Academic Use of Online Social Networks

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ABSTRACT: Now a day with the Internet revolution, the online business has been one of the most popular and efficient marketing methods. The change of the economy has the biggest impact on the business method. For example: social networking and its influence, shopping type, creativity, and create a new business environment.
Electronic business shows the success in the marketing over the world. Also, it becomes the promised feature of having deployed ideas in order to introduce products or services over the global.
The online services have been the most modern and convenient terminologies among the people using the social networking. When the social network has a hug influence on this kind of marketing, for example Facebook. We just heard about the Face book ten years ago and after four years only; the Twitter was launched. Those famous websites are the best examples can support the social networks. It was unbelievable in that time those billions of people will spend most their time on Face book. The most important thing, the market people started taking advantage of these social sites and make their own business. Moreover, many of them make a good investigation and develop good ideas.

KEYWORDS: Online-business, marketing, Social Networks, Online services, Facebook.

1   INTRODUCTION

Social Networks have a high impact on the marketing world. It becomes the most powerful tool over the commerce for attracting the customer. Recently, it becomes the most efficient tool uses in the market to effect the customer's decision of purchasing any product or service.

Even the big and known companies are using these online methods "social network tools" to spread their products and to announce about any new service. In order to keep up these services available and interesting; the companies need to know how to control these sites.

For the customers, the social networks are more trusted than promotions because they can express the reality more than the marketers [1, 2]. So, by using the social networks sites; the marketers can contribute in the conversation and share their information [3].

1.1   ONLINE-SOCIAL NETWORKS DEFINITION

These networks are online tools use for communication and sharing the activities and interests. Emails, blogs, newsfeeds [4] are all different provided tools of interaction ways that the people use to communicate with each other over these networks [5, 6]. That proved their straight over the communication side. The most known online social networks are the Face book, Twitter and LinkedIn for professional people [7]. The communication usually starts after creating the profile.

People start to setup their profile by filling their own information and expressing their interests. Based on this information, the user gets invitation from other friends who have same interests.

However, most websites require the friend relationship for providing linking service and sharing the activities over that network [8]. After the linking service done, the user will be able to join his/her friends and update them with the new information and activities. That leads to a fact that users manage to self-organize through life stage, attraction and more. These systems propose an exceptional opportunity for greatly aimed marketing.

1.2 SOCIAL NETWORKS INFLUENCE ON ONLINE MARKETING

As known the online users like to join in groups and share their experiences about any service or product over their network. The sound of that recommendation or opinion has more influence than the marketer messages. Previous studies show that more than 78% of online customers trust the others experience than watching the advertisements in order to buy any product or get service. According to number of researches, it is more impartial to get others opinion than the marketers' messages. So, whenever the customer is willing to buy or try a new product; he/she starts to use the social networks resources to find a sufficient answer.

Social networks associates operate two characters which content supplying and consuming [5]. So, the consumer and supplier can be same person but for different services. In case the proper influencers are caught with a communication that detect as appreciated, then it can be easily improved as habitual. This process is smart in which the purchaser does not feel the market influence on his/her decision because he/she got this recommendation over trusted network [9, 10].

2 RESEARCH METHOD

Our main point of this research is based on students' observation, assessment as well as the positive and negative effects of social networks sites in academic resolution. We have used for data collection the survey method. Our study population involves University of Bridgeport students, Connecticut, USA.

So, in this research we are trying to solve an important issue that graduate students face; which is an unavailable service inside the university. Hence, this service is about providing the tutorials with reasonable price. By that we could raise the issue according to the target people opinions and provide the acceptable solution.

Based on above explanation, we have used two different kinds of research methods. First one is the small survey to explore the range of the issue using specific questions [11]. Second method is the study case for the proposed solution. Furthermore, the applied methods' purpose is not about the finding of academic use of social network, but it is also for making a change for the addressed issue in order to make improvement in the particular system which we are going to use; as well as making a recommendation based on the feedback.

2.1 SURVEY METHOD

We have used the survey approach with different number of students at University of Bridgeport. The main purpose of this research is to highlight the issue that most of the graduate students face with writing their researches; and its solution would be providing a tutoring service for them. However, the university provides this service only for undergraduate students.

So, we have prepared number of questions that were asked for the graduate students. Then we have chosen both the native and non-native students to restrict the issue and make it narrower. Our questions were based on specific strategy to know how we will use this service and how many students in need of an online tutorial service. If this idea will be welcome by the students or it is useless.

2.2 CASE STUDY

Usually, the case study is to be used in purpose of understanding the phenomenon behind the issue [12]. It is used for either finding a new idea or deploying an existing approach. However, this useful method requires evaluation of real situations.

Case study usually is restricted where the observed review of number of sources can help in explore the main idea. The research methods are emerged in order to understand the main problem using specific reports of previous studies. The case study is considered as one of quantitative research methods for providing deep understanding. However, two issues can face the case study such as: limitation due to geographic edges and the number of members or situations need to be studied.

The research purpose is to study the limited services issue at University of Bridgeport and try to provide the solution online for more convenience using the social networks websites. Therefore, we are going to use the case study on Face book website since the Face book is the most popular and known social website.

It is very important to understand the concept of case study method because some people misunderstand it. When the researcher use case study that means that person is working on number of sources and he is willing to focus on a single situation. However, the following case study focus on the Facebook history, advantages, disadvantage as well as how to take advantage of this social service.

2.2.1 CASE STUDY OF FACE BOOK SITE

In 2004 and from a school dorm at Harvard, the Face book website was launched as a social network [13, 14]. It was only for Harvard students use. After some time Face book becomes the second biggest social website use online over the world. Now a day, it is extended to allow more than 500 million users have account on Face book. What make the Face book more uniquely is the market and user base support.

However, Mark Zuckerberg who was a student at Harvard collage introduced Face book. Face book was only a sideline project of Mark Zuckerberg. He was lucky of getting a financial funding from Saverin until this website was around the campus. Then it became well-known over the world. Mark Zuckerberg received a hug support of two friends "Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes" who dropped out of their college just to run out the Face book. In 2005, Face book has facebook.com domain for $200,000 in order to make it wide available [15]. When other competitors such as: MySpace, Xanga keep their websites are restricted in only familiar schools [16], universities, colleges due to the users number limitation.

3 PROPOSED IDEA

3.1 CREATING AN ONLINE-BUSINESS

With online services and online websites features, the actual marketing meaning has been totally changed. So, less money with less effort and less time become the marketers' first requirements or hops.

According to Galagan research, 60% of people use the social network sites when 70% who tweets and recite the blogs [17].

Face book creates a big movement in marketing network. So, instead of using it as social network, it starts to be a business gateway. Cooley explains in his paper, which is titled "Social Networks and Face book" [18], that the Face book has big influence on the business. So, the company can create its own page and collect a hug number of followers to increase its chance of selling the introduced products or services.

Similarly all the companies start to have their own page and make number of fans for faster support and easier marketing way to introduce their business. These companies always work on maintain a good relationship between the fans and marketers. In marketing department, Face book starts to be considered as known strategy of business. With using the free page, the company can introduce its business and products for the users and try to attract them. So, if the user loves the product; then it will be easy to go to the company website and get more information about the desirable product.

Our main idea in this research is finding an appropriate solution for unavailable tutorial service at University of Bridgeport for the graduate students. This service is provided for undergraduate students. However, based on our survey; we realize many students spent much money just for reviewing their assignment or researches.

As known, writing is not an easy skill for either the native and non-native students. The students have to have a solid foundation in grammar side. Most of the students even the native students have issue in grammar because most of the graduate students return after long time to the classes. Other issues with the non-native students especially the Chinese or Arabic students have a lot of difficulties due the language differences. Chinese language uses characters that are totally different from English language. When, Arabic language uses different style and different letters. In English language people write from left to right when in Arabic language the people write from right to left.

Considering to these issues, it would be a good idea if we can take advantage of Face book service in providing us a free page. This page can be used for online tutorial to help the students in correcting their assignments and fix the grammatical mistakes in their researches. In addition, the student needs to submit his/her assignment one week before the due date. So, by that we can make the changes and discuss with the student to show him/her the mistakes. This service will be for reasonable price instead of spending a lot of money in services offices who take advantages of non-native students.

If the students submit their assignments in less than one week than the charge will be 10% higher.

Furthermore, we are not only going to help the student in correcting or fixing the researches, but also we are going to have a discussion to show him/her how the work is done.

Later, if we found hug of interested students; we can add more services such as: online classes, Videos, helpful material for each class. The student can order this material based on his/her requirement.

By that we can make an online Business with no capital requirement. Only the time is required, following the fans and run out the page. Finally, in our opinion this idea can be grow very fast; it needs a social network creation by having a good relationships inside the university.

3.2   THE ACADEMIC USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS MODEL

Online marketing provides hug services and it is considered to be more convenient for people who have no time. If we just look to some trusted websites such as: eBay or Amazon we can clearly observe the billions of people who visit their pages either to sell or buy. Internet brought many advantages for non-developed companies. It produces a real business with no boundaries.

The concept of scientist about the online business is the online- Business obviously supported by the marketing Department [19, 20]. As known the tradition marketing start to not have this attention comparing to department of online marketing.
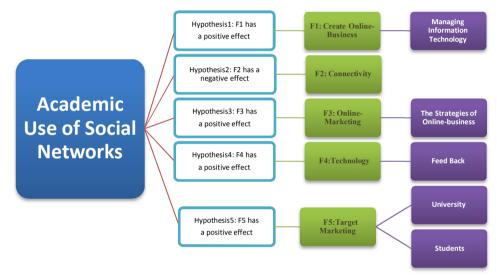

Fig. 1.   The Academic Use of Online Social Networks Model

3.2.1   THE GOAL OF THE ACADEMIC USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Using the online social networks sites in educational side motivated many researchers in the social science due to its benefit for people who cannot attend their classes regularly or having issue with some classes. Many ideas were introduced to improve the academic need using the online social network sites over different levels [21]; **"Distance education can be regarded as mediated form of education relying on various forms media and technologies [22]"** When using the social networks sites can have a big negative influence on the universities' education. According to Armstrong & Franklin's research, most of the universities will lose their rights for being the honored role as education provider since these service will be widely available and more flexible [23].

However, there are many reasons and benefits make us toward to social networks use such as: justifying better education, learning experiment enhancement, continuous availability of educational services for students and having quick feedback [24]. Furthermore, these kind of sites can be considered as faster communication way. The students and instructor can communicate everywhere and anytime. One of suggested sites is the Facebook for having a reliable communication [25].

3.2.2   FACTOR1: CREATING ONLINE BUSINESS

Based on our survey creating Business using social networks sites can have huge advantages for graduate students. Researchers are seeing using the social networks sites can having a negative effects on the traditional education. They realize the impact of the students feeling with having online instructor on Facebook as well as the relationship; yet **"participants emphasized possible negative associations between teacher use of Facebook and teacher credibility [26, 27]"** Most of education departments' librarians are against using kind of these sites in the universities which make issue like this as a big challenge of using social networks sites for higher education [28].

In addition, online business starts to replace the tradition business due to its advantages [29]. People start to prefer these kinds of sites due to their limited time. So, they are able to order anything in five minutes just using smart phones, laptop, or iPod. So, it becomes much easier. Same thing if we used these services for online education to provide service that unavailable in the university like the suggested solution "online tutorial" to correct and help students in their assignments. This service can be provided for a reasonable price. That can return two advantages: first creating a business based on a society with no money need. Second is helping the students in keeping themselves in their classes and raising their grades. Online business can also help the marketers.

The use of online business can be considered as an information management tool. This tool can contain three mechanisms:

1. The online business implementation and improvement management as well as the approach of information technology.
2. Employing the new information technology and online business application management.
3. Information processes' management and organization. This feature can help the people managing their business and show them how to attain their goal [30].

3.2.3   FACTOR2: CONNECTIVITY

According to Haythornthwaite, the connectivity of the Internet can have disadvantage as it has advantage. That because he stated, **"The very nation of community in an online context can being a hot debate [31]"** People start to lose their relationships with their families and friends. All their relationships are restricted in online communications [32, 33]. If this service disconnected due to any urgent, these relations can be stopped. Regarding to his argument, the people who use kind of these sites have stronger relation even if they are not known people for us [20].

So, if the resources are available then the relation remain strong unless that the relation can be destroy or get less interest.

However, Haythornthwaite explains that the Internet connectivity has a good advantage for online students. But it can have disadvantage for them in case of disconnecting these resources due to any urgent such as: weather issue or connection issue. That is the most consideration in our research. If the connection is not available then the student will not be able to communicate with the instructor and the process will be stopped and the students cannot get their work on time.

3.2.4   FACTOR3: ONLINE MARKETING

Introducing the products and services is more flexible and easier by using the social networks sites. When these sites are available over 24 hours. These services can be spread out using just the relationships between the fans and their friends [34]. So, it can be spread out easily with more influence because the talker about the service or product is a friend who is trusted party. So, it was right what Wilsom said, **"Social networks do have the potential to become business enablers if you get to know them well enough [35]"** When Trusov emphasizes in his paper that the electronic invitation over social networks sites replace the tradition marketing and give a better results [36].

So, to make our idea successful; we are following the marketing expression that says, "Sell anything, anywhere, anytime, at any price".

Based on that, this factor can have a good effect on our proposed service. If we spread our page link over the university students and each student has number of friends who are also students then the business of creating Facebook page for online tutorial, will be wilder and more popular. So, our business can grow very fast.

To make this idea efficient there are some roles need to be stated for successful business. Which are:

1. Include your business in the new economy manner.
2. The efficient marketing way now is the online business.
3. Rearrangement the Value Chain.
4. Keep following your business.
5. Guarantee the protection availability over your business.
6. Follow the five important rules of e-marketing "Sell anything, anywhere, anyway, anytime, for any price".
7. Keep following all the new marketing strategies.
8. Keep your business busy.
9. Having marketing approval.
10. Get advantages of the chances.
11. Have a good relationship with your customers [37].

These steps can be following for any kind of successful business. They are the magic keys. However, the successful marketer who keep trying to find a good solution to make the communication easier for the customer and consider all the issues and have it soother [38].

3.2.5   FACTOR4: TECHNOLOGY

The technology makes the relationship between the marketer and the customer much closer and informal. For business improvement and service implementation, there is some information needs to be provided by the customer [39]. The customer feedback is very important information to rate the business [40, 41]. Using the social networks technology, the feedback can be provided fast or direct from the user.

For example, the feedback of both the seller and buyer can be a better way of indication on some sites such as: amazon and eBay. **"The most notable is that of the feedback rating where the parties to the transaction may rate each other [42]"** Hence, eBay subtracts the undesirable feedback amount from the positive feedback amount for evaluation [43]. Even if the buyer comments more than once, they will be counted as one feedback for that seller.

However, in our idea the student's feedback can be getting direct from the user's comments and interaction on the provided page. So, the admire user of the service would deal with the instructor again and will have more participation than the user who do not like the service or not interested in. Also, feedback can benefit in the business improvement by the user's new or discovered requirements. By that, it will be easy for us to edit any undesired service or provide any new desired service.

3.2.6   FACTOR5: MARKETING TARGET

In marketing, the target always is the customer [44]. The marketers should find the satisfied solution for the target. In fact the target of marketing includes different segmentation based on the strategy [44, 45]. You clearly distinguish your target potential beneficiaries of your business's services [46]. Your business section should explain who are your customers and how can you make their need satisfy with your provided service. **"An important aspect of marketing practice is the targeting of consumer segments for differential promotional activity. [47]"**

However, our target for the suggested business is the university or the students.

So, the business section can be formed as:

1. The business can be between the marketer "instructor" and the student. So, the student submits his/her assignment for getting service for specific amount of money. This will be direct relationship; there is no third party.
2. Second, the business can involve the marketer and the university. So, this business can be done under the university's support for reasonable price in order to run out this business under the university name.
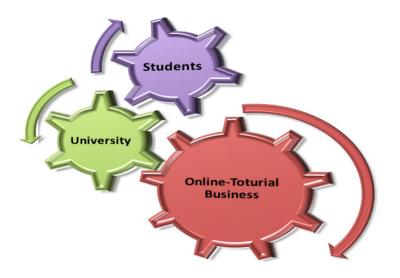
Fig. 2.   Students – University – Online-Tutorial Business

4   THE IMPORTANCE

The main point of this research is all about providing learning, teaching and high level of education "online tutorial" using social network sites. This experience gives us a chance of looking up for understanding and solving an important issue for graduate students at university of Bridgeport. Providing online tutorial on Facebook site for those students can keep them in their classes and raise their grads. There are some students get bored in a traditional education way, so online tutorial can solve this issue. Other students leave their classes just because they do not get help from somewhere. So, this solution would be perfect.

Providing expensive services for a reasonable price to the students can help both the customers and marketers; especially if the marketer will only offer the time for providing this service. This solution can help the students reduce their expenses in paying a lot of money for services office who provide like this service. Online tutorial can provide more than teaching or education help service, which is the discussion class for offering some suggestions and ideas to the student.

5   CONCLUSION

The most important invention of science uprisings is the online business using the social networks sites. This becomes very popular and much convenient. Online Business using the social network motivates many researches to know and explore new ideas.

In this research, we explained our idea of creating an online business using social network sites "Facebook". This idea was based on need of specific and important service that is required by the students in the universities which is "Online Tutorial". Hence, this service will be provided for reasonable price.

Our research could clearly show how it is easy to take advantage of these free pages and make an online business with no effort or money. However, in the past years the online business could prove that, its growth can be as much as the digital world. Based on that, each of us can make his/her own business and make the future more optimism.

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