

# A Facebook Community Management and Marketing Tool for Micro and Small Enterprises and Social Entrepreneurs

Mathias Haas, 1402010

## ABSTRACT

Social media has taken over all over the world as a mass phenomenon of unprecedented dimensions and displays itself in full force in the everyday life of billions of people; the centrality of social media in marketing, and especially in digital marketing, is undisputed. Facebook emerged as the most widespread single social networking site, also for companies, allowing them to reach out to customers, to listen their voices and to engage them in conversations, namely Community Management. The profitability of the platform proved true for Micro and Small Enterprises (SMEs) and Social Entrepreneurs (SEs), but with the opportunities provided by Facebook, also come challenges.

Two main Research Questions are addressed in this paper. First, the *status quo* and common problems for Micro and Small Enterprises and Social Entrepreneurs in dealing with Community Management and Marketing on Facebook are examined, in order to identify the *status quo* of these common problems. Secondly, it was researched how an easy-to-apply toolbox for MSEs and SEs, with methods for Facebook Community Management and Marketing, addressing the identified common problems, could look.

This paper focuses on the Austrian landscape of MSEs and SE both with a theoretical and empirical approach and applying a multi-method approach. This includes literature research (indirect and external view) as well as a semi structured qualitative survey and a semi structured qualitative expert interview (direct or internal view).

The outcome of the present paper shows, first, the *status quo* of common problems: there is a lack of understanding of the structural importance of social media in current digital marketing, a time management issue, a lack of expert knowledge, a lack of education possibilities, as well as a general dissatisfaction felt by the practitioners. Second, this paper describes a toolbox that was built, endowed with a hybrid structure: an offline part, consisting of a *in praesentia* workshop, and an online part, with various formats (slides, videos, white papers, checklists, news updates), with most relevant information and tips regarding Facebook Community Management and Marketing.

The presented work contributes to the discussion of the problems faced by practitioners in practice and is the first to make an assessment of the readiness to perform Community Management and Marketing with Facebook in Austria. This work also built and introduced a Facebook Community Management and Marketing toolbox for the demands of MSEs and SEs, which is an important contribution for practitioners. Furthermore, this toolbox has been validated and tested successfully.