

THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN B2B MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON TURKISH COMPANIES¹

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ABSTRACT

The different characteristics of B2B and B2C markets affect the traditional marketing communication mix as well as the social media content strategy. However, it is seen that while some B2B companies have adopted well to social media, the others tend to imitate B2C companies in social media existence. This study aims to figure out which MARCOM tools are intensified in social media and if it works or not. For this purpose, every single social media post of 40 Turkish B2B SMEs have been classified into MARCOM tools and then the interaction performance of each post have been measured via engagement rate formula. Thus, evidence gathered to figure out what kind of content serves best in which social media platform for engagement and interaction. This study is believed to be a general guideline for selecting the right MARCOM mix in social media for B2B companies –at least- for B2B SMEs in Turkey.

Keywords: B2B MARCOM, B2B Social Media Marketing, B2B Content Strategy, Engagement Rate, Content Analysis

Jel Classification: M30, M31, M39

B2B PAZARLAMA İLETİŞİMİNDE SOSYAL MEDYA KULLANIMI: TÜRK İŞLETMELER ÜZERİNE KEŞİFSEL BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Öz

B2B ve B2C pazarlar arasındaki farklar, geleneksel pazarlama karmasını etkilediği gibi sosyal medya içerik stratejisini de etkiler. Fakat B2B işletmelerinin bir kısmı sosyal medyayı doğru şekilde benimsemişken, büyük çoğunluğunun halen B2C firmaları taklit etme eğiliminde oldukları görülmektedir. Bu çalışma, sosyal medyada hangi pazarlama iletişimi araçlarına yoğunlaşıldığını ve bu araçların işlevlerini yerine getirip getirmediğini ortaya koymayı hedeflemektedir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda 40 adet küçük ve orta ölçekli Türk B2B işletmenin sosyal medya paylaşımları tek tek incelenerek pazarlama iletişimi araçları bağlamında sınıflandırılmış ve her bir paylaşımın iletişimsel performansı etkileşim oranı formülü aracılığıyla hesaplanmıştır. Böylelikle ne tür içeriğin hangi sosyal medya platformunda en iyi şekilde fayda sağladığını ortaya koymaya yönelik bulgular edinilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın, sosyal medyada doğru pazarlama iletişimi karması kullanımı için Türkiye’de faaliyet gösteren küçük ve orta ölçekli B2B işletmelere genel bir kılavuz niteliği taşıyabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: B2B Pazarlama İletişimi, B2B Sosyal Medya Pazarlama, B2B İçerik Stratejisi, Etkileşim Oranı, İçerik Analizi

Jel Sınıflandırması: M30, M31, M39

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INTRODUCTION

Development of internet technologies have broken new grounds for communication And social media is one of the major and newest communication tools. The new communication tools have removed the borders and enabled rapid worldwide connectedness. As those tools are widely used by individuals, marketers have also seen the opportunities in social media and other digital communication channels. Marketing boundaries have totally disappeared and the whole world have been a potential market for all businesses thanks to the internet. At this point, the ability to communicate with the target market has been the key point for businesses. While B2C (Business to Consumer) companies quickly adapted and began to use social media effectively in their MARCOM efforts (Marketing Communications - advertising, public relations, personal sales, direct marketing, and sales promotion), B2B (Business to Business) companies still struggle to find out how to benefit from social media because of the differences in market characteristics.

The lack of social media experience in B2B MARCOM can be observed not only by glancing over the academic studies and industry reports on this subject, but also comparing the quantity of B2B and B2C companies which are heavily engaged to social media. A significant proportion of social media accounts belong to B2B companies consist of very few and limited content (Social Media Benchmarking Report, 2013; B2B Marketing Benchmarking Report, 2012). Blaney also vindicates this proposition and points out that most of B2B companies do not have a social media strategy and an action plan (2013: 70-72). But there are exceptions as well.

On the other hand, few industry reports about social media activities of B2B companies focus on the approach of B2B marketers on social media, their intention to use social media marketing, and expressions about their past performances (Social Media in B2B Marketing Survey, 2013; Social Media Marketing Industry Report, 2014). Even though B2B Content Marketing Report (2015) present deeper information about the content strategy and underlines the importance of a systematic content strategy, there is no evidence to figure out the components or formation of an effective content.

In addition, Michaelidou et al. (2011) have stated that especially B2B SMEs (Small and Medium Size Companies) do not benefit from

social media effectively, particularly from social networking sites. Companies do not exactly know where to be and what to do. Jussila et al. (2014) have also underlined the gap between the perceived potential of social media and use of social media among customers and partners in B2B companies. In fact, social media opens many ways for B2B companies to connect with their current and potential customers and generate leads if used properly. Besides, B2B marketers may evaluate final consumers as target audience in order to trigger the derived demand. Social media by the way, is an efficient and low-cost medium to reach big masses of interested consumers especially to create ingredient brands.

As social media is a communication channel with several platforms, it is important to expose the preferred social media platforms, frequently used MARCOM tools, and the engagement performance of the posts shared. The aim of this exploratory study is to reveal out the current activities of Turkish B2B companies from different sectors which use social media above average. By this way, it could be possible to present a general point of view for the contents of social media posts in terms of MARCOM tools and their engagement success. Thus it could be possible to determine the rights and wrongs made on social media.

Turkey were appropriate for sample selection because Turkey is a developing country with a high level of technological compliance. Turkey also have a high ranking in individual use of social media which offers companies many opportunities for reaching their target audiences.

1. SOCIAL MEDIA (SM), MARCOM & B2B

It is known that especially B2B marketing relies on existence of exchange relationship networks that create value for all parties, which is called relationship marketing (RM) (Grönroos, 1994:13). From this point of view, social media is nothing more than an unsophisticated and informal messaging tool between parties. But with an integrated approach of MARCOM and Relationship Marketing (RM), there has to be specially planned MARCOM efforts in order to achieve the desired outcomes from the RM strategy (Andersen, 2001: 178). Especially in the initial steps of relationship building process, social media is an effective tool for finding, attracting, and informing potential customers.

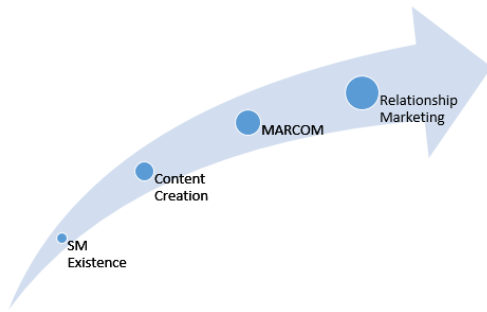


Figure 1: Path to RM in SM

It can be seen from Figure 1 that in order to use SM for B2B marketing purposes, having SM accounts and creating content are the basic steps. For the utilization of SM, content must be organized in terms of MARCOM tools compliant with the RM strategy of business.

Purchasing is a strategic process for a company. Professional and experienced employees from different departments are included to this process and constitute the buying center (Webster & Wind, 1995: 56). In response to buying center, the selling company have to establish a selling center in order to understand the needs of the customer completely and facilitate influencing interaction at different levels of function (Puri & Korgaonkar, 1991: 313). This is the only possible way for the parties of exchange to communicate and compromise for an industrial/B2B product in every respect. In a similar way, social media should be considered as an influencing interaction tool that delivers rational, functional, and reliable content, which is proper for the needs of sectorial experts. In addition, every single social media platform has its own characteristics and it may not be appropriate to use the same content everywhere.

Despite facts as rational purchasing motives, professional decision making, or high level of information; B2B marketing is under the influence of behavioral approach for several decades (Hadjikhani & LaPlaca, 2013: 299-302). According to Blaney (2013: 73), developing good relationships with target market is the key to success in B2B marketing .Within this scope, Gillin & Schwartzman (2011: 12) claims that B2B companies have more to gain from social media when compared to B2C companies because it is possible to affect B2B relationships at almost every level. B2B companies can deliver their expertise and experience more easily and develop more reliable relations via social media. As Bonoma & Johnston (1978) have stated, the major factors influencing the industrial purchasing decision are the social ones.

In their study about the differences of tweets between B2B and B2C businesses, Swani et al. (2014: 875) depict the flow of communication between marketers and customers in a social media context which has been adopted from classic communication process. According to this, both B2C and B2B marketers encode and send social media messages through social media sites, and customers receive and decode these messages. In the study, Swani et al (2014: 875-876) propound that there exists a difference in tweets in terms of branding and selling strategies and message appeals but there has been no analysis through the MARCOM characteristics of contents. A communication model derived from Swani et al. with MARCOM purposes has been presented in Figure 2:

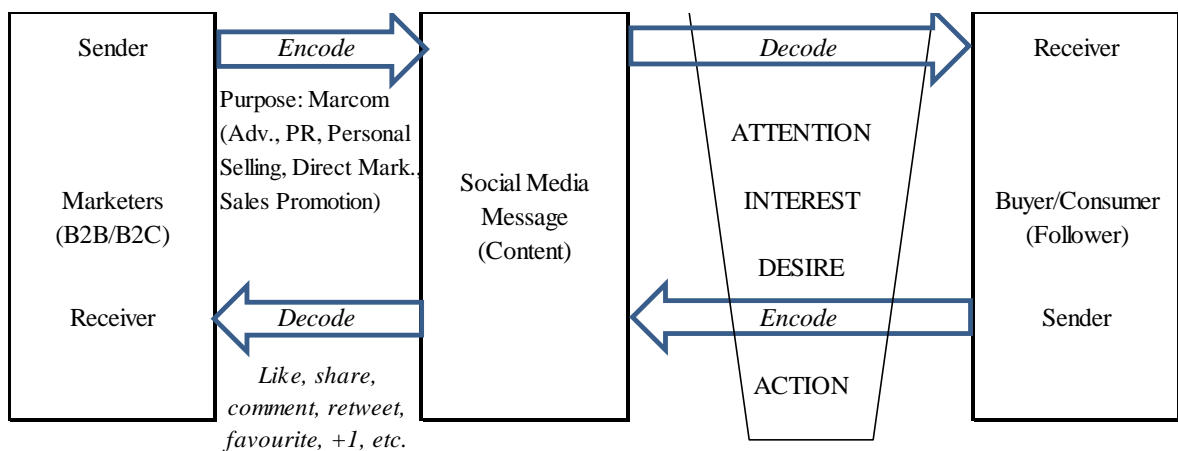


Figure 2: Social Media Communication Model

Source: Derived from Swani et al., 2014

Fill (2009: 5) defines MARCOM basically as the elements which are used for communicating an organization's offerings to a target audience. These elements may vary in a wide range of communication efforts and they together constitutes the MARCOM mix. MARCOM mix basically consists of five main types of tools which are advertising, public relations, personal selling, direct marketing and sales promotion (Cherunilam, 2008; Fill & McKee, 2011; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010; Mucuk, 2009).

Swani et al. (2014: 878) have proved that B2B content is different from B2C in terms of structure and the delivered message. Further, it is also possible to MARCOM communication tools. Thus, we can develop a better understanding about the scope of the messages delivered on social media in terms of MARCOM efforts. So, we can make the distinction about whether a social media post serves best as an advertisement or public relations (PR) tool, either personal selling or sales promotion, and so on.

2. SOCIAL MEDIA MEASUREMENT

Measuring social media performance is one of the major challenges for marketers because return of investment in social media is generally just not fiscal (Akar, 2010). Intangible factors like generated brand awareness, reputation increase, relationship development are some intangible outcomes of social media marketing and these factors are hard to measure.

By the way, effective and appropriate conversation with the target audience is crucial for a corporal social media account (Bodnar & Cohen, 2012). As relationship and interaction between buyer and seller is the main dimension of B2B marketing (Gillin & Schwartzman, 2011), interaction in social media can be deemed as more significant for B2B companies than B2C companies.

There are various ways for calculating the performance of a social media campaign, company page, or a posted content. Google Analytics, Omniture, Klout, PeerIndex, Tweetdeck, ViralHeat, FeedBurner are among the most popular tools used by companies to measure their social media performance. However, these tools require authorized access for analytics and it is not possible to view the metrics by third parties who are not the account manager or authorized personnel of the related company.

Nevertheless, there is a basic indicator which can be used by third parties for measuring the

interaction performance of a social media post which is referred as the engagement (interaction) rate formula. This simplified measurement can be found even on Facebook-Page Post Metrics , and is very convenient to apply on every social media platform. The original formulations actually measure the average post engagement rate and total engagement rate for a given day . In this study, the engagement rate formula has been modified to calculate rates for every single post which has been presented below:

$$\text{Engagement rate} = \frac{\text{Total number of engagements to a single post} * 100}{\text{Number of fans}}$$

This formula basically takes the number of likes, comments, shares, etc. into account and divides the sum to the total number of fans in order to figure out which size of crowd have created that interaction. The interaction/fans ratio is then multiplied by one hundred and the engagement rate is calculated.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study has been designed as a qualitative and exploratory research. Exploratory studies are a special case, because what is characteristic of them is that the case is not yet known but is only constructed in the course of the investigation (Flick et al., 2004: 169).

This study aims to reveal the use of social media for B2B companies in Turkey. In this regard, preferred social media platforms, the type of content (in terms of MARCOM tools), and the interactivity performance of the social media posts have been examined.

From this point, the study has a unique value as it examines the social media posts of businesses platform by platform in terms of dominant MARCOM effort of the content and measures the interactive performance of these efforts.

3.1. Data

In the study, 40 Turkish B2B companies have been selected by purposeful sampling. As stated by Patton (2002: 15), qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases which have been selected purposively. By applying extreme case sampling method for the study, cases which are information rich and available for deeper research were selected and then, it

could be possible to have an insight into the purpose of the study.

For the study, major industrial sectors have been searched in Google and listed companies have been examined whether they have active social media accounts or not. Afterwards, the companies which have active social media accounts have been included into the sample. The sectorial distribution of the companies examined is as below:

- Technology and software: 5
- Medicine: 6
- Advertising/digital agency: 5
- Logistics: 5
- Financial audit: 4
- Wall painting: 3
- Manufacturing (other): 12

The companies subject to the research are engaged in 5 different social media platforms in total which are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, and Instagram. Therefore, other social media platforms could not be included in the study.

3.2. Content Analysis

Social media posts of B2B companies have been classified into MARCOM tools by content analysis (Table. 1). Content analysis is a frequently used methodology to study marketing content, especially for understanding the MARCOM approach of the message (Kassarjian, 1977).

For the classification of social media posts by content analysis, MARCOM efforts have been separated into five categories as advertisement, public relations, personal selling, direct marketing, and sales promotion. These categories have been thematised by literature review in order to explain what type of content involves in which MARCOM tool. The generated framework have been submitted to two different academic colleagues who have been specialized in MARCOM, and their comments and revisions have been taken into consideration. The categorization of

content in terms of MARCOM tools can be seen below in Table 1:

As understood from the table, social media posts which bring product features or corporal information into the forefront have been evaluated under advertisement category. Social campaigns, how-to posts, or posts which are not about the company, product or sector just as season's greeting or words of wisdom have been regarded as PR posts. Content related to steps of personal selling process like customer need analysis, monitoring, and account management were classified as personal selling as well as posts about tradition personal selling activities. Posts with links to direct purchase pages and online catalogues on websites have been considered as direct marketing together with posts which intend for information acquisition for database generating. And finally, posts that announce sales campaigns and similar competitions were evaluated under sales promotion category.

For the process of content analysis, two researchers have examined the posts separately and abiding by the references in Figure 1, and made their own judgments for the classification of the content. At the end, researchers have agreed on approximately 88% percent of 6735 analyzed posts. Disagreed posts have been discussed one by one and included into most appropriate MARCOM tool after consensus. By peer debriefing and investigator triangulation, it is believed that the trustworthiness of the study have been corroborated.

3.3. Performance Measurement

As it was not possible to gain access to social media accounts of companies as administrator, the interactivity performance of the posts have been measured with the modified engagement rate formula above. As mentioned earlier, engagement rate formula is a simple, practical, and widely used tool for third party social media measurement.

Table 1: Categorization of Content in terms of MARCOM Tools

Marcom Tool	Feature of Content	Cited From
Advertising	Product, service and brand display or brief. (product features, functions, price, brand introduction, transfer of slogan, logo, brand colors or words, etc.)	Chen et al., 2007: 1047
	Corporation display (introduction of company/entity, facility features, labor info, product range, etc.)	Odabaşı & Oyman, 2010: 101
	Corporal news (recruitments, partnerships, turnover, income, capacity increase, new markets or sectors, new facilities, new assignments, etc.)	Odabaşı & Oyman, 2010: 101
Public Relations	Delivery of business problems or ideals and corporate identity (mission, vision)	Ferrrel & Hartline, 2011: 303
	Product or service benefits (independent from company or brand)	Yolaç, 2004: 196-197
	Dialog efforts regardless from company or sector	Odabaşı & Oyman, 2010: 101
	Social, environmental, economic, sectoral news and informative content.	De Pelsmacker et al., 2007: 297
	Social responsibility	Capriotti & Moreno, 2007: 84
	Sponsorships	Fill & Fill, 2004: 309
	Rewards, reports, and social occasions except personal fairs and exhibitions (seminar, workshop, etc.)	Odabaşı & Oyman, 2010: 101
Personal Selling	After-sales services and feedback demands from clients	Blythe, 2006: 255
	Commercial events (trade fairs, exhibitions, etc.)	Fill & McKee, 2011: 283
	Surveys or questionnaires for measuring customer satisfaction or expectations	Odabaşı & Oyman, 2010: 101
Direct Marketing	Contents which divert to online purchasing (Online catalogue, price list, live support, web site land page for purchasing, etc.)	Fill & McKee, 2011: 281
	Content for database generation (Online forms, personal information acquisition)	Pickton & Broderick, 2011: 585
Sales Promotion	Campaigns like discount, refund, lottery, prize, contest, etc.	Odabaşı & Oyman, 2010: 101

Source: Batum, 2014

4. FINDINGS

Social media accounts of 40 companies from several sectors have been analyzed, the posts have been classified into MARCOM tools, and various deductions made by revealing preferred social media platforms, scope of content, engagement rates, and number of posts and comparing this data among sectors.

The findings and related conclusions have been conveyed in three dimensions.

4.1. Platform Preferences

Table 2 represents the percentages about the use of platforms subject to the study in which global B2C and B2B preferences have been compared with our findings.

Table 2: Comparison of Platform Selection between Global Context and the Study

Social Media Platform	Global Findings (Figure 3)		Study Findings
	B2C	B2B	B2B
Facebook	67%	29%	97,5%
Twitter	10%	16%	77,5%
LinkedIn	5%	29%	25%
Google+	1%	3%	12,5%

Table 2 indicates that almost all of the companies subject to study have an active Facebook account. Despite LinkedIn is stated as the major social media platform for B2B marketing (Gehman, 2011; Powell, 2013) and as significant as Facebook in global context; the

usage of LinkedIn is only a quarter of Facebook for Turkey example.

When ranking of the platforms is evaluated, it is seen that our sample is more similar to global B2C behavior than B2B. As seen on Table 2, despite being 1st in global context, LinkedIn is the 3rd platform both for global B2C and Turkish B2B companies. It is same for all other three platforms.

This situation points out that Turkish B2B companies tend to imitate B2C companies in their social media existence. LinkedIn has not been adopted by Turkish companies yet and the platform plays second fiddle for B2B social media MARCOM in Turkey. This means that Turkish B2B companies cannot benefit from the unique business networking advantages of LinkedIn.

Table 3: Platform Preferences of Sectors

Sector	Firms	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Google+	Instagram
Medicine	6	5	4	0	0	0
Technology	5	5	5	2	1	0
Painting	3	3	3	1	3	1
Logistics	5	5	4	1	0	0
Adv. Agencies	5	5	4	1	0	0
Fin. Audit	4	4	4	3	0	0
Manufacturing	12	12	7	2	1	0
Total	40	39	31	10	5	1

When platform preferences of sectors are evaluated, it is seen that there are slight differences in platform selection between sectors. On the other hand, companies tend to similarize within sectors and companies which operate in the same sector generally show existence in same platforms. In other words, by the means of platform preferences, there are differences between sectors but on the other hand, uniformity has been observed within sectors.

4.2. MARCOM Tools

Table 4 displays data for the numbers and percentages of posts after classification. It is understood from the figure that PR type posts are dominant in all platforms. It means that

companies consider social media as a two way communication channel on a preferential basis. They use social media intensively for dialogue, information relaying, and receiving reactions.

Other interesting fact is the high ratio of advertisement-purposed content. As unit cost of mass media for many B2B markets is relatively high, advertisement is not a significant part of the traditional marketing mix for B2B companies (Fill & Fill, 2004: 302). However, zero cost of social media and existence of professional target audience have encouraged companies for sharing content which include pure information about their company/brand/product/services. In other words, B2B companies have seized the cost opportunity and converted social media into an effective advertisement channel.

Although personal selling is regarded as the primary element of traditional B2B marketing communications mix (Fill & McKee, 2011: 283), this type of content constitutes only 4.63% of the posts. It is seen that the most important factor of traditional marketing mix for B2B marketing is not considered as

important as for the digital –or at least- social media marketing mix.

Table 5 indicates the engagement rates of MARCOM tools in social media platforms and offers an insight to the success in content selection in terms of MARCOM tools.

Table 4: Distribution of Posts in terms of MARCOM Tools in Social Media Platforms

Platform	Advertisement		Public Relations		Personal Selling		Direct Mark.		Sales Promotion		Total	
	Qty	%	Qty	%	Qty	%	Qty	%	Qty	%	Qty	%
Facebook	465	21,92	1475	69,54	118	5,56	26	1,23	37	1,74	2121	100
Twitter	584	16,24	2713	75,44	168	4,67	48	1,33	83	2,31	3596	100
LinkedIn	75	15,21	407	82,56	8	1,62	3	0,61	0	0	493	100
Google+	119	28,81	247	59,81	17	4,12	0	0	30	7,26	413	100
Instagram	19	16,96	68	60,71	1	0,89	0	0	24	21,43	112	100
Total	1262	18,74	4910	72,9	312	4,63	77	1,14	174	2,58	6735	100

Table 5: Engagement Rates of Marcom Tools in Platform Base

Platform	Advert.	Public Relations	Personal Selling	Direct Marketing	Sales Promotion
Facebook	0,7591	0,9117	0,4103	0,5787	0,254
Twitter	0,05557	0,0999	0,0766	0,0081	0,049725
LinkedIn	0,4051	0,2538	0,1031	0,0773	0
Google+	0,2397	0,0934	0,203	0	0
Instagram	5,0047	4,7663	0,5655	0	1,5015

Table 5 figures out what kind of content interacts with target audience in which degree. It shows that while PR based posts have the highest engagement rates within Facebook and Twitter, advertisement-type posts retain the highest rates at other platforms. It means that PR content is more popular among B2C oriented platforms and advertisement content is more popular among “more B2B oriented” platforms.

The differences at engagement rankings point out the distinct characteristics of followers (target audience) in each platform. While the audience in Facebook and Twitter seem more emotional and tend to be more interested in posts about social responsibility, general issues, special days, etc.; audience of LinkedIn and Google+ seem to be rational and professional and bear on more specific issues just as product/service specialties, attributes, and corporal introductions.

On the other hand, personal selling related posts attain remarkable engagement rates on Twitter and Google+. Thus, it is obvious that personal selling based posts can arouse interest and create engagement in those platforms more effectively.

Despite the interactional success of advertisement based content in LinkedIn, Google+, and even Instagram and high performance of personal selling on Twitter and Google+; companies have preferred to concentrate on PR based content in all platforms. This situation points out that B2B companies lack the specific strategies required for every single social media platform and follow a general strategy which cover all platforms. Companies also tend to use a post in more than one platform. For this reason companies’ engagement rates are below average and they fail to attain high level of interactivity. Companies ignore the feedback that has been obtained from the rates and do not intend to change their content mentality. So they do not efficiently benefit from the unique advantages of different social media platforms.

4.3. Sectoral Analysis

Table 6 - 9 represents detailed data about the engagement rates and post quantities of sectors for every platform separately.

Table 6: Engagement Rates and Post Quantities of Sectors in Facebook

Sector	Advertisement		Public Relations		Personal Selling		Direct Mark.		Sales Promotion		Total	
	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Qty	%
Medicine	2,5	13	1,01	282	4,928	4	-	0	-	0	299	100
Tech.	0,2217	70	0,2774	102	0,205	56	0,0001	1	0,0037	5	234	100
Painting	0,0896	53	0,1509	112	0,105	8	-	0	0,0952	24	197	100
Logistics	2,799	27	1,855	220	0,1024	5	-	0	-	0	252	100
Agencies	0,635	23	0,3336	183	-	0	-	0	-	0	206	100
Fin. Audit	0,672	56	0,8735	109	0,0684	12	-	0	-	0	177	100
Manufact.	0,773	223	0,9644	467	0,456	33	0,602	25	0,887	8	756	100

Table 7: Engagement Rates and Post Quantities of Sectors in Twitter

Sector	Advertisement		Public Relations		Personal Selling		Direct Mark.		Sales Promotion		Total	
	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Qty	%
Medicine	0,11	8	0,1203	457	-	0	-	0	-	0	465	100
Tech.	0,0917	186	0,1235	441	0,0787	105	0,0003	20	0,055	12	764	100
Painting	0,0036	68	0,0236	271	0,0142	14	-	0	0,0489	58	411	100
Logistics	0,284	20	0,351	338	0,777	5	-	0	-	0	363	100
Agencies	0,0306	34	0,0293	634	0,0077	11	-	0	-	0	679	100
Fin. Audit	0,0233	42	0,0337	156	0,0118	11	-	0	-	0	209	100
Manufact.	0,029	226	0,0307	416	0,014	22	0,014	28	0,0491	13	705	100

Table 8: Engagement Rates and Post Quantities of Sectors in LinkedIn

Sector	Advertisement		Public Relations		Personal Selling		Direct Mark.		Sales Promotion		Total	
	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Qty	%
Medicine	0,11	8	0,1203	457	-	0	-	0	-	0	465	100
Tech.	0,0917	186	0,1235	441	0,0787	105	0,0003	20	0,055	12	764	100
Painting	0,0036	68	0,0236	271	0,0142	14	-	0	0,0489	58	411	100
Logistics	0,284	20	0,351	338	0,777	5	-	0	-	0	363	100
Agencies	0,0306	34	0,0293	634	0,0077	11	-	0	-	0	679	100
Fin. Audit	0,0233	42	0,0337	156	0,0118	11	-	0	-	0	209	100
Manufact.	0,029	226	0,0307	416	0,014	22	0,014	28	0,0491	13	705	100

Table 9: Engagement Rates and Post Quantities of Sectors in Google+

Sector	Advertisement		Public Relations		Personal Selling		Direct Mark.		Sales Promotion		Total	
	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Qty	%
Medicine	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	0	0
Tech.	0,188	8	0,1671	18	0	3	-	0	-	0	29	100
Painting	0,0838	73	0,0302	196	0,247	14	-	0	0	30	313	100
Logistics	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	0	0
Agencies	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	0	0
Fin. Audit	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	0	0
Manufact.	0,55	38	0,432	33	-	0	-	0	-	0	71	100

The above four figures indicate the distribution and interaction performance of posts in terms of MARCOM tools for all sectors separately in each platform. For instance, it is understood from Table 6 that 299 posts have been shared by medicine companies in Facebook with a distribution of advertisement: 13, PR: 282, and personal selling: 4. As indicated, there have been no posts for direct marketing and sales promotion. On the other hand, engagement rate of personal selling has the highest with a value of 4,9277 while average engagement rate of advertisement posts is 2,5 and PR is 1,01.

The same interpretations can be applied for all sectors and platforms as well.

The data obtained from the tables can be evaluated in two dimensions; intra-sectorial and inter-sectorial. Intra-sectorial findings present us information about the social media marketing behavior of companies operating in the same sector and inter-sectorial findings give us an insight for the social media marketing tendencies of different sectors.

Inter-sectorial findings indicate that sectors differ from each other in platform selection. Differences in MARCOM distribution of posts

also have been observed. By the way, engagement rates vary between sectors depending on the selected platforms, related MARCOM tool and sector.

Intra-sectorial data reflects the existence of similarities for the companies in the same sector. It is seen that companies in the same sector tend to show existence in same sectors and they post contents in similar MARCOM tools. In other words, sector competitors tend to imitate each other's moves in social media management. On the other hand, engagement rates within sectors fluctuate. While one company obtains high engagement rates, other competitive gets low values. This fact proves that quality of content determines the interactivity level and engagement rate of a post rather than the MARCOM tool classification or sectorial dynamics.

Briefly, it is observed that companies tend to ignore the characteristics of their target audience, they do not develop specific strategies for social media account management, and do not pay regard to unique characteristics of different platforms in content sharing. For instance, despite high engagement rates of personal selling or advertising oriented posts in medicine sector, companies still continue to focus on PR oriented posts. This situation also points out that companies do not reckon among interactional feedbacks from their target audience. On the other hand, same posts have been encountered in several platforms frequently which can be considered as a frivolous approach on social media content management. The lack of a reliable and serious strategy has also been reflected to social media accounts' interaction performance with low engagement rates.

In order to raise the low engagement rates and develop the relationship of companies with their target audience and thus converting followers into leads, a simple guideline have been presented regarding to the results of the study:

- i. Companies should analyze their target audience well and select the social media platforms to perform in accordingly,
- ii. Companies should choose the right MARCOM tools to focus on in their posts by taking into consideration their sector, target audience, and platform characteristics.
- iii. A content marketing strategy should be developed separately for every single social media platform in order to deliver the right message to the right audience.

- iv. Performance of posts should be evaluated by social media metrics and dynamic account management should be attained by adjustments and additions in the direction of feedbacks.
- v. In case of inability to transfer the required sources for an effective social media account management within company, outsourcing should be embraced and professional support should be demanded.

When platform preferences of sectors are evaluated, it is seen that there are slight differences in platform selection between sectors. On the other hand, companies tend to similarize within sectors and companies which operate in the same sector generally show existence in same platforms. In other words, by the means of platform preferences, there are differences between sectors but on the other hand, uniformity has been observed within sectors.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

As the study covers the social media posts between the dates of July 1 2013 – January 1 2014, the data obtained is limited with the given dates. Also purposive sampling is another limitation of the study and more descriptive sampling methods may be applied for further research. Besides, the engagement rate is a changeable factor and the rate of each post may variate since the date ratings have been calculated.

On the other hand, additional research can be done to see the insights of B2B social media behavior of Turkish companies. B2B and B2C companies may be compared under the framework of some affiliated criteria. It is also possible to compare the international or global social media accounts and national accounts of the same B2B companies to have a deeper sight for the situation of social media intelligence in Turkey. The content may be classified in more detail instead of the five MARCOM tools, and the engagement performance of content types can be understood more clearly.

In this study the only analyzed Instagram account has presented an excellent engagement performance with an average engagement rate value of 5,0047. This value means that Instagram have the highest interaction compared with other platforms. In this regard, B2B companies with Instagram account can be investigated and the

opportunities of Instagram for B2B companies may be unearthed.

In conclusion, despite the notion that B2B should be different than B2C, we have explored so far that B2B companies tend to imitate B2C companies in their social media strategies. B2B take a different tack from traditional marketing in social media, which is more close

to B2C strategies. That kind of behavior seems right for some situations, but unique and exclusive strategies are a necessity for B2B companies in general. B2B companies should focus on and pay more attention to social media in order to enhance their relationship with their clients.

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