social media promotion can be defined as usage of social media to persuade those whose organization, items and/or solutions are worthwhile (Sajid 2015). According to Lazer and Kelly's (1973) social marketing is concerned with the application of promoting information, ideas, and methods to enhance social and economic ends. It is important to state that promotion via social media is also called a social media marketing (SMM) which is known as a marketing strategy adopted by businesses in order to reach out to their clients via social networks (Khan & Jan 2017). It is also described as a process that empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, services, or products via various online social channels and tap into a bigger community that might not be available by using only traditional channels (Weinberg 2009). Another definition relates social media marketing to relationship marketing where companies have to shift from an attitude that can be described as trying to sell to customers to the attitude of making connections with them (Gordhamer 2009). Other authors define it as a process where organizations utilize social media websites to create a rush of their company's official website. Through various social media firms inform their potential new customers about future events and happenings, latest news, and also about launching a new product (Khan & Jan 2017). Another definition of SMM states that it is a

kind of internet marketing form that includes creating and also sharing a content on various social media networks in order to achieve company's marketing and branding goals, including activities such as posting texts, images, videos, and any other relevant content that can keep audience engagement, as well as paid social media advertising (IGW 2020). Social media marketing in literature is also described as a customized way of marketing and promotions can be targeted only to particular categories which have an interest in a specific domain, opposite to conventional marketing (Stelzner 2015).

According to Bhanot and Sandeep (2012), and also Baird and Parasnis (2011) social media promotion allow companies to:

- Generate exposure.
- Increase traffic.
- Build new partnerships.
- Generate qualified leads for better prospecting projects.
- Increase sales
- Gather feedback from users that can be used for improvement
- Provide Exceptional Customer Service
- Growing brand awareness
- Building customer loyalty
- Assistance with link building in browsers
- Increase reach by using hashtags
- Direct referral traffic to company's website or blog
- Reduce their overall cost of promotion

All of the above is strictly connected to customer engagement. For instance, when a company's brand awareness is growing a company's number of clients also grows, along with the relationship between those two.

2.4.1 Five main activities of social media marketing

For a company to successfully attract customers' attention or receive traffic to the company's website, all below 5 activities are required (Buffer 2019).

1) Strategy

A company must determine their goals and objectives along with the type of the content they

are going to share with their audience via social media channels.

2) Planning and publishing

In order to have a successful social media marketing a firm needs to make careful plans in regards to what their content will be and how it will look like (i.e. About what a post will be? If there will be any photos?) and then decide when it will be published (Barnhart 2020).

3) Listening and Engagement

A company should closely monitor what people (their customers and also other users) are saying about the company's posts on social media. It is highly recommended for a firm to be engaged in this process by simply interacting with users (Hayers 2021)

4) Analytics and Reporting

A company must be aware of who saw their posts, therefore all reports in regard to reach and engagement are required. For instance, a company's main goal might be increasing the number of conversions. In order to be able to track the progress a manager must have access to necessary reports to be able to analyze them (Chen 2021).

5) Advertising

Running a paid advert on social media is another way of promoting a company's products, or services. A company by paying for advertising on social media can reach out to a bigger audience in comparison with non- paid advertising that is limited to the company's page followers.

Social media marketing is a part of digital marketing, and Chaffey and Ellis- Chadwick (2020) say that key features of digital marketing are:

- be aligned with business and marketing strategy
- use clear goals for a company
- be consistent with customers who use a specific social media channel
- support customer journey during buying company's product or service
- manage lifecycle of online customer through attracting visitors to the page, then converting them into customers and retention

If a company will follow all above strategies in a consequence will gain not only more

customers that will purchase company's product or a service but following all strategies below will also help to keep those customer engaged.

2.4.2 Advantages and disadvantages of promoting services via social media.

Social media can be a useful tool for businesses, moreover social media marketing helps companies to reach their targeted consumers not only easily but effectively and also instantly. The table below presents advantages and disadvantages of promoting services via social media.

Table 1

Pros and cons of promoting services via social media

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
- increase brand awareness	- intense competition
- reach larger audience	- necessity to follow the latest trends & techniques
- possibility to evaluate performance	- necessity to promote creatively and consistently
- learn about competitors	-possibility of receiving negative feedback
- brand building	- potential for embarrassment in case of misunderstanding hashtags
-direct connection with audience	- time consuming (campaigns, posts)
- access to paid advertising services	- wasted time and money if not successful
- ability to target particular groups	

Source: Produced by the author based on (Nadaraja & Yazdanifard 2013) and (Van der Bank & Van der Bank 2014)

2.4.3 Process of promotion via social media

Starting from the very first beginning, it is important for a company to choose a social media platform. Nowadays most companies have an account on more than one social media. However, with very few posts a firm does not look attractive for prospective customers, thus a company should take care of posting interesting content in order to keep the audience engaged and also to look professional.

Another important factor is to complete the firm's profile in order to provide all necessary information about business, such as company's name, profile picture, location, link to company's website, a short description about what business firm does etc.). Next is to have its own logo that helps to improve brand identity. Last but definitely not least is usage of hashtags. User tagging of entries, media and many other information has been a main feature of many social media platforms (Bruns 2008).

When it comes to the actual process of promotion via social media Barnhart (2021) states that it should start from:

1st step- set a goal
A company must answer here a question: what exactly do they want to achieve using social media? For example, it could be to increase brand awareness, or sales.

2nd step- research target audience
In order to engage a customer a company must choose the right audience, therefore they need to decide who they are going to target, for instance a company which operates in the IT industry should rather not target an audience that has no experience in this area.

3rd step- choose the right social media platform
If a company is looking for individuals knowing specific programming languages, then they should rather use LinkedIn to gather CV's than Twitter, as the LinkedIn user- base is well-educated and allows them to browse by skills.

4th step- set up an account on social media platform
A firm must remember to carefully fill in their profile to have all significant information, such as their area of expertise, photos, contact details, location etc.

5th step- posting content on chosen social media
It is crucial for a business to have content on their social media page to engage the audience. Thanks to that they can also keep them updated in regards to products or services offered. That's why frequent posts are required; they also add credibility to the company.

If a company wants to be noticed on Social Media it must follow all above strategies to plan

the process of their promotion via social media channels.

2.4.4 Methods of promoting services via social media

There are 2 main methods of promoting a business via social media, either paid or not paid. In both cases, significant meaning has a content, the more attractive it is the higher possibility of engaging a user. Companies have various approaches in this matter. Below are presented the most popular:

1) Running a contest
A contest is actually a great way of promotion without actual advertising. Running a contest in social media automatically drives attention toward the product or services, especially if a firm offers attractive benefits (Philips 2015).

2) Offering deals and promo codes
By providing deals via social media, companies can keep their customers engaged. Moreover, this strategy can also help to keep them loyal (Hensel & Deis 2010)

3) Joining in social media communities
In such a way company can passively promote its services, or products by simply interacting with users in one of many communities (Saravanakumar *et al*. 2012)

4) Posting engaging content
It goes without saying that content matters when it comes to keeping existing customers loyal and gaining new ones. The more attractive content a company shares, the higher possibility of conversions. A good content can be either a product/ service a company can offer with an interesting description, or even regular posts (without an aim to drive sales) just to keep the audience engaged, so when the time comes a company will more likely will not have much difficulties with promotion having already engaged audience (Philips 2015).

A company can use all above methods to promote their product or service on social media. Each one can be successful but if a company can merch all together then the promotion on social media will have better outcomes.

2.5 Facebook marketing

To begin with let's start from defining what Facebook marketing actually is. According to Hansson, Wrangmo, and Solberg Søilen, (2013), Facebook marketing is defined as a practice of promoting a company and maintaining its presence on Facebook. Facebook marketing refers to organic (free) postings/interactions, and also to paid ones called usually "boosted" posts.

There are many benefits of Facebook marketing for a company such as lower communication costs, personalized and direct advertising, big volume of prospect customers, immediate feedback from them, word-of-mouth referrals and also a positive influence on buyer behavior (Treadaway & Smith 2012). However, it must not be forgotten that Facebook users often can simply ignore sponsored ads (Ramsaran- Fowdar & Fowdar 2013). The most significant benefit is definitely lower marketing costs in terms of monetary and personnel (Ramsaran-Fowdar and Fowdar 2013). Costs of communication have fallen drastically with Facebook and other sites, giving opportunities for firms to communicate directly and quickly with individual customers (Mize 2009; Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009).

2.5.1 Usage of Facebook by companies for their social media promotion

Firms in order to promote their services or products frequently use Facebook to boost their ads in order to reach out to more people. The platform allows companies to connect with more potential customers, and more often in comparison with phone calls, emails, or meetings (Luke 2009). Facebook offers its users customized ways to advertise their products or services. They can easily customize their advertisements in order to fit certain groups of individuals. This can be simply done based on their demographic features or even by their interests (Lukka & James 2014). Because of its number of active users along with frequent activity of each one of them, Facebook is considered as an appealing platform for marketers and online advertisers (Francisco 2006). Another way companies utilize Facebook for promotion is building trust in products by providing customer reviews and testimonials. A great example here is a Facebook page of "GoPro" that actually is full with content generated by users, as the firm is sharing on their page photos taken by users. Worth of interest is also a fact that many companies decide to join a Facebook community to advertise their services or products by simply taking part in various discussions with users (FATbit Chef 2017)

2.5.2 Advertising on Facebook

For an ad to work, the prospect customer has to notice it first, and then react to it (Barreto 2013). Facebook allows users to easily create advertisements, select a specific target audience, set daily budgets, and finally measure results. What's more, Facebook communities (groups) are the most suited for marketers (Casteleyn *et al*. 2009). Through them, marketers can identify the tastes and likes of their prospect customers. This information is essential when it comes to creating market segmentation and also targeting and positioning strategies (Acar & Polonsky 2007; Treadaway & Smith 2010). Unlike Google, Facebook can utilize all of the profile information that its user has shared. With all advertising options that Facebook provides, marketers can target a specific audience simply by their location, age or even relationship status (Dunay & Krueger 2010). Advertising via Facebook can be conducted via an application on the site that allows users to create their own advertisements which later can be posted on the site. Members can make their own advertisement by utilizing their own Facebook account. Facebook allows users to target an audience by location, gender, age, keyword, relationship status, job title, workplace or college. What's more, when the above is selected, later Facebook provides information on an approximate number of users that their targeting will be covering. Moreover, advertisers also have a daily budget in which they indicate the amount they are willing to spend on advertising every day (Curran *et al*. 2011).

Facebook also provides detailed reports in regards to how the advert is performing, with statistics on the number of users and also the Click Through Rate (CTR). It is the rate of clicks the advert has gained. As there is not a set cost for Facebook advertisements, there is an average cost per click (CPC). This is the amount users pay on average for each click their advertisement receives (Curran *et al*. 2011).

2.5.3 Creating an advertisement on Facebook

An advert can be created by simply clicking on the "Add advert" button, and then a page should be filled out with all the details of the advertisement (Facebook 2021). It must be chosen where the advertisement will go once clicked on, and it is done by choosing a destination URL. A title for the advert, image and description are also required. Next step is

deciding who will be a desired audience by providing information such as location, demographics, likes and interests, or even education and work. The final stage is the pricing and scheduling stage. This requires completing the account currency, time zone, campaign budget and schedule and pricing. Once all above have been completed, an advertiser gets to review their advertisement, make any required changes and then finally an advert can be placed (Curran *et al*. 2011).

There is one method of advertising through Facebook. However, it can be done in two ways. The first one is based on promoting an existing post (known also as boosting) visible in the timeline, and the second is based on creating a completely new post that is presented to the target audience, but is not visible on a company's page.

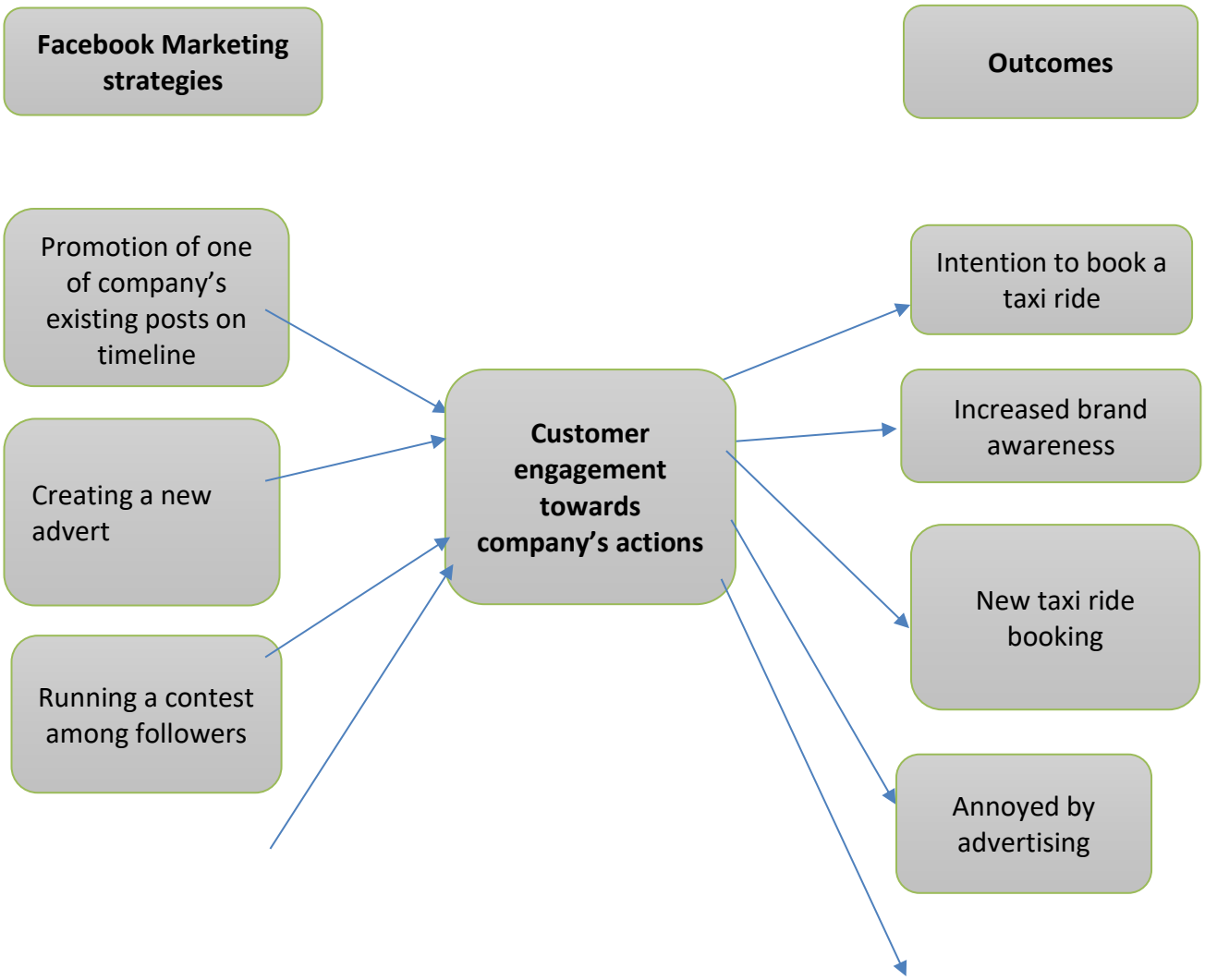
2.6 How Facebook users perceive paid Facebook Ads?

It goes without saying that a good marketing strategy cannot be designed in the absence of knowledge about customers' attitudes (Kornias & Halalau 2012). Their attitude can be either positive or negative (Philip et al., 2018) based on the extent of favorability attached to feelings. Attitude has three elements such as affect, cognition and behavior, which basically means to feel, believe or behave about/to the object (Mumcu & Aktaş 2019).
Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) state that effects of different communication motives, behaviors and dependencies on this information lead to effects, which can be categorized as cognition, affect (feelings), and behavior (coactive). Cognition concerns the knowledge in a person's mind and also how that is obtained (Li & Leckenby 2004) such as information about the products (e.g., price, or quality). Affection refers to the audience's emotional responses that are one of the least explored kinds of effects, such as fear, or anxiety (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur 1976). Lastly, behavioral effects of advertising can be represented in individual purchasing and also product usage behavior (Vakratsas & Ambler 1999).

Furthermore, studying all the factors that are influencing the behavior of customers is crucial in designing adverts (Me-hta & Purvis 1995) and it is significant for social media nowadays. According to Kornias and Halalau (2012) social network adverts are more appealing to customers when they are linked to their area of interest. It means that customers have a more

positive attitude towards customized advertisements. Therefore, an advertisement strategy can lead to engaging a user if the right kind of audience has been targeted (Eid *et al*. 2020)

3. Conceptual Framework Model



The model above represents the conceptual framework model which illustrates the expected relationship between Facebook marketing strategies that the "ChristosTaxi" company could apply and expected outcomes. According to the model, if a company will apply in their marketing strategy one or even all described Facebook marketing strategies (promotion of one of company's existing posts on timeline, creating a new advert, running a contest among

followers, offering a deal) then the firm may expect one or more possible outcomes presented

Offering a deal

ntention to book a taxi ride, increased brand awareness, new taxi ride booking, vertising, loyal to the brand). For instance, if a company will run a contest, as a me can expect more taxi ride bookings (or intention t creased brand awareness.

Loyal to the brand

In the current chapter it has been written what current literature says about each strategy and also all the outcomes. In order to identify a cause-and-effect relationship between each strategy and potential outcome, research must be conducted. Furthermore, the purpose of the research is to examine and establish if all those steps must be taken to successfully promote taxi services via social media with particular emphasis on Facebook.

4. Research Methodology

The major research question of this dissertation was "How to promote taxi services in Paphos via social media (Facebook)?". This question is very important because the main focus of the "ChristosTaxi" company is to reach an audience via Facebook. Therefore, objectives of the study were to find out:

• how Facebook users perceive sponsored ads,
• if and how Facebook users use social media to purchase a product, or a service,
• to what degree Facebook users fell engaged when they participate in contests run by a company,
• how important for Facebook users are deals offered by a company on social media (and their impact to engagement).
• how all above can affect brand awareness.

The research approach that was conducted for the purposes of this dissertation was based on the qualitative research method. According to Flick (2018) qualitative research is of specific relevance to the study of social relations. Other authors Pathak, Jena, Kalra, (2013) state that qualitative research actually focuses on understanding a research query as a humanistic or idealistic approach. Qualitative method is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions (Flick 2018). It generates non-numerical data.
For this study the qualitative approach is the most appropriate because it focuses on human

behavior from a participant's point of view, and results of the objective studies will help to develop an approach to the main research question (How to promote taxi services in Paphos via social media (Facebook)?" Furthermore, respondents in qualitative research are able to freely disclose their experiences, thoughts and feelings without constraint, as this method offers a dynamic approach to research, where the researcher has an opportunity to follow up on answers given by respondents in real time (Flick 2018).

For the purpose of this study, 12 interviews were conducted to examine and establish what Facebook strategies written in the conceptual framework model could be the most convenient to promote taxi services of the "ChristosTaxi" company. The one- on- one interview method has been chosen as it provides a great opportunity to gather precise information. All interviews helped to gather descriptive data by gathering observations without intervening. The type of conducted interviews was semi- structured, where the researcher asked informants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions. This type of interview allows significant flexibility to pursue new topics based on how a conversation was running.

All participants of interviews were selected carefully to get results that are as reliable as possible. Interviewees were chosen from existing, well known company's regular clients who are in private contact with the company's driver (and are also active in the company's Facebook fanpage). All of them are the company's followers on Facebook page, and all were contacted via Facebook. It is important to state that more of the company's clients were contacted to participate in this research, however, only 12 had enough time for an interview.

The approximate duration of each interview was between 1- 1.5 hours. All were conducted via video Skype calls. Answers were recorded with consent, but the interviewer was taking notes as well. All participants signed the consent forms, however, one interviewee preferred not to be recorded. The blank consent form is attached in the appendix number 1.

Thematic analysis was conducted in this research. The data has been closely examined to identify common themes such as ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. It is important to state that the data have been analyzed using an inductive approach where a researcher begins by collecting information that is relevant to their topic of interest. Once a data has been collected, the researcher looks for patterns in the data, working to develop a theory that could explain those patterns (Azungah 2018).

Other methods of analysis such as content and discourse analysis were not suitable for this research. Content analysis focuses on categorizing and discussing the meaning of words, phrases and sentences (Drisko & Maschi, 2016) which was not the case here, as the main aim of this study was to find out what Facebook marketing strategy would benefit the company the most. Another method, discourse analysis focuses on studying communication and meaning in relation to their social context, as it aims to understand how language is used in real life situations (Jones *et al.* 2015). Therefore it has been decided that thematic analysis would be the most convenient way to analyze the gathered data from conducted interviews to identify common themes – topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly.

The approach that was followed during this study was based on a six- step process proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006):

• familiarization,
• coding,
• generating themes,
• reviewing themes,
• defining and naming themes,
• writing up.

In this study each step was done with the highest sedulity. The first one- familiarization was time consuming, because all 11 interviews had to be transcribed. For the one that was not recorded, the researcher took notes during the interview. Also, later reading through the text a few times, and taking notes was also time consuming. Another step, which was coding, has been done by isolating phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that were meaningful, and then labeling them by using a specific code. Table below presents coded data from one of the interview questions related to attitude towards Facebook advertising.

Table 2

Codes

INTERVIEW EXTRACT	CODES
I don't care, I don't check it unless I see something that is interesting to me. It doesn't matter to me how the advert is done, or presented, if I'm interested in advertised product or service then, I click on the advert to see it.	-unconcerned -change of attitude - attention - does not matter how the advert looks if interested in a product/ service

Source: Produced by the author based on data from conducted interviews.

Another step was about generating themes. The researcher was analyzing codes to identify patterns among them to start creating themes. This step was also time consuming, especially avoiding repetitive themes was challenging. Table below presents developed themes from codes created from interviews where respondents were asked about their attitude regarding Facebook advertising.

Table 3

Themes

CODES	THEMES
-unconcerned -lack of interest -neutral -unbothered - does not care	-neutrality
-change of attitude -change of mind - reconsider - second thoughts	-change of mind
-attention -interesting -eye catching -curious - bored, thus checks out of boredom	- curiosity

- does not matter how the advert looks if interested in a product/ service - looking for a product/ service - want a product/ service anyway	- interested because was looking for a product/ service earlier
-annoyed by all adverts -annoyed by adverts if does not look for anything - irritated by pushy adverts - annoyed, cuz ends up buying something that is not needed	- annoyed overall but also annoyed can if advert is not in area of interest

Source: Produced by the author based on data from conducted interviews.

The fourth step was about reviewing themes. Here the researcher was checking if terminology of themes was accurate and also if it was responding to gather data. Same theme names were renamed, some deleted depending on the specific question.

Second to last step was defining and naming themes. Here the researcher was formulating exactly what each theme means to understand the data better. Basically, short notes were added to each theme, explaining in more detail the meaning of it.

The last step was writing the results chapter, which follows.

Despite that the thematic analysis has disadvantages such as being phrase- based which can lead to misinterpretation because sometimes phrases cannot capture the meaning correctly, still it is the most convenient analysis for this study as the flexibility of the method allows for a wide range of analytic options. More information about study limitations can be found under chapter 6.1.

In the next chapter of this dissertation are presented all the results from analysis of all conducted interviews including demographic data of all the interviewees. It is important to state that all participants signed consent forms to participate in research. The example of a blank consent form can be seen in the appendix number 1.

5.Results

This chapter presents the results of the interviews that have been conducted with 12 interviewees. What is important to state is the fact that all respondents know the company and they used their services more than one time. In order to examine what Facebook strategies presented in the Conceptual Framework Model will be beneficial for the “ChristosTaxi" company, a qualitative research method has been applied. The outcomes that the model was assuming were to increase customer loyalty, customer engagement, number of taxi ride bookings (along with an intention to book a taxi), and also to discover if customers are annoyed by advertising. It is important to mention that interviews were semi- structured, which gave the researcher a possibility to ask extra related questions whenever it was applicable. The results of the study will be presented per objective of the study with a description of most common themes.

The table below represents demographic parameters of participants of the study.

Table 4

Demographic details of respondents

GENDER	
Male	9 persons
Female	3 persons
AGE	
18-30	4 persons
31-45	8 persons
NATIONALITY	
Polish	2 persons
Cypriots	3 persons
English	3 persons
Scottish	2 persons
Russians	1 person
Swedish	1 person
OCCUPATION	
Entrepreneur	3 persons
account manager	2 persons
Accountant	2 persons
Driver	1 person
physical worker	3 persons
Pediatrician	1 person
EDUCATION	

secondary education (high school)	1 person
higher education	11 persons
STATUS	
single	7 persons
married	5 persons
PLACE OF LIVING	
Cyprus (Paphos)	3 persons
UK (Bristol, London, Manchester, Leeds, Coventry, and Cambridge)	6 persons
Poland (Zabrze, Katowice)	3 persons

Source: Produced by the author based on data from conducted interviews.

The above information shows that the dominant type of the respondent was a single man from the UK, between 31-45 years, having a higher education.

The questions that respondents were asked are addressing the directions of the conceptual associations that emerged from the conceptual framework model. Wherever it was applicable the researcher asked additional questions. Participants were asked on what social media platform they have an account with and how often they use it. All interviewees have social media accounts. Mainly Facebook and Instagram, which are used by them on a daily basis. Four persons (both genders, 1 Cypriot, 3 from the UK with higher education, age between 31-45) additionally have accounts on Twitter and Pinterest but do not use them more than once a month, or once a week for one participant. The fact that all have an account on Instagram is a very important finding for the company, because the firm has only one social media channel

which is Facebook. In this case, the company could also create an account on Instagram since their followers use it on a daily basis, it will help the company to increase their reach.

Objective of the study:
If, and how Facebook users use social media to purchase a product, or a service.

Firstly, participants were asked if they are using their social media to purchase anything. Since they all (except of one person) use social media to purchase various products (clothes, shoes, furniture, cars, perfumes, educational courses, and books) and services (such as services of interior designers, singers for weddings, or repair services) the company can definitely take into consideration doing a promotion on social media. Participants make purchases via social media at least once a month, only one person once per 6 months.

The respondents were also asked how they search for a specific product or service on social media. Most of the respondents (from the UK and Cyprus) stated that they ask for recommendations on groups they belong to, or go directly to the Facebook page of the company's products, or services they are interested in. One of the interviewees also said: *I only use Facebook for it, and always check reviews on the company's Facebook page, or comments section under their posts to see what other people think about them (Man, UK, 18-30, entrepreneur).* Some participants (English, Polish and Cypriot) also use Facebook Marketplace to find what they are looking for by using filters.
For the "ChristosTaxi" company those findings have a significant meaning. Since respondents said that they ask for recommendations in the groups they belong to, the company should take into account joining a few to be able to advertise their services when needed. Also, it has been said that reviews on the company's Facebook page matter, as well as the comment section under company's posts. Therefore the "ChristosTaxi" company should ask some of the regular customers to write reviews on their Facebook page and closely monitor the comment section under the company's posts to reply to all of them. Another factor that should be taken into consideration by a company is to create an advert in Facebook Marketplace since it's used by participants.

Another question that responders had to answer was if they follow any specific brands on Facebook (all answered that yes), and how often do they buy their product, or use their

services. The answers for the last part of the question were various, some of interviewees (both genders, and age groups, 2 Cypriots and 3 English and 2 Scottish) said that they buy company's product, or service roughly once a month, other participants (Polish, Russians and English) said that once per quarter, another that once per six months, and one of participants said that he does it only once a year**.** Also, one of the responders (man, between age of 31-45, Cypriot) said that he did not buy anything from the brands he follows on social media. For the "ChristosTaxi" company it means that most likely Facebook users could book their services if needed.

Participants also had to answer if they follow any taxi companies on Facebook, and how often they book their services. Since they all are the company's regular customers, they all follow the company's Facebook page. Only 2 respondents (both men, 31-45 years, accountant and pediatrist, English) said that they use social media to find taxi services, the rest of participants said that they do not use social media for this purpose.

Objective of the study:
How Facebook users perceive sponsored ads

Participants had to answer about their attitude regarding sponsored (paid) ads on Facebook. This question was very significant because the "ChristosTaxi" company wants to run paid advertising on Facebook, thus knowing participants' attitude regarding seeing sponsored ads was very important. In this case opinions were completely different. Based on themes respondents can have a neutral attitude, some who normally are not interested can change their mind simply out of curiosity, they can also be interested in an advert if they are looking for a specific product/ service..
Interviewees were also asked about their attitude toward sponsored (paid) taxi services ads on Facebook. It has been said by a few that their attitude about sponsored (paid) ads on Facebook is neutral. It neither bothers them nor makes them feel enthusiastic about it. However, one person (male, Cypriot, 31-45, driver) said:
Personally, I would never book a taxi from a sponsored Facebook ad without knowing the company. It looks to me like a firm is so desperate to get clients that they are begging for their attention. In my opinion it means that they do not do a good job.
Participants had to also answer how often they click on a Facebook ad to book a taxi. They all answered that it has never happened to them to book a taxi from a sponsored Facebook

advertisement yet. Participants answered that they do not see such ads often. Another question that participants had to answer was about how often they make a purchase or use a service after clicking on an advert on Facebook? Majority of interviewees said that it happens to them, but no more than once every three months. Three participants (31-45 age, males, highly educated, two English and one Cypriot) said that it had never happened to them.

All those findings show that in general people are not annoyed by sponsored ads on Facebook, so the company does not have to be afraid that their followers will be annoyed by seeing their sponsored ad.

Objective of the study:

To what degree Facebook users fell engaged when they participate in contests run by a company

Next question that was asked to interviewees was regarding how often they participate in contests run by companies via social media. This question and also the rest below, were asked to see what is the correlation between running contests and brand awareness and intention of tax ride bookings.

Some answered (mainly females with various nationalities and professions, between age of 18-30) that they participate very often, especially if their friends tag them. Many of the participants (mainly men with various nationalities and professions, between age of 18-30) answered that if there would be any interesting prizes for them, they most likely would take part but the vast majority of them are not aware when and what company is running a contest. Five participants (females and men with various nationalities and professions, between age of 31-45) said that they have never participated in any contest on social media, and don't have any intention to do it, as they don't have time.

Interviewees were also asked about what type of contests they usually take part in, and what they have to do. One person (female, Cypriot, between age of 18- 30, account manager) answered that she participates in contests where she can win travelling accessories, jewelry, or cosmetics. Three interviewees (females, various nationalities and professions, between age of 18-30) answered that they are interested in contests where they can win discounts on clothes, services, or they can get them for free as a prize. One participant (female, Cypriot, between age of 18- 30, account manager) said that to win she usually has to tag her friends

under the company's post (that is, running a contest) and ask them to make a comment. The rest of participants to win a contest usually have to either make a thematic photo, or videos, or write a short story.

Another question that was asked to participants was related to a way how contests run on Facebook help them to learn more about the company that runs it. One person (female, Cypriot, between age of 18-30, account manager) said:
Honestly, I don't care about a company, or an influencer who runs a contest. I only care for the prize I can win.
Another participant said (man, English, between age of 31-45, physical worker):
I think that the only thing I can learn here is if a company is honest. What I mean if they really give prizes to winners.
All participants said that contests run by a specific brand that they follow definitely help them to learn more about this specific firm. The way how a company handles comments (some even rude) visible publicly for every one tells a lot about their attitude regarding their customers.
One of the participants (female, Cypriot, between age of 18- 30, account manager) also said:
It happened to me once that I saw that a company deleted a comment made by someone who was not very pleased with a product and their customer service. I lost my trust, because I think that they could treat me in the same way if I would ever contact them to make a complaint.
Participants had to also answer in what way contests engage them to the company.
Only one person answered that she feels strongly connected to the brand if their contests offer valuable prizes (female, Cypriot, between age of 18- 30, account manager). However, the rest of participants answered that they do not feel engaged to a brand in any way.

Another question they had to answer was about their opinion on how running a contest by a company can affect their awareness of the brand.
Some of the participants (both genders, various nationalities and professions, between age of 18-30,) said that it can definitely help, especially if the contest's participants have to tag their friends, as one of the tasks of the contest they are taking part in.
One person (man, English, between age of 31-45, entrepreneur) said:
If a company runs a contest, they usually expect that their brand awareness will grow. This is one of the reasons for running contests. A company can offer either deals, or products as

prizes to attract people, and if those people will tell their friends about it...they achieved their goal.

Objective of the study:
How important for Facebook users are deals offered by a company on social media (and their impact to customer engagement).

Participants had to also answer how important for them are deals that a company offers to their clients via social media.
Some of the respondents (both genders, various nationalities, between age of 18- 30, various professions) answered that deals are highly important for them as they feel that a company by offering them is showing their appreciation towards customers.
Respondents who were above the age of 30 years old, having various nationalities, said that deals are not so important for them.

Respondents had to also say what deals they are the most interested in.
The answers given by them are various. The most frequent were discounts and offers like "buy 1 and get another for free". Participants also said that they are always interested in deals that offer free shipping, returns, and coupons.

Next question that the interviewers had to ask was about them making a purchase, or using a service because it was offered on social media by a company as a deal.
Respondents (except one person) said that it happens to them often to purchase a service (such as a language course), or a product just because it has been presented to them as a deal. Majority of participants also stated that deals always get their attention, and often they make a purchase even if they do not need a specific product.

Participants were asked to what degree offered deals engage them to the brand. The main themes that appeared here were:
-does not engage
- engages a little if a deal is good (majority of participants)
- engages significantly if a deal is good
Participants from the last theme (engage significantly if a deal is good) answered that such deals also make them loyal to the brand.

Another question that participants had to answer was about their opinion on how running a deal by a company can influence its brand awareness. All respondents said that deals offered by a company have a significant impact on the respondent's awareness of the brand. Participants said that if deals are advertised on social media, then more people become aware of the brand even if they will not make a purchase but they will most likely remember the advertisement (if they will see it a few times). One participant also said that thanks to offering deals a company can keep their current clients engaged and active on the company's social media pages.
All participants said that if deals were offered by a taxi company they use services from, they would definitely feel loyal and engaged to the brand.

Additional questions related to promotion of taxi services

Respondents also had to answer how often they use taxi services in Paphos. All participants who live abroad use "ChristosTaxi" taxi services in Paphos every time when they visit Paphos for holidays, which occurs 2-3 time a year. Respondents who live here in Paphos replied that they barely order a taxi.

Participants were also asked about their opinion regarding using taxi services that are promoted via social media. One person (man, Polish, 18-30, accountant) said:
I really don't mind. As long as this company has positive reviews on their page, I would definitely take into consideration booking a taxi there. Majority of respondents (both genders, various nationalities, age groups and professions) share his opinion. They also said that positive reviews and active comment sections under company's posts build trust. However, there was one person (man, Cypriot, between age of 31-45, driver) who said he is not very positive about it. He said that people who book taxi services on social media can be easily cheated by a taxi company, because a firm can pay for fake reviews. Personally, he would never book a taxi in such a case. Therefore, the themes that emerged here are:
- not against it
- don't mind, especially if a company has positive reviews
- against it

Another question that was asked to participants was referring to what degree offered deals

and/ or contests by a specific taxi company could influence them to book a taxi ride. All interviewees said that if a deal or a contest were attractive to them, most probably they would book a taxi ride. They confirmed that they would be highly influenced in such a case. Therefore, the theme that emerged from this question is:
- highly engaged if a deal would be attractive for them.

The last question respondents had to answer was if they would book a taxi ride from a taxi company which promotes their services via paid Facebook ads. All answered that they would, especially if a company offered an attractive deal to them, such as a free ride, or a discount, or a free trip around Paphos. Some of the participants (31-45, various nationalities, and occupations) also replied that even if a company would not offer any deals, or contests but there would be many positive reviews then they would book a taxi ride.

6.Discussion of Findings and conclusions

Received data is important as it can help to understand if presented Facebook practices in the conceptual framework model can give desired by the "ChristosTaxi" company outcomes. It was necessary to conduct all the interviews to identify the customer's point of view, and also reveal themes that can help answer the central research question of the study, which is "How to promote taxi services in Paphos via social media (Facebook)?".

The results of the study presented strong associations with the issues addressed in the literature review. For instance, it has been stated that almost everybody nowadays frequently uses social media (Jan and Khan, 2014), and all respondents said that they use social media on a daily basis, and they also use them to shop specific products, or services.
The results show that all interviewees besides Facebook, also use Instagram on a daily basis. Therefore, the "ChristosTaxi" company should also take into consideration creating an Instagram account to increase their reach with their brand awareness, and gain potential new customers.
Since participants stated that they frequently use Facebook as a shopping platform, when they are looking for a specific product, or a service, the "ChristosTaxi" can definitely take advantage of this information and start promoting their taxi services via Facebook. Moreover, taking into consideration that most of the interviewees (except for one person who does not

like seeing any ads on Facebook) stated that they are not bothered by seeing paid Facebook ads the “ChristosTaxi” company can definitely use paid advertising to promote their services online. Especially, that according to the literature, social media users have in general a positive attitude towards advertising on Facebook (Lukka and James, 2014). However, not being bothered by seeing paid Facebook ads, does not necessarily mean that users will click on it. As respondents of the study said the ad must be interesting for them (to cover whatever their need is at the specific moment). What is interesting is the fact that only 2 respondents said that they use social media to find taxi services. However, the rest of them said that they never thought about it earlier, but they express their willingness to do it if they need to find a taxi. It is a very promising sign for the “ChristosTaxi” company as they may get new clients, especially that the literature review currently does not say much regarding using social media to find taxi services, thus is a niche in the market that could be filled.

Since it has been said by respondents that they pay attention to the comment section in a company’s page, “ChristosTaxi” should take care and monitor the comment section under their posts. Another important outcome of conducted interviews is that respondents frequently ask for recommendations before they make any purchase, or booking. Therefore the “ChristosTaxi” company should take into account joining some Facebook groups where they can recommend their services as a reply when a user is asking for recommendations. The company’s Facebook fan page should be also taken care of, as interviewees said that they always check a company’s page along with a comment section before they make any booking, or a purchase.

The “ChristosTaxi” company should also take into consideration running a contest or offering a deal on their Facebook account. As it has been said during the interviews those actions can help to increase brand awareness, attract new clients, and keep regular customers loyal. It is also confirmed in the literature review that contests and deals can significantly increase brand awareness, gain new customers, and keep current ones loyal (Woodard, Bob, 2006).

Conclusions from the data (such as attitude towards advertising, usage of social media for purchasing and customer engagement) are linked to the literature review. It has been said that social media is a great tool not only for advertising and selling but also to keep customers engaged (Venkatesan 2017). However, it has been also discovered that deals offered by a taxi company can highly influence an intention to book a taxi ride.

Below are presented conclusions in regards to interviews' outcome by objectives of the study.

Objective of the study:
If, and how Facebook users use social media to purchase a product, or a service.

Based on the data, the conclusion is that Facebook users use the platform for shopping purposes. In regards to the Facebook strategies presented in the conceptual framework model (Promotion of one of a company's existing posts on timeline, or creating a new advert), it does not matter what type of promotion the "ChristosTaxi" company will do. If the advert is interesting for the audience, then they click on it to learn more, thus the fact that this is a newly created ad (which does not appear on the company's timeline of Facebook), or boosted one of the company's posts that is visible on the company's timeline does not matter. Furthermore, since Facebook is used on a daily basis, the advert will be seen by the audience, and since the platform is frequently used for shopping, there is a high chance that the Facebook audience will click on the ad to learn more. However, it is important to mention that the advert itself is not that important as the user's interest. If a user is looking for something specific, or what the ad is promoting is in their area of interest, then the user will click on the advert anyway to learn more (based on the gathered data), therefore the right targeting is significant for the company. Also, the literature review confirms the above. Nowadays, social media users frequently use social media to purchase either a product or a service (Kemp 2019). As it has been said during interviews, customers usually ask for recommendations either in the groups, or on their own profiles, thus the company could join some Facebook groups related to traveling in Cyprus, to passively advertise their services, by participating in discussions.

Objective of the study:
How Facebook users perceive sponsored ads

Based on gathered data, the audience will not be annoyed by seeing a paid Facebook ad, therefore the "ChristosTaxi" company can definitely run a paid Facebook advertising.

Moreover, the literature review also states that social media users are usually not bothered by seeing paid adverts if they are not too pushy (Lukka and James, 2014). Since advertising on Facebook is relatively cheaper in comparison with Google Ads, it is advised for the company to run regular campaigns. Moreover, some users may click to see the advert out of curiosity, and later book a taxi ride in consequence.

Objective of the study:

To what degree Facebook users fell engaged when they participate in contests run by a company

Based on the results, contests are attractive to social media users, so they could be a good trigger to later book a taxi ride. Also, the literature review stated that contests have an impact on customer's intention to buy a product, or a service offered by a company who runs a contest in which customers participate (Sasmita and Mohd Suki, 2015). However, based on the study there is one exception. The group of people between age of 31-45 years old that don't have time for participating in contests, therefore is recommended for a contest to be run among the younger generation. What is also important, based on the results, is that the contest itself can increase not only brand awareness but also customer engagement. Furthermore, as it has been said in the literature review, offering a deal on social media, or running a contest can have a positive impact on brand awareness of a company (Sasmita and Mohd Suki, 2015).

Objective of the study:

How important for Facebook users are deals offered by a company on social media (and their impact to customer engagement).

Respondents said that attractive deals could not only attach their attention, but also increase their loyalty to the brand. It also has been confirmed in the literature review (Sasmita and Mohd Suki, 2015)). The "ChristosTaxi" company could run a deal in order to attract more clients, and keep curt ones loyal, based on gathered data, as participants replied that they feel highly engaged by attractive deals.

There are also some interesting conclusions based on profiles of the respondents, which are:

• people between age of 31- 45 do not have time to participate in contests on social media,

thus it's not recommended for the company to target them in contests, as more likely they will not be interested due to lack of time

• people between age of 31- 45 find deals offered on social media as not important

• Cyprus residents in comparison with visitors, seldom use social media to find services, however, they often buy products using social media.

• English, Scottish, and Polish more often ask for recommendation in Facebook groups in comparison with Cypriots who usually ask their friends via social media

• females more frequent buy product/ services, when it's offered on social media as a deal

• Cyprus residents in comparison with visitors, seldom use taxi services

• Taxi services in Paphos are not usually promoted on Facebook, thus is the niche that a company could fill, especially that general attitude of respondents towards promoting taxi services on Facebook is not negative

6.1. Limitations

There are some limitations of the study that are further presented below. Definitely, one of them is the generalizability of the results which is limited by the amount of conducted interviews (12). If the sample size was bigger, then the results might be different. Especially, comparing the sample size with the total number of taxi customers in Paphos. Moreover, the dominant profile in this research was a single man from the UK, between 31-45 years, having a higher education. If the majority of participants would be older than 45 years old, and for instance they would live outside of Europe then the results could be different.

Another important limitation is the fact that all interviewees know the "ChristosTaxi" company, which might affect their answers. Moreover, in this research a biased sample has been used, which occurs when some members of a population are systematically more likely to be selected in a sample than others (Cortes *et al* 2008). Hence, it limits the generalizability of findings. In this particular study, it means that findings can only be generalized to populations that share the specific characteristics with the sample, so in this case all known and used services of the "ChristoasTaxi".

Another important limitation of the study is lack of previous studies in the research area, thus further research is necessary to examine promotion of taxi services in Paphos via social media with particular emphasis on Facebook.

It is important to mention limitations of the type of the research also.
Qualitative research is not a statistically representative form of data collection, and it's very important to state it. It can only provide research data from various perspectives of respondents. Moreover, it is difficult to replicate results, thus the data collected through qualitative research can be difficult to verify, which can lead to questioning the conclusions that researchers generate through this process. Also, because the qualitative research method is based on individual perspectives which can change, thus the data gathered is only reliable at the time it is gathered.

Regarding thematic analysis, because of its flexibility, it can lead to inconsistency and a lack of coherence while developing themes derived from the research data (Holloway & Todres, 2003). In this particular study, the researcher for instance could miss some important codes, or themes as analyzing data with usage of this method is time consuming and difficult. Moreover, another disadvantage of this approach is that it is phrase-based, so sometimes phrases cannot capture the meaning correctly. Therefore, in this particular study some of the themes could be named wrongly, as it depends on the subjective point of view of a researcher.

6.2. Recommendations for practical implementation

Based on the results of conducted interviews it is strongly recommended for the "ChristosTaxi" company to implement as many suggestions as possible from listed below:

1) Create an account on Instagram
Since all respondents said that they use Instagram on a daily basis, the "ChristosTaxi" company should consider creating an account there, especially since the platform allows paid advertising. Thanks to that the firm could attract potential new customers, keep regular ones engaged and increase their brand awareness.

2) Respond to comments section on Facebook page
The "ChristosTaxi" company should monitor, and be involved in their comments sections under their posts on Facebook, as comments are frequently checked by prospect customers before they make a purchase decision, as it has been said during the interviews.

3) Run contests on their Facebook page, and/ or offer deals regularly

It has been said by respondents that contests and deals matter to them, and help to increase their loyalty towards the brand and brand awareness, thus the “ChristosTaxi” company should take into account creating on a regular basis either deals or contests, or even do both.

4) Join Facebook groups related to transportation in Paphos

The “ChristosTaxi” company by participating in various discussions could not only increase its brand awareness, but also promote their services, especially that it has been said during interviews that people often ask for recommendations in groups on Facebook.

5) Join Facebook marketplace

As it has been said during interviews, the Facebook marketplace is frequently visited when people are searching for a specific product, or a service, so the “ChristosTaxi” company can make their presence visible there in order to promote their services.

6) Run paid Facebook campaigns

Since participants are not bothered by seeing paid Facebook ads it would be a great way to promote the company's services. The company should target both age groups 18-30 and 31-45 from various locations abroad, as Cypriots seldom use taxi services.

The “ChristosTaxi” company by implementing all above recommendations or even one of them could reach some of their goals stated in the conceptual framework model like increasing brand awareness, or intention to book a taxi ride. One of the expected outcomes in the conceptual framework model were the intention to book a taxi ride, and a new taxi ride booking. Unfortunately, answer to both is not précised as respondents are anyway regular customers of the “ChristosTaxi” company. Therefore, recommendation for future research is to revise the conceptual framework model that needs to be empirically tested via quantitative survey approach.

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APPENDICES

Appendix number 1
Blank consent form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Promotion of taxi services in Paphos via social media. The case study of the company "ChristosTaxi" Facebook Page.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by ***Daria Magdalena Wójcicka***, from the ***Department of Economics and Business*** at **Neapolis University in Paphos, Cyprus**. *The study is being conducted as part of the master dissertation.*
You have been asked to participate in this research to gather necessary in-depth insights regarding the topic of the master dissertation.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study is designed to examine and establish what steps must be taken to successfully promote taxi services via social media with particular emphasis on Facebook.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a video Skype call that will be recorded. During the call you will be asked to answer a series of questions. The duration of the interview may take up to one hour.

BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS

Information provided by you will be used to examine ways of promotion of taxi services on social media with particular emphasis on Facebook.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____
Printed Name of Subject

_____ _____
Signature of Subject Date

_____ _____
Signature of Witness Date

Appendix number 2
Transcript of one of the interviews

1. Which social media platforms do you have an account with?
Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest

2. How frequently do you use each?
Insta and Facebook every day, the rest once or twice a week.

3. What types of products or services do you purchase via social media? Do you book taxi services via social media?

Various, like clothes, books, cosmetics, but I have never bought any services as far as I recall. I haven't look for a taxi service on social media yet.

4. How often do you use social media to purchase product or a service?
Very often. Usually few times a month, and sometimes even twice a week.

5. How do you search for a specific product or service on social media?
I usually use Facebook Marketplace, but I also ask my friends on Facebook. Sometimes I also go directly to the Facebook page of a company that sells something I'm looking for.

6. Do you follow any specific brands on Facebook? If yes, how often do buy from them/ use their services? DO you follow any taxi companies in Paphos?
Yes, I follow many brands but it's difficult for me to say how often do I buy something from them. Let's say twice a month. I also follow taxi companies, but I seldom use their services.

7. What is your attitude regarding sponsored (paid) ads on Facebook?
I don't mind seeing them.

8. How often do you click on them to see the full post?
I don't know. I have never thought about it. I think I clicked few times, for sure.

9. What is your attitude regarding sponsored (paid) taxi ads on Facebook? How often do you click on them to see the full post?
I have never seen such advert but if I saw from a taxi company that I know I would click to see it just out of curiosity, maybe I'd even book it if I needed.

10. How often do you make a purchase or use a service after clicking on an advert on Facebook?
It happened to me recently. I bought shoes heheh. But I don't know how often it happens. Let's say once every three months.

11. How often do you participate in contests run by companies via social media?
Often, especially if someone tags me. Sometimes even once a week, depends if I know about contest.

12. In what type of contest do you usually take part and what do you have to do?
In a contest where I can win travelling accessories, jewelry, or cosmetics. It depends what I have to do. Sometimes I have to write a text about something, sometimes post a nice photo, sor tag my friends under company's post etc.

13. In what way a contest run on Facebook helps you learn more about the company that runs it?
Honestly, I don't care about a company, or an influencer who runs a contest. I only care for the prize I can win but it happened to me once that I saw that a company deleted a comment made by someone who was not very pleased with a product and their customer service. I lost my trust, because I think that they could treat me in the same way if I would ever contact them to make a complaint.
Anyway, I think that in some way a contest can definitely help to learn more about the company if someone cares about it.

14. In what way contests engage you to the brand?
If I can win something valuable then I feel strongly engaged.

15. How in your opinion running a contest by a company influences its brand awareness?
It has a big influence, I think. Especially if the prize is attractive, and in order to get it participants have to tag other people under post, and later they can participate and do the same.

16. What do you think about contests run by a taxi company on Facebook? Would you participate?
I think it would be a cool idea. If a prize would be attractive to me then yes, I would participate.

17. How important for you are deals that a company offers to their clients via social media?
They are super important. Thanks to attractive deals a company can gain new clients in my opinion.

18. What are the deals you are the most interested in?
Buy 1 and get 2nd for free, or discounts.

19. Have you ever made a purchase/ use a service because it was offered on social media by a company as a deal (eg. buy 1 get 2nd for 50% price)?
Yes, many times.

20. To what degree offered deals engage you to the brand?
I don't know. If deals are attractive and I need to buy something then I would feel highly engaged. It's difficult to say. It really depends.

21. How in your opinion running a deal by a company influences its brand awareness?
Highly, I think. Especially if a deal is attractive to people.

22. What do you think about a taxi company offering a deal on their Facebook page?
I think it's a good idea to attract people, especially if a deal is attractive to them. For me a free ride would be attractive. I think I'd be interested.

23. How often do you use taxi services in Paphos?
Very seldom, because I have my own car but it happens from time to time when I'm going out and I want to drink alcohol.

24. Which taxi companies in Paphos do you use?
"ChristosTaxi" of course.

25. What is your opinion about using taxi services that are promoted via social media?
I don't have anything against it, especially if a company has positive reviews on their Facebook page.

26. To what degree offered deals and/ or contests by a specific taxi company could influence you to book a taxi ride?
It really depends if I needed a taxi, but if yes then I think that I would be highly influenced by both, especially if a company could offer me something attractive to me.

27. To what degree does Facebook advertising annoy you?
It does not annoy me. I understand that companies pay for advertising to spread their reach, so I totally get that.

28. Does advertising on Facebook inspire you to be loyal to the brand?
I don't think so. I don't know.

29. How do Facebook adverts engage you with companies?

If an advert can offer me something that I like then I think I'm highly engaged.