The effect of social media on the Kuwaiti SMEs 2017
El impacto de las redes sociales en las pymes kuwaitíes en 2017

Abdulmuhsen AlAjeel[1]
alajeel_kw@yahoo.com
Amiri Diwan Affairs of Kuwait, Kuwait

Abstract

In Kuwait, there has been a drastic increase in the uses of social media platforms through online communication of products, brands and services. Many Kuwaiti entrepreneurs depend on these creative social media channels to reach their goals and shorten their path to success. Famous social media celebrities are used to endorse and promote brands on different social media platforms. Several successful online public relation projects in Kuwait proved that the use of social media is very beneficial and can lead to success and in a quicker period of time. Online PR through social media has a great effect on the decision making process of buyers and on the attitudes of the online users towards the targeted brand, company or cause. Nowadays online PR through Social Network Sites (SNSs) is overwhelmingly drawing the attention of a large number of entrepreneurs who do business communicating their products and services online. This scientific article will try to clarify the affect of online communication through different digital platforms in the state of Kuwait and their impact on people and their lives, in terms of achieving more success in their small and medium businesses. For this purpose, a large wide of investigation techniques using different kinds of methods for collecting data is used.

Keywords: Social Media, Public Relations, communication, entrepreneurs, Small and Medium Enterprises and State of Kuwait

Resumen

En Kuwait, se ha producido un aumento drástico en los usos de las redes sociales en la comunicación de productos, marcas y servicios. Muchos empresarios kuwaitíes dependen de estas redes sociales para alcanzar sus objetivos y acortar su camino hacia el éxito. Se utilizan diversas celebridades con alta resonancia en las redes sociales para respaldar y promover marcas en diferentes plataformas de redes sociales. Varios proyectos exitosos de relaciones

---

[1] Abdulmuhsen AlAjeel is Media Specialist, Amiri Diwan Affairs Department , Amiri Diwan of Kuwait, Kuwait.

públicas online en Kuwait evidenciaron que el uso de las redes sociales es muy beneficioso, y puede llevar al éxito en un período de tiempo más corto. Las relaciones públicas online a través de las redes sociales tienen un gran efecto en el proceso de toma de decisiones de los compradores y en las actitudes de los usuarios online hacia la marca o la empresa. Hoy en día, las relaciones públicas online a través de las redes sociales (SNS) está atrayendo abrumadoramente la atención de un gran número de empresarios, que hacen negocios comunicando sus productos y servicios en línea. Este artículo intenta aclarar el efecto de la comunicación en línea a través de diferentes plataformas digitales en el Estado de Kuwait y su impacto en las personas en su cotidianidad, en términos de lograr más éxito en sus pequeñas y medianas empresas, entre las que se encuentran empresas vinculadas al turismo. Con este propósito, se utilizan varias técnicas de investigación que han permitido la recopilar datos.

Palabras clave: Redes sociales, Relaciones públicas, comunicación, empresarios, pequeñas y medianas empresas y el estado de Kuwait

Summary

Sumario

1. INTRODUCTION

Public relation through social media represents one of the recent and fundamental trends of communication activities, which led to a great success in many business companies and campaigns because it is an effective tool which helps for wide branding spread. No one ignores the vitality of public relations in the field of communications and the most important goal for online PR is to persuade the consumer and see their reactions towards using the service or buying the product, therefore this is a promotion for the brand itself through promoting its products (VanRysdam, 2010).

Once the business adopts social media transformation, there are significant benefits to the business which includes definite financial benefits to the companies, product development, promotions, market research, advertisements, feedback from the customers, branding and as well as promoting the word of mouth marketing. Social media has made marketing communication smoother and easier by having direct interaction between SMEs and their customers and it saves working time and effort as well as improving SMEs' efficiency. "You should be able to see very clearly then that social media offers a gigantic opportunity for any business-owner to promote their products to exactly the sort of marketing they want to reach" (Comm, 2010).

Kuwait is a country where 70% of the population includes expatriates, there are 1.4 million expatriates belonging to Asia while 1.1 million are Arab expatriates (Paci, 2017). Even though the country is said to be a high-income nation, the economic scenario of the country reflects it to be among the middle income countries. The private sector of the economy and the contribution of SMEs have been significant. Since most of the employees in Kuwait are employed by the government sector, there has been immense diversification, which would transform the financial hub of the country in the future (KISR, 2016).

In Kuwait, Social media has existed everywhere and become very important for entrepreneurs in sharing content and posting online. Companies took advantage of the Social Media Marketing techniques and reached a broad market and targeted consumers quickly and inexpensively and let people interact with one another making strong relationship with online users. Furthermore, this rapid change in our society had led to the emergence of a lot of creative projects in different types of SME such as: Dessert collections, beauty services, wedding parties, automotive services and online orders…etc. Depending on online advertising tools Many of Kuwaiti entrepreneurs assume that the success of any SME needs a perfect and excellent medium, which is new channels of public relation methods.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Public Relations through Social Media

Social media is an umbrella term of online communication channels that are entirely dedicated to community based input. It is a medium that allows users from all over the world to come together to share content, interact and collaborate. There are websites, forums, blogging and microblogging, social bookmarking and social networking (Fuchs, 2017). Social media is a platform to create virtual communities and networks so that individuals come together and share common interests. Every social media platform is different and yet the same, they are different in their core offerings to the users but same in terms of forming community (Levenburg, Schwarz and Motwani, 2015). Social media is basically a web and Internet based applications, highly interactive, they promote user-generated content such as videos, digital photos, texts, comments and reviews. Users have the privilege to serve specifying profiles on applications or websites. Social networks are formed through social media by connecting the user's profile with other groups (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

Social media gifted the users with the sense of community, a sense of belonging, even virtually. The increase of virtual community opportunity is rising for the users as they can create a community anywhere at any time. They are not bound to geography (Piñeiro-Otero & Martínez-Rolán, 2016). Most of the businesses, however, want to keep themselves engaged in these online PR communities. Facebook and Instagram are platforms where pages and accounts are dedicated to brands and managed by brands. They also serve as hubs for public relations and a sense of community. All the users, and consumers of the same brand come together to share their idea listen to the brand message to carefully respond to it (Donnellan, 2016). However, the brands through online PR present on different sites and social media platforms, which enables brands to understand what they are doing and what are their competitors doing. This brings them closer to their competition and paves ways for them to listen to the consumers and respond with an improved or same message (Jakobson & Rueben, 2013).

Social media was present since the 1950s where telephone network was a source of socialization and communication. Hence, there was a formation of a homemade electronic

device helping to facilitate for people to make free calls. With the passage of time, in the 1960s, the concept of email was developed, however it was not available to the public till the year 1991 after which internet was made available. Initially, it was done through the connection of two computers that were connected to the same server and had to be online together (Curtis, 2013). However, social media networking sites were created in the 1990s which were highly niche and people were able to interact through different contact models. In the meantime, the blogging and opinion sites were created where the customers read about the product and created reviews (Ellison, & Boyd, 2013).

To understand the importance of social media, one must understand where the e-commerce world and online advertising industry has gone in terms of total spending. Social media has received a lot of attention because of the benefits it provides to users. Most people now use social media in the form of apps on their smart phones. Social media provided space for individuals to come together to form a sense of online community, sharing ideas and thoughts and the need for belonging. The concept of staying in touch with friends, family and colleagues lifts up the communication bond (Leung, Law, Van Hoof & Buhalis, 2013). There has been a tremendous change in the PR industry, it is transitioning more and more to the online world, people are switching to purchasing online throughout the world. There are different companies who are increasingly moving towards the use of social media celebrities or in other words "Social Media Influencers" to successfully promote both their goods and services to the customers. According to the study by eMarketer, it is expected that by the year 2020, the global mobile advertising revenues would reach around $6 billion yearly (Bokunewicz, Bokunewicz, Shulman & Shulman, 2017).

2.2. Social Media on Kuwaiti SMEs

Social media has become one of the most important ingredients for the success of a company. They have changed the way companies form their marketing strategies and communicate with the customers (Elasrag, 2011). These days companies are able to target particular customers that are relevant to their business and deliver their message that is related to their interest and needs, hence resulting in the overall promotion being more effective. It is very important that the companies understand social media and it is also very important to manage the changes in the business environments (Gilinsky, Stanny, McCline

and Eyler, 2015). The usage and formation of a strong social media can definitely result in increasing firms' competitiveness and maximizing their customer reach without investing significant amounts. With the development of information technology, multimedia has resulted in companies becoming information intensive. There becomes a partnership between the online agents and the firms, they help them strengthen competitive advantage especially for SMEs. For example, there are more than one billion active users of Facebook and the message sent through this forum has exceeded 20 billion around the world (Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden, 2011).

The MENA region consists of the Middle East and North America. The MENA region includes Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordon, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Sahrawi Arab, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The uncountable amounts of petroleum and gas found in this region make it an important factor in the economic stability of the world. The population in the MENA region has increased drastically from around 110 million in the 1950's to the great jump of 569 million in 2017 (McKee, Keulertz, Habibi, Mulligan,Woertz, 2017). The GCC is the Gulf Cooperation Council which includes specific counties from within the MENA region. It is a union between the counties Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman.

Kuwait, a country part of the Gulf Cooperation Council, is always looking for advancement in all areas. It is a located in Asia and is a small country in size, it is on 17,818 square kilometers of land with a coastal line reaching around 500 kilometers (including the islands). It is located on desert land and usually has hot dry summers and short cold winters. Around 70% of Kuwait's population are expatriates with only 30% Kuwaitis. English is spoken by the majority of the citizens, but the main language of the country is Arabic. The currency used in Kuwait is Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD) and is considered one of the strongest currencies today due to the stability and the investments of the country. The capital of Kuwait is Kuwait City and the local time in the country is 3 hours more than GMT. It has a democratic Amiri regime with a constitution. The ruler of the country is the Amir of the State. The authority is transferred between the members of the ruling family. Amir is the title of the ruler of Kuwait, the Amir rules through the cabinet.

Kuwait is considered a country that constantly gives to other countries, whether by sending relief, giving loans or by the many other ways it has given to others in this world. They always have a helping hand when it comes to the developing countries in need and in helping build better societies and economies around the world. President Jimmy Carter has named the Amir as a 'global humanitarian leader' and described him saying "his support of disaster relief, peace efforts and advancing public health are an inspiration. Other world leaders can learn from the wise example set by my friend, His Highness the Amir" (Andrew, 2016).

Kuwait has been considered as the hub of online PR, among all other Middle Eastern countries. The Kuwaiti online community ranks the highest in online usage. Northeastern University Studies showed that Kuwait tweets more per person than any other country in the world. Recently twitter plays a good role upon setting online public relations, which helped many of entrepreneurs to upraise their communication activities. Furthermore, twitter added online video service, which led many to share together their business enterprises (Arab Social Media Report, 2014). Kuwait has a semi free media when compared to the countries in the Middle East. This is mainly from the democratic nature of the country, as the parliament in the country is selected by the people and the print media is mostly privately owned therefore less restrictions and more freedom of opinion. Kuwait online society users are active, they dominate Instagram. Statistics show that #Kuwait has been used in 8.2 million posts. While #USA has around 7.7 million, considering Kuwait has a population of 4 million and the USA, 300 million.

In Kuwait, it is noticed that some online PR channels are popular among males, they mostly prefer Twitter, as it brings them all the news regarding politics, events, and has on the spot news. Instagram, on the other hand, attracts females more, like fashion, food recipes, hair styles, community news and so on. Another PR channel used is Snapchat, it became popular fast and is a good communication tool, the material shown in it is fresh, live and doesn't stay long, that's why it pushes people to watch and follow before the footage disappears. On Instagram, you can watch a video, you have the option to comment, like or dislike and you see the pictures as if they are live, this social media PR channel is very effective in the success and broad expansion of small and medium enterprisers' in our Kuwaiti community

Bin Dhafari. F. (2015, May 12). Personal interview. There has been a tremendous change in the PR industry and people are switching to purchasing online throughout the world.

Facebook is one of the most well-known platforms out there and is the most popular social media platform by expats living in Kuwait. 94% of expats living in Kuwait use Facebook while only 55% of locals use it. This shows that the locals adapt and change with trends and get accustomed by new platforms, unlike expats who stay with the older platform (kazi, 2017, July 12). Personal interview. Instagram, on the other hand, is a picture sharing smart phone app and is very popular by Kuwaiti locals but not popular with expats living in Kuwait. 65% of locals use the app while only 11% of expats use this app. Instagram celebrity influencers are people who have lots of followers and influence viewers with their posts, they post ads that reach a huge variety of audience. Kuwaiti Influencers are very popular and are followed and loved by many in Kuwait, the GCC, the MENA region and even the rest of the world. Many local businesses use them for online PR and in recent years, international companies and brands have been reaching these influencers and using them for their advertisements. The popularity of the influencers is what makes SMEs in Kuwait use them to become popular and reach their target goal in a quicker way.

Snapchat is also a major social media platform, it is the most popular social media outlet by Kuwaiti locals. 70% of locals use Snapchat while only 14% of expats use it. Snapchat is a great outlet for online public relation because most of the locals use it on a daily basis. Twitter is like a personal mini blog type of social media outlet where anyone can post and express themselves with a few characters. 46% of Kuwaitis use twitter and only 10% of expats use this app (kazi, 2017, July 12). Personal interview.

As Kuwait is the core of this article, it is noted that in recent times, there has been a significant boom in the social media influencers including the following names Ascia, Abodka, Bibi, Vintagebaza, Fouz and Almutairi...etc. These Influencers advertise on their social media platform in order to reach people and convince them in purchasing what they have presented online, whether it is makeup, shoes, hair care products or trying a new restaurant. Influencers became the most effective communication tool for the companies as an online public relation strategy for their goods, services and events. Through their online PR channels they insist to involve the people in the newest trend and influence them into

purchasing the marketed product. The new trends are usually set by the brands, the influencers force people interested in their social media profile to follow them as they control their buying decisions (Almutairi, 2017, July 19). Personal interview.

These influencers have become an important tool of marketing in Kuwaiti society. They are forgoing their privacy by making all their accounts public and allowing any online user to visit and follow their account. Their advertising techniques concentrate on using mediums such as Instagram, using "#" hash-tags and tagging "@" the company on the products that they are promoting. In addition, the wide spread of advertising in Snapchat platform Ads or even with the influencers through using online "code" that lead the users to use these codes for a special discount. Bin Dhafari, F. (2017, August 10). Personal interview. Consequently, the wide online fame had led those influencers to have their own business without any interference from other advertising agencies or any support of other business owners. As they have become independent in managing their business and benefit from the online revenue through their social media accounts, which cost them zero money. In the first years of social media existence in Kuwait, most online celebrities were amateurs, they improved with time.

The successful online businesses in Kuwait had required that the rest of the SMEs take motivation from these successful firms and apply different strategies in their businesses to be able to compete in the market (Salloum, 2017, July 26). Personal interview. Some of the most successful online small business enterprises in Kuwait have expanded their e-commerce from local market into Gulf market. This broad success and popularity had led some foreign investment companies from Germany (Rocket Internet and Delivery Hero) to take full acquisition of two of the most successful Kuwaiti SMEs. Rocket Internet had bought Talabat and Delivery Hero bought Carriage later on.

Talabat.com is the first website for online delivery service in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman. Talabat.com started with providing their services to only Kuwait and later on expanded to the other countries. By using the internet and social media the company was able to reach more viewers and customers and become successful and expand. The use of the online platform and making their own app helped in reaching more users and even reaching the companies abroad who later were very interested in acquiring

the company. Talabat.com applications offer a service in connecting customers with their favorite restaurants. It takes just a few clicks from your computer to place an order through Talabat.com. The German Rocket Internet company is the biggest internet company in Europe. Rocket Internet expanded their investment fund portfolio in the Gulf Countries through a full acquisition of Talabat.com, in the amount of 150 million in 2015 (Sheahan, 2015).

Kuwait's wide success in the field of online food business and the creativity in finding out the needs and the awareness of the purchasing behaviour of online users, had led many foreign companies to enter the Kuwaiti market. After the purchase of Talabat.com by Rocket Internet, a Company called Delivery Hero (German Company) came to Kuwait to purchase a Kuwaiti online food ordering enterprise called Carriage.

Delivery Hero made an enticing offer to Carriage, the owners of the enterprise took the deal but enforced one main condition, the four founders must remain employees of the company until they decide to leave themselves. On the 29th of May 2017, Delivery Hero acquired Carriage for 200 million dollars (Almutawa, 2017, August 25). Personal interview. The utilization and dependency on social media and online marketing is believed to increase with the passage of time making it important for firms to adapt to this change in the current situation (Beale, Malson, and Tischner, 2016).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research includes a series of interviews with people who work in the online PR field, in addition to a questionnaire for Kuwaiti entrepreneurs who established small and medium business enterprisers. The interviews and the questionnaire included in this project aim to highlight the importance of public relation through social media and its influence as a factor of change and expansion in business communications. Methodology is "A way of thinking about and studying social phenomena" and methods are "techniques and procedures for gathering and analyzing data" (Strauss & Corbin, 2008).

The research is the most important support of the article, since it helps to align the article in the most effective way. Article methodology, in other words, is said to be the path in which the writer follows to identify and recognize the problem or the phenomenon which is

examined in the article, hence reveals the facts which are related to the answers to which the questions were raised. It is achieved through different ways in which the data is gathered and then analyzed to be able to reach to an efficient conclusion. The design of any research article has to be accurate and focuses on the basic plan and the logic behind that makes it possible to be able to draw general conclusions from it.

This part lays emphasis on the research study population identified and then the sampling procedures are explained which include different ways through which the writer would carry out the article. The article study reliability and validity issues are also taken into consideration and the statistical methods used in the data analysis are explained in detail. The success of the article depends on the methodological approaches selected for the study relying heavily on the features, ways through which it is implemented, the definition of the steps, ways through which data is gathered and information is established and how the overall approaches has been used.

For this research, there will be a use of mixed approach including both quantitative and qualitative approach. The qualitative part refers to the exploratory research helping to gain true understanding about the fundamental reasons and opinions by providing details about the problem and then developing the research study. It is used to analyse the opinions and trends, which dive deeper into the problem. There are different techniques, which are included in this article, but the most important one is the questionnaire, which is used in this article study as the qualitative approach. On the other hand, the quantitative research refers to solving the problems through generation of the numerical data, which could be transformed into statistics and analyzed in that way. This approach quantifies the opinions, different attitudes and behaviours to define the variables and the results are generalized from the sample from larger population.

Period of collecting data

Research period extended for many months and it was distributed to many intervals. Questionnaires for small business enterprise projects, interviews with entrepreneurs, media active, influencers, mangers of offline media such as newspapers, radio and Television.

Questionnaire Study Field Sample

The research study was done on small and medium business enterprises in Kuwait who took part in the event held on February and March 2017, in the period of two months, it was the country's national celebration. The survey study tool which was applied for this research study, was a questionnaire which was distributed during the event, this event was sponsored by the Government and it was under the title "National Community Development Projects for Kuwaiti Youth". The event organizers divided the Traditional Event of National days for youth project Expo 2017, into four periods. Therefore, the study population were the participants of the four periods, it was located at Al Mubarkia, Kuwait City, from: 5:00pm – 10:00pm on each weekend of the two months, starting from the 16th of February to the 11th of March 2017.

Methodological Measures: To achieve the objectives of the article, the statistical analysis SPSS was applied to transform the primary data into understandable results and facts. This kind of analysis is beneficial for both qualitative and quantitative data, as it gives appropriate results for the data that has been entered and attains their results. Moreover, SPSS analysis saves time and one can compare the data sets accurately, hence it was applied in order to get information on a scientific basis and to achieve the targeted objectives of the article.

Sample Size

The sample size of the research was 355 participants and all of them were Kuwaiti business entrepreneurs who ran their business on their own. 322 of the participants had responded to our study method and got involved in the questionnaire, while 33 of the total number were passive for different reasons: shortage of time, busy with their work of organizing through the event and others didn't complete answering the whole paper questions, so they were removed from the measurement scale in order to get accurate study results. The margin of error for the research study was low, it reached 2% with the confidence level 98% from the over all response of the questionnaire. Hence, this statistical method was made to enrich the targeted topic on the basis of a profound and accurate level of academic scientific research.

Questionnaire

The study was based on a survey tool through a questionnaire, which is directed for small business entrepreneurs aiming to identify the scientific and objective variables. Besides using the qualitative and quantitative approach to measure the business owners' attitudes towards this new trend of online PR through social media, which mainly depend on online communication. Another tool was used for data collection in the research, which were direct and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire is out of a population of 355 participants, the article was illustrated through questionnaires for those individuals and the number of sample had reached 322 respondents of the total population, the results would be obtained from this sample size. The population includes the owners of the small and medium sized enterprises being run in Kuwait. The focus was to lay emphasis on the smaller projects taking place in Kuwait mainly in the business sector. There were 355 small and medium businesses identified who were participating in the event and they became the study population for this study.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Questionnaire Analysis

Gender: Male 41% and Female 59% of total 100% Percentage.

In this survey, the sample population of the respondents were 322, they were divided into 190 females and 132 were male participants in a percentage, While the age group of the participants were between the ages of 18-45 years. The age groups sampled in this questionnaire between 18-24 years old, accounted for 10% of the total people surveyed, they were 32 people. 24-30 years old accounted 40% of the total people surveyed, they were 129 business owners. 31-36 years old were 35% of the people surveyed were 113 of the total. 38-45 years old were 15% of the people asked they account for 48 business owners.

4.2. Questions results

What is the best effective communication platform for a successful online public relation of your products or services?

The result showed that the majority of the population in the study prefer Instagram by 55% with 177 respondents, Snapchat comes in second with 30% and 96 respondents, while Twitter got 12% with 39 respondents and the last platform Facebook unfortunately got the least number 3% as only 10 respondents think it's a good platform for a successful online PR of a product or service. It is clear that online users in the Kuwaiti society tend to use mostly Instagram for successful communication, while Facebook is rarely used by online Kuwaiti users.

What are the major difficulties faced by the small businesses in Kuwait?

Since it was evaluated that the majority of the respondents were facing difficulties operating in Kuwait, there was a need to understand and identify the factors that had an influence on small business companies. There were 4 options given to the respondents to select from, which included financial constraints, communication consultation issues, technical issues and training and consultation problems. The results showed that out of 322 respondents, there were 145 who stated financial problem to be the major problem. Along with that, 49 respondents chose technical shortcomings, which was 15 % of the sample percentage. While 64 stated communication and training consultation as their major problem, since they did not have any kind of PR exposure. They were equal in the respondents' percentage with 20% for each. From this question, it was clearly evident that each of the respondents had more than one problem out of those 4 options from which Financial problems was said to be the biggest problem.

Is there an increased productivity with the use of social media?

The result showed that 70% of the respondents strongly agreed, with 225 respondents, while there were 30% who just agreed, with 97 respondents. A huge number of agreement meant that people in Kuwait do want to adopt the change in the online communication strategy and did believe that it might result in increased productivity for their businesses.

Do the comments and reactions about your online PR through social media affect your business?

Business owners where surveyed and asked the question above. From the answers received, 55% said yes with 177 business owners. Only 5% of them said no they consist of just 16 business owners. 10% of business owners said that the feedback of social media users might affect their business, they consist of 32 people. 30% of business owners said that it affects their business to a certain extent, they are 97 business owners.

5. CONCLUSION

The importance of social media in Kuwait is explained in the article, it was identified that social media has been a very important tool when it comes to promoting the brand as it allowed the companies to hit the target market directly. In addition, several social media platforms were discovered to be very effective when it comes to public relation through social media tools in the MENA region and most specifically Kuwait. Such platforms included YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and also Twitter. The successful PR campaigns were also discussed helping to understand how they became the footprints for others. There was a detailed background provided which reflected that the small and medium sized enterprises are the most important contributors to the growth and development of the Kuwait's GDP. There are numerous benefits of SMEs, however the focus of this research article was on social media benefits on the Kuwaiti SMEs. Finally, the aim of this article is to analyse the benefits of social media and online communication on the SMEs in Kuwait with the consideration of information system, which is the major concern. This study was extremely important for the economic development of Kuwaiti online users, as they are up to date and follow the trendiest application and newest ideas. The Kuwaiti community likes to use and test the newest programs and applications in the world of social media platforms and communications programs.

6. REFERENCES

ARAB SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT (2014, June). Citizen Engagement and Public Services in the Arab World: The Potential of Social Media. Dubai. (6th ed.). *Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government Publication*. Retrieved from: http://www.mbrsg.ae/getattachment/e9ea2ac8-13dd-4cd7-9104-b8f1f405cab3/Citizen-Engagement-and-Public-Services-in-the-Arab.aspx

BEALE, K., MALSON, H. AND TISCHNER, I., (2016). Deconstructing "real" women: Young women's readings of advertising images of "plus-size" models in the UK. *Feminism & Psychology*, 26(3), pp.378-386.

BOKUNEWICZ, J. F., BOKUNEWICZ, J. F., SHULMAN, J., & SHULMAN, J. (2017). Influencer identification in Twitter networks of destination marketing organizations. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology,* 8(2), 205-219.

COMM, J. (2010). *Twitter power 2.0, How to dominate your market one tweet at a time.* Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

CURTIS, A. (2013). The brief history of social media. Retrieved from https://www.uncp.edu/home/acurtis/NewMedia/SocialMedia/SocialMediaHistory.html

DONNELLAN, J. T. (2016). *Effect of Ad Repetition and Relevance in Social Media Advertising*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

ELASRAG, H. (2011). *Enhancing the competitiveness of the Arab SMEs*. Available at SSRN 1586454.

ELLISON, N. B., & BOYD, D. M. (2013). Sociality through social network sites. In *The Oxford handbook of internet studies.*

FUCHS, C. (2017). *Social media: A critical introduction*. Sage.

GILINSKY JR, A., STANNY, E., MCCLINE, R.L. AND EYLER, R. (2015). 'Does size matter? An empirical investigation into the competitive strategies of the small firm', *Journal of Small Business Strategy,* 12(2), pp. 1-13.

HANNA, R., ROHM, A. AND CRITTENDEN, V.L. (2011). 'We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem', *Business horizons*, 54(3), pp. 265-273.

JAKOBSON, G., & RUEBEN, S. (2013). *U.S. Patent Application No. 13/998,065.*

KISR. KUWAIT INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. (2012), Center of Scientific and Technical Excellence, 1st edition. *Institute Scientific publication*.

LEVENBURG, N.M., SCHWARZ, T.V. AND MOTWANI, J. (2015) 'Understanding adoption of internet technologies among SMEs', *Journal of Small Business Strategy*, 16(1), pp. 51-70.

LEUNG, D., LAW, R., VAN HOOF, H., & BUHALIS, D. (2013). Social media in tourism and hospitality: A literature review. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(1-2), 3-22.

MANGOLD, W. G., & FAULDS, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business horizons*, 52(4), 357-365.

MCKEE, M., KEULERTZ, M., HABIBI, N., MULLIGAN M., WOERTZ, E. (October 2017). *Demographic and economic material factors in the mena region*. No.(3). Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture. Retrieved from: http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/menara_wp_3.pdf

PACI, GOVERNMENT OF KUWAIT, (2017). The population in Kuwait citizens and expats. Kuwait: *Public Authority For Civil Information journal publication*.

PIÑEIRO-OTERO, T., & MARTÍNEZ-ROLÁN, X. (2016). Understanding Digital Marketing—Basics and Actions. In MBA (pp. 37-74). Springer International Publishing.

SHEAHAN, M. (2015, February 11). Rocket Internet buys Kuwait food delivery service Talabat. *Reuters.* Retrieved from https://www.reuters.com/article/rocket-internet-ma/rocket-internet-buys-kuwait-food-delivery-service-talabat-idUSL5N0VL1GY20150211

STRAUSS, A., & CORBIN, J. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research, Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

TALABT.COM, (2015). The total of downloading Talabt.com applications. *Kuwait annual report.*

VANRYSDAM (2010). *Marketing in A Web 2.0 World-using Social Media, Webinars, Blogs, and more to boost your Small Business on a Budget*. Florida, Atlantic Publishing Group, Inc.

WHITE, A., (2016). *The Amir of Humanity.* London: Wall Publication.